



2023 Year in Review

NORTH KOREA AND THE WORLD

A YEAR IN HEADLINES

EDITED BY
ALBERT BUIXADÉ FARRÉ
SAMANTHA GARCIA



THE COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN
RIGHTS IN NORTH KOREA

The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea

2023 Year in Review

NORTH KOREA AND THE WORLD

A YEAR IN HEADLINES

**Edited by
Albert Buixadé Farré
Samantha Garcia**

2023 Year in Review

NORTH KOREA AND THE WORLD: A YEAR IN HEADLINES

© 2025 Committee for Human Rights in North Korea. This work is published under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (CC BY-SA 4.0).

You are free to copy, distribute, and adapt the material, provided you give appropriate credit to the original publishing institution, author(s), and source. If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original. Any modifications must be noted in a reasonable manner and must not imply endorsement by the licensor.

e-ISBN: 978-1-959391-04-3

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.69981/4703>

Albert Buixadé Farré, Managing Editor
Samantha Garcia, Associate Editor

Cover design: Samantha Garcia

Cover image: "Map of North and South Korea" by Tanarch, courtesy of Canva

Published digitally by:
Committee for Human Rights in North Korea
1801 F Street, NW,
Suite 305 Washington,
DC 20006, USA
HRNK.org

This report is intended for digital distribution only and is not available in print.

This publication can be downloaded at no cost at [HRNK.org](https://hrnk.org).

First digital edition, June 2025

2023 Year in Review
NORTH KOREA AND THE WORLD:
A YEAR IN HEADLINES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN NORTH KOREA	3
FOREWORD	5
CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	6
YEAR IN REVIEW	7
INTRODUCTION	8
A. OVERVIEW	8
B. SCOPE OF NEWS COVERED	8
PART I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	9
PART II. CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS	10
A. IN NORTH KOREA	10
B. IN SOUTH KOREA	13
C. INTER-KOREAN RELATIONS	13
D. INTERNATIONAL	14
I. PART III. DAILY PRESS	19
1. JANUARY	19
2. FEBRUARY	92
3. MARCH	159
4. APRIL	235
5. MAY	302
6. JUNE	365
7. JULY	439
8. AUGUST	502
9. SEPTEMBER	556
10. OCTOBER	626
11. NOVEMBER	692
12. DECEMBER	762
RESEARCH NOTES	830

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN NORTH KOREA

The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK) is the leading U.S.-based nonpartisan, non-governmental organization (NGO) in the field of North Korean human rights research and advocacy, tasked with focusing international attention on human rights abuses in that country. It is HRNK's mission to persistently remind policymakers, opinion leaders, and the general public that more than 20 million North Koreans need our attention. Since its establishment in October 2001, HRNK has played an important intellectual leadership role in North Korean human rights issues by publishing over 50 major reports (available at <https://www.hrnk.org/documentation/>). Recent HRNK reports have addressed issues including North Korea's overseas workers, the influx of outside information into North Korea and the regime's response, the health and human rights of North Korean children, and North Korea's political prison camps.

HRNK is the first and only NGO that solely focuses on North Korean human rights issues to receive consultative status at the United Nations (UN). It was also the first organization to propose that the human rights situation in North Korea be addressed by the UN Security Council. HRNK was directly and actively involved in all stages of the process supporting the work of the UN Commission of Inquiry (COI) on North Korean human rights. Its reports have been cited numerous times in the report of the COI, the reports of the UN Special Rapporteur on North Korean human rights, a report by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, two reports of the UN Secretary-General António Guterres, and several U.S. Department of State Democratic People's Republic of Korea Human Rights Reports. HRNK has also regularly been invited to provide expert testimony before the U.S. Congress.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2023

Gordon Flake, Co-Chair

Executive Director, Mike and Maureen Mans-field Foundation

Katrina Lantos Swett, Co-Chair

President and CEO, Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice

John Despres, Co-Vice Chair

Consultant on International Financial & Strategic Affairs

Suzanne Scholte, Co-Vice Chair

President, Defense Forum Foundation
Seoul Peace Prize Laureate

Kevin C. McCann, *Treasurer*

General Counsel, SHI International Corp.

Andrew Natsios, Co-Chair Emeritus

Former Administrator, USAID
Professor, Georgetown University

Morton Abramowitz

Senior Fellow, The Century Foundation

Thomas Barker

Partner, Co-Chair, Healthcare Practice,
Foley Hoag LLP

Rabbi Abraham Cooper

Associate Dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, LA

Jack David

Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute

Paula Dobriansky

Senior Fellow, Belfer Center, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

Nicholas Eberstadt

Henry Wendt Chair in Political Economy,
American Enterprise Institute

Robert Joseph

Senior Scholar, National Institute for Public Policy

Steve Kahng

General Partner, 4C Ventures, Inc.

Robert King

Former U.S. Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights Issues

Jung-Hoon Lee

Dean, Graduate School of International Studies (GSIS) Yonsei University

Former Ambassador for North Korean Human Rights Republic of Korea Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Winston Lord

Former Assistant Secretary for East Asia, Department of State

David Maxwell

Vice President at the Center for Asia Pacific Strategy

Marcus Noland

Deputy Director and Senior Fellow, Peterson Institute for International Economics

Jacqueline Pak

Fellow, East Asia Program, Cornell University

John H. Tilelli Jr.

Chairman & Chief Executive Officer (Emeritus), Cypress International

Greg Scarlatou, *Executive Director*

*Board of Directors as of December, 2023

(<http://web.archive.org/web/20231204224815/https://www.hrnk.org/about/board-of-directors.php>)

FOREWORD

After its establishment in 2001, the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK) has assumed intellectual leadership of researching, investigating and reporting on the North Korean human rights situation. In addition to our reporting, HRNK has conducted robust outreach to think tanks, universities, civil society organizations, U.S. Government agencies, Congressional offices, members of the European Parliament, members of the South Korean National Assembly and the Japanese Diet as well as the UN, especially since acquiring UN ECOSOC consultative status in April 2018.

As HRNK embarked on a mission to find out and tell the truth about North Korea's human rights violations, our organization has relied on youthful energy and enthusiasm rather than large budgets. HRNK has trained around 450 interns over the past 14 years. Our research interns execute multiple tasks. One product that keeps attention constantly focused on our work and mission is our Daily Press, a daily compilation of relevant articles on Korean peninsula issues. This is entirely the mission of our interns, who take turns and work in teams to ensure not a single day is missed.

The Daily Press requires effort, discipline, and teamwork. HRNK Managing Editor Albert Buixadé Farré had the brilliant idea of collecting and categorizing all headlines of the daily press issued throughout a calendar year and publishing them in one volume. He subsequently worked with HRNK research intern Samantha Garcia, executing the first project of this kind for our organization. This will be an essential tool, meant to enable researchers and students of North Korea to get a firm grip on the timeline, nature, and implications of relevant developments throughout a given calendar year.

The first report “Year in Review – North Korea and the World” covers calendar year 2023. This is a pilot project, aimed to charter the way forward for reports covering other calendar years, to be produced and published in rapid succession.

Greg Scarlatoiu

President and CEO
Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK)
June 18, 2025

CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is the result of the dedicated efforts of our team throughout 2023. Samantha Garcia compiled the daily news digests and crafted its summary sections, ensuring a comprehensive overview of the year's events.

We also acknowledge the diligent work of the authors listed below, who created the original daily news digests compiled in this report. Their commitment and expertise ensure that our readers remain well-informed about the latest developments.

Abbigail Thacker	Gabrielle Drinkwine	Kia Fatahi
Alejandro Cassal	Gloria Guo	Mohona Ganguly
Amanda Leckner	Haeun Moon	Myriam Aribaud
Angela Yoon	Hyunjo Lee	Nathan Choe
Annie Heitmeier	Jack Boone	Nate Bent
Ava Jane Moorlach	Jiwoo Hwang	Rachel Baek
Ava Kim	Jiwoo Katie Choi	Raymond Ha
Bella Packowski	Jody Chen	Ryan Beane
Bryan Clark	Joseph Choi	Tessa Aguilar
Cherise Kim	Juntae Rocke	Tiana Lakhani
Claire McCrea	Juntae Rocker	Valerie Xu
Dan McDowall	Kate Refolo	Venesia Delancy
Debby Kim	Kathy Yu	Yesun Kim
Diana Woo	Kaylee Kim	Yoshino Yamauchi

Cover design by Samantha Garcia.

Manuscript copy-editing by Jocelyn Bruce and Emily Spaugh.

Editorial direction and project management by Albert Buixadé Farré.

YEAR IN REVIEW

The 2023 Year in Review report series offers a comprehensive overview of the evolving landscape of North Korean human rights through three pivotal reports.

First, *North Korea and the World: A Year in Headlines* presents a curated collection of news archives, capturing global and regional developments related to North Korea. This archive provides context for our work and for the work of those in related fields and ensures significant events are documented and verified.

Second, *Eyes on North Korea: Essays on Human Rights* (forthcoming) features insightful essays and opinion pieces from diverse contributors, including young professionals, HRNK interns, and experts. This collection offers a range of perspectives and in-depth analyses on specific political and human rights issues, enriching the discourse and broadening the understanding of North Korean human rights.

The third and final report, *HRNK in Action: Research, Advocacy, Impact*, (forthcoming) introduces HRNK's board, staff, and interns, and provides a comprehensive overview of our activities over the past year. This includes details about the events we have attended and hosted, the reports we have published, and highlights from our social media.

Together, these reports offer a thorough understanding of our work and the broader context in which we operate. They serve as a valuable resource for academics, policymakers, advocates, and anyone interested in the ongoing efforts to address human rights issues in North Korea.

INTRODUCTION

A. OVERVIEW

The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK) is dedicated to providing comprehensive and up-to-date information on developments related to North Korea through our daily email digests. This report consolidates an entire year's worth of monitoring into a single, accessible document, offering valuable insights for the general public and researchers.

The report is divided into three distinct parts:

- Part I: A concise one-page executive summary offering a snapshot of the year's key events and trends.
- Part II: A ten-page chronological account, organized by topic, providing a more detailed overview of the events of 2023.
- Part III: The complete collection of daily news digests, spanning eight hundred pages, preserving the original content for in-depth research and reference.

By organizing the information in this manner, we strive to accommodate various preferences for detail and to enhance the utility of the report for all readers.

B. SCOPE OF NEWS COVERED

HRNK staff compile a daily list of news articles focused on North Korea, its relations, key developments in the U.S.-South Korea relationship, and significant domestic events in South Korea. Most of the news is sourced from the following outlets:

- [NK News: North Korea News](#)
- [Korea JoongAng Daily](#)
- [The Korea Times](#)
- [The Korea Herald](#)
- [Radio Free Asia](#)
- [38 North](#)
- [BBC](#)
- [The Guardian](#)
- [The Daily Telegraph](#)
- [Reuters](#)
- [Associated Press News](#)
- [CNN](#)
- [The National Interest](#)
- [North Korea Leadership Watch](#)
- [North Korea Economic Watch](#)
- [The New York Times](#)
- [PIIE: Peterson Institute for International Economics](#)
- [UPI: United Press International](#)
- [VOA: Voice of America](#)
- [The Washington Post](#)
- [HRNK Insider](#)

PART I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2023, North Korea remained a highly isolated state, marked by ongoing military advancements, limited diplomatic outreach, and cautious economic recovery. The country's human rights situation remained a key concern, with the UN Security Council holding two major discussions on the issue, though no resolutions were passed due to opposition from China and Russia. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights reiterated calls for referring North Korea to the International Criminal Court for systematic human rights violations.

Militarily, North Korea escalated missile tests, which it claimed were in response to joint U.S.-South Korea military exercises. These tests included successful trials of solid-fuel ICBMs and the Hwasong-18 ICBM, and showcased advanced weapons like hypersonic glide vehicles and UAVs in military parades. North Korea also attempted to launch reconnaissance satellites twice, succeeding in November, signaling its growing technological capabilities. Despite these advancements, inter-Korean relations worsened with North Korea's rejection of South Korea's offers for dialogue and escalating tensions over missile tests.

Economically, North Korea's economy showed signs of gradual recovery amid ongoing sanctions. Kim Jong-un's January address prioritized agricultural productivity, infrastructure improvement, and self-sufficiency. The country expanded Economic Development Zones and renewable energy initiatives. Trade with China resumed in late 2022, with North Korea's exports to China reaching \$267 million by November 2023, the highest since 2018.

Diplomatically, North Korea welcomed Russian and Chinese delegations in July, marking the 70th anniversary of the Korean War armistice. In September, Kim Jong-un visited Vladivostok, where North Korea agreed to supply artillery to Russia in exchange for advanced military technology, including satellite launch support. While travel to North Korea remained heavily restricted, China resumed issuing visas for business-related travel, though tourism remained suspended.

Overall, 2023 for North Korea was characterized by significant military strides, strategic partnerships with China and Russia, and incremental economic recovery amid stringent sanctions. However, the country remained economically and diplomatically isolated, with deepening tensions and a lack of substantial progress in inter-Korean relations. North Korea's focus on military self-reliance and selective international engagements underscored its strategy of fortifying security while navigating global isolation. The continued strain in its relationships with the U.S. and South Korea further heightened regional instability.

PART II. CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

A. IN NORTH KOREA

HUMAN RIGHTS

- **March 2023, UNSC Arria-formula Meeting:** The UN security council held an Arria-formula meeting on human rights issues and a formal debate in August to discuss human rights concerns in North Korea since 2017. Due to China and Russia's opposition, the council could not adopt any resolutions. An Arria-formula UNSC meeting is an informal, off-the-record meeting without the need for formal resolutions or decisions.
- **August 2023, Nine Years After the Commission of Inquiry:** Nine years after the 2014 Commission of Inquiry report recommended the UN Security Council refer the situation in North Korea to the International Criminal Court, the UN High Commission of Human Rights restated the same recommendation.

MILITARY ACTIVITY

- **February 18, 2023, ICBM Launch:** North Korea launched an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), which fell into the Sea of Japan. This test was seen as a direct challenge to recent joint military exercises by South Korea and the United States.
- **March 13-23, 2023, Artillery Drills:** North Korea conducted a series of artillery drills in response to the joint military exercises held by South Korea and the United States, which it perceived as a threat to its sovereignty.
- **March 16, 2023, Failed ICBM Launch:** North Korea launched a presumed failed ICBM, identified as the Hwasong-17, which traveled about 1,000 kilometers before landing in the Sea of Japan.
- **March 24, 2023, ICBM Launch:** North Korea successfully launched an ICBM that reached an altitude of 6,000 kilometers, traveled 1,080 kilometers in 71 minutes, and landed in waters off Japan's western coast, according to Japan's Defense Ministry.
- **April 13th, 2023, ICBM Launch:** North Korea launched a new type of solid-fuel ICBM, marking a significant advancement in its missile capabilities. This test was particularly notable due to the potential for quicker launch times compared to liquid-fueled missiles.

- **April 25, 2023, Military Parade:** A large military parade was held to commemorate the founding of the Korean People's Army. The parade showcased new weapons, including advanced missile systems and UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles).
- **May 4, 2023, Launch of SRBMs:** North Korea launched a series of short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs) into the Sea of Japan. These tests were interpreted as a response to ongoing military exercises by South Korea and the United States.
- **May 30-31, 2023, Attempted Launch of Military Satellite:** North Korea attempted to launch a military reconnaissance satellite, "Malligyong-1," using a Chollima-1 rocket. The launch failed due to an issue with the rocket's second stage, causing the payload to fall into the Yellow Sea.
- **July 5, 2023, Launch of SRBMs:** North Korea launched two SRBMs into the Sea of Japan. The missiles traveled approximately 600 kilometers before landing in the sea. This test was seen as a response to joint military exercises by South Korea and the United States.
- **July 14, 2023, Launch of ICBM:** North Korea tested its latest Hwasong-18 ICBM, which state media described as the core of its nuclear strike force, highlighting its 74-minute flight—the longest for any North Korean missile—achieved through lofted trajectories in the second and third stages for safety.
- **July 19, 2023, Launch of Cruise Missiles:** North Korea tested two long-range cruise missiles, which flew for over two hours in patterns simulating evasive maneuvers before hitting their targets. These tests demonstrated advancements in North Korea's cruise missile technology and its ability to conduct prolonged flights with precision.
- **August 24, 2023, Attempted Launch of Military Satellite:** North Korea made a second attempt to launch the "Malligyong-1" military reconnaissance satellite using the same Chollima-1 rocket. This attempt also failed due to a problem with the third-stage booster, resulting in the satellite not reaching its intended orbit.
- **September 2, 2023, SRBM Tests:** North Korea conducted a series of SRBM tests. Several missiles were launched into the Sea of Japan, demonstrating North Korea's continued focus on advancing its missile technology.
- **September 9, 2023, Military Parade:** To commemorate the 75th anniversary of its founding, North Korea held a large-scale military parade in Pyongyang. The parade showcased new military hardware, including advanced missile systems and other strategic weapons.
- **September 28, 2023, Test of Hypersonic Glide Vehicle:** North Korea claimed to have successfully tested a hypersonic glide vehicle, which can evade missile defenses and deliver warheads with high precision. This was part of its broader strategy to develop advanced weapons technology.
- **November 3, 2023, Launch of SRBMs:** North Korea launched multiple SRBMs into the Sea of Japan. These tests were part of ongoing efforts to enhance its missile capabilities and serve as a demonstration of military strength.
- **November 22, 2023, Launch of Spy Satellite:** North Korea claimed it had successfully put a military spy satellite into space, after two earlier failed attempts.

- **November 29, 2023, Launch of ICBM:** North Korea tested an ICBM, which flew over 1,000 kilometers before landing in the Sea of Japan. This test was viewed as a show of strategic force and an assertion of North Korea's long-range missile capabilities.
- **October 10, 2023, Military Drill:** On the anniversary of the founding of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK), North Korea conducted a large-scale military drill involving multiple branches of its military, including artillery, infantry, and air force units.
- **December 18, 2023, Launch of ICBM:** North Korea launched an ICBM, which flew around 1,000 kilometers before landing in the Sea of Japan. This test was seen as a demonstration of North Korea's strategic missile capabilities and a response to international sanctions and pressures.

ECONOMICS

- **January 2023, New Year's Address:** Kim Jong Un ceased delivering a traditional New Year's speech and instead addressed the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) plenary meetings. In January 2023, his speech focused on military objectives but also included discussions on the state budget and economic planning for 2023 and 2024.
- **March 2023, Plenary Meeting of the WPK:** During this meeting, the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) Central Committee discussed various economic policies, focusing on improving agricultural productivity, enhancing infrastructure, and boosting domestic production of essential goods.
- **May 2023, Agricultural Reforms:** The North Korean government announced measures aimed at increasing agricultural output, including the introduction of new farming techniques, improved distribution of fertilizers and seeds, and incentives for collective farms to enhance productivity.
- **July 2023, EDZs Expansion:** North Korea expanded its Economic Development Zones (EDZs) to attract more foreign investment and boost local economies. These zones were intended to facilitate joint ventures and partnerships with foreign entities, especially in sectors like manufacturing and technology.
- **September 2023, Supreme People's Assembly Session:** During a session, several economic bills were discussed and passed. Key among them was a bill to improve financial management and budgeting practices to ensure more efficient allocation of resources.
- **October–November 2023, Energy and Infrastructure:** North Korea focused on renewable energy development, including solar and wind power, to reduce reliance on imported fuels and improve energy infrastructure, alongside large-scale rural development projects. These efforts, which included new highways, railways, and public facilities, aimed to boost connectivity and stimulate economic activity, particularly in rural areas vital to the country's agricultural and economic goals.

B. IN SOUTH KOREA

- **January 1, 2023, President Yoon Emphasizes Economics and Security:** In his New Year Address, President Yoon Suk-yeol emphasized economic growth, job creation, and security policies.
- **February 28, 2023, Economic Stimulus Package:** South Korea announced a new economic stimulus package to combat the economic slowdown, focusing on small businesses and job creation.
- **April 7, 2023, Joint Military Exercises:** Joint military exercises with the United States took place, focussing on defense against North Korean threats, highlighting the strong military alliance.
- **May 10, 2023, First Anniversary of Yoon's Presidency:** The first anniversary of President Yoon Suk-yeol's inauguration included a review of his administration's achievements and challenges.
- **June 15, 2023, Trilateral Summit:** South Korea hosted a trilateral summit with the United States and Japan to discuss regional security and economic cooperation.
- **July 1, 2023, New Labor Laws:** South Korea implemented new labor laws aimed at improving workers' rights and working conditions.
- **August 10, 2023 UNSC Inaction Affects South Korea's Security:** China and Russia blocked UN sanctions on North Korea, impacting South Korea's security and diplomatic stance.
- **September 18, 2023, Japan and South Korea Discuss Security:** President Yoon met with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida to discuss regional security, economic cooperation, and historical issues.
- **October 15, 2023, New Trade Agreements with Southeast Asia:** South Korea announced new trade agreements with Southeast Asian countries to boost economic growth and diversification.

C. INTER-KOREAN RELATIONS

- **January 4, 2023, Vice Minister of Unification Emphasizes Family Reunions:** South Korea's Vice Minister of Unification emphasized the urgency of resuming family reunions for families separated by the Korean War, as many elderly South Koreans have passed away without the chance to see their loved ones in the North.
- **January 18, 2023, Banning Use of Korean with Outside Influences:** The North Korean government implemented the Pyongyang Cultural Language Protection Act, banning the use of language that is South Korean in style or possesses other foreign influences.
- **April 25, 2023, North Korea's Military Parade Concerns South Korea:** North Korea's military parade, marking the Korean People's Army's anniversary, featured displays

of new missile technology. South Korea expressed concern over the parade's focus on advanced weaponry and inter-Korean relations remained strained.

- **June 25, 2023, Separate Commemorations of the Korean War:** On the anniversary of the Korean War, both Koreas held separate commemorative events. South Korea called for peace and reconciliation, while North Korea reiterated its commitment to strengthening its military capabilities.
- **August 15, 2023, South Korea's President Yoon Calls for Dialogue with the North:** During South Korea's Liberation Day celebrations, President Yoon Suk-yeol offered a renewed call for dialogue with North Korea, emphasizing the importance of peace and denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula.
- **December 17, 2023, South Korea Condemns ICBM Launch:** North Korea launched an ICBM that reached a record altitude and flight duration, drawing condemnation from South Korea and other nations
- **December 20, 2023, South Korea Approves Fewer Humanitarian Aid Requests:** South Korea approved two humanitarian aid requests from private organizations to North Korea, a sharp decline from the 12 projects approved in 2022, reflecting a shift in Seoul's prioritization of humanitarian assistance.
- **December 30, 2023, The North Criticizes the South's Military Cooperation with the U.S.:** In a year-end statement, North Korea reiterated its stance on strengthening its military capabilities and criticized South Korea's military cooperation with the United States. The statement highlighted the ongoing challenges in improving inter-Korean relations.

D. INTERNATIONAL

UN SECURITY COUNCIL & SANCTIONS

The UN Security Council held a series of meetings and consultations, all in reaction to North Korea's launches of missiles and military satellites. No new sanctions were put in place.

- **January 20, 2023:** The UN Security Council held a meeting to discuss North Korea's missile launches in late 2022 and early 2023. Member states reiterated the importance of enforcing existing sanctions and called for North Korea to cease its provocative activities.
- **February 18, 2023:** Following North Korea's ICBM test, the UN Security Council convened an emergency meeting. While no new sanctions were imposed, member states condemned the test and emphasized the need for stringent implementation of existing sanctions.
- **March 16, 2023:** North Korea conducted an ICBM test, prompting a UN Security Council meeting where member states discussed potential responses and sanctions.

- **April 13, 2023:** In response to North Korea's new type of solid-fuel ICBM test, the UN Security Council held consultations. The discussions focused on ensuring compliance with existing sanctions and exploring ways to prevent further escalation. Again, no new sanctions were introduced.
- **June 15, 2023:** The UN Security Council held an emergency meeting following North Korea's short-range missile launches. China and Russia reiterated their stance against additional sanctions.
- **August 10, 2023:** China and Russia blocked a U.S.-led attempt at the United Nations to strengthen sanctions against North Korea. This occurred after North Korea conducted ballistic missile launches in violation of existing UN Security Council resolutions. The proposed measures included a ban on additional refined petroleum exports to North Korea and other actions aimed at curbing North Korea's missile and nuclear programs.
- **August 24, 2023:** After North Korea's failed satellite launch, the UN Security Council discussed the implications of the launch for regional security. Member states reiterated the necessity of enforcing current sanctions and monitoring North Korea's technological advancements.
- **September 28, 2023:** Following North Korea's claim of a successful hypersonic missile test, the UN Security Council convened to address the potential threat posed by such advancements. While the council condemned the test, it did not result in new sanctions but called for stricter enforcement of existing measures.
- **December 12, 2023:** The UN Security Council discussed North Korea's satellite launch, which is widely believed to be a cover for ballistic missile technology development. No consensus was reached on new sanctions.
- **December 18, 2023:** In response to North Korea's ICBM test earlier in the month, the UN Security Council held a meeting to discuss the situation. The council condemned the test and called for continued enforcement of existing sanctions. There was a consensus on the need for diplomatic efforts to address the security concerns.

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- **January 20, 2023, North Korea Condemns U.S.-South Korea Military Exercises:** North Korea's representative at the UN condemned the joint military exercises between South Korea and the United States, calling them a provocation and a threat to regional stability.
- **April 17, 2023, North Korea Criticises the U.S:** North Korea's ambassador to the UN delivered a speech accusing the United States of escalating tensions and asserted North Korea's right to self-defense, including missile tests.
- **September 28, 2023, North Korea Defends Missile Program:** North Korea's representative at the UN General Assembly defended the country's missile program and criticized the UN for being biased against North Korea.

- **October 4, 2023, North Korea Condemns U.S.-South Korea Military Exercises:** North Korea sent a letter to the UN Secretary-General protesting the ongoing joint military exercises by South Korea and the United States, claiming they threatened peace on the Korean Peninsula.
- **November 21, 2023, The UN General Assembly Condemns North Korea's Human Rights Record:** The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution condemning North Korea's human rights record. North Korea's delegation rejected the resolution, calling it a political tool used by hostile forces.

CHINA

- **January 9, 2023, China's President Congratulates North Korea:** China's President Xi Jinping and North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un exchanged congratulatory messages to mark the anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between their countries. The messages emphasized the strength of bilateral ties.
- **July 28, 2023, North Korea Opens Borders to China and Russia:** North Korea reopened its borders for the first time since the pandemic to Chinese and Russian visitors.
- **September 24, 2023, China's President Congratulates North Korea:** President Xi Jinping congratulated North Korea on its founding anniversary, expressing a willingness to enhance strategic communication. In response, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un pledged to further strengthen cooperative relations with China.
- **December 18, 2023, Chinese Foreign Minister Visits Pyongyang:** Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi visited Pyongyang for talks with North Korean officials. The discussions focused on regional security dynamics, denuclearization efforts, and economic cooperation initiatives.
- **December 20, 2023, North Korea's Vice Foreign Minister Visits China:** The visit of North Korea's Vice Foreign Minister Pak Myong-ho to China –the first in four years– was indicative of a shift in focus back to strengthening bilateral relations between the two states.
- **December 30, 2023, China's President Congratulates North Korea:** Chinese President Xi Jinping sent a congratulatory message to North Korean leader Kim Jong n for the New Year. The message reiterated China's commitment to deepening bilateral relations and enhancing strategic cooperation.

RUSSIA

- **March 18, 2023, North Korea Congratulates Russia:** North Korean leader Kim Jong n sent a congratulatory message to Russian President Vladimir Putin on his re-election as President of Russia, emphasizing the importance of bilateral ties and cooperation between the two countries.

- **September 6, 2023, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Visits Pyongyang:** Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yury Borisov visited Pyongyang for talks with North Korean officials. Discussions focused on economic cooperation projects, including energy cooperation and infrastructure development.
- **September 13, 2023, Kim Jong n and Vladimir Putin Meet:** North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin met for a rare summit on Wednesday, where they discussed military matters, the war in Ukraine and potential assistance for North Korea's satellite program.
- **October 13, 2023, North Korea Sends Military Supplies to Russia:** North Korea delivered more than 1,000 containers of military equipment and munitions to Russia within a couple weeks.
- **October 19, 2023, Russian Foreign Minister Visits North Korea:** Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov arrived in North Korea to strengthen military ties and suspected arms deals.
- **November 2, 2023, North Korea Provides Missiles to Russia:** South Korean military officials claimed North Korea provided Russia with SRBMs and portable anti-aircraft missiles.
- **November 11, 2023, North Korea Congratulates Russia:** North Korean leader Kim Jong Un sent a congratulatory message to Russian President Vladimir Putin on the occasion of Russia's Unity Day. The message reiterated North Korea's commitment to strengthening bilateral ties and cooperation.
- **November 15, 2023:** A Russian government delegation arrived in Pyongyang for talks on trade and science cooperation.
- **December 15, 2023:** North Korean Premier Kim Tok-hun held talks with the governor of Russia's far eastern region of Primorsky Krai, possibly seeking to send workers to Russia.

UNITED STATES

- **January 1, 2023, North Korea States Continued Preparations to Counter the U.S. and Allies:** North Korea's New Year's Day statement reiterated its commitment to strengthening its nuclear arsenal and warned of potential military confrontations with the U.S. and its allies.
- **March 2, 2023, Joint Military Exercises:** The U.S. and South Korea conducted large-scale joint military exercises, which North Korea condemned as rehearsals for invasion. These exercises included air, naval, and ground forces.
- **March 23, 2023, Trilateral Summit:** Leaders from the United States, South Korea, and Japan met for a trilateral summit to address the growing threats from North Korea, particularly its missile tests and nuclear program.
- **April 25, 2023, U.S. and ROK Strengthen Military Readiness:** North Korea conducted a military parade showcasing its latest missile technology. The U.S. and South Korea responded by enhancing their joint military readiness and continued diplomatic efforts to address North Korean threats.

- **June 14, 2023, U.S. Secretary of State Visits Seoul:** U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited Seoul and reiterated U.S. commitment to the defense of South Korea and the denuclearization of North Korea. Blinken also called for international unity in applying pressure on North Korea.
- **July 19, 2023, U.S Reinforces Missile Defence Systems:** North Korea tested two long-range cruise missiles. The U.S. responded by reinforcing its missile defense systems in the region and calling for a UN Security Council meeting to discuss the missile tests.
- **October 4, 2023, U.S.-ROK Military Exercises:** The U.S. and South Korea conducted joint military exercises, including air and naval drills, in response to North Korea's missile tests. North Korea condemned these exercises as hostile acts.
- **November 26, 2023, Trilateral Summit:** A trilateral summit in Washington between the United States, South Korea, and Japan focused on North Korea's missile tests and nuclear threats. The leaders reaffirmed their commitment to regional security and coordinated military and diplomatic efforts to counter North Korea's provocations.
- **December 18, 2023, U.S. Condemns ICBM Test:** North Korea conducted a significant ICBM test, which flew over 1,000 kilometers before landing in the Sea of Japan. The U.S. strongly condemned the test and called for immediate action by the UN Security Council to address North Korea's provocations.
- **December 25, 2023, U.S. Reiterates Opposition to North Korea's Nuclear Program:** U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken reiterated the U.S.'s stance on North Korea's nuclear program, emphasizing the importance of diplomacy and sanctions to achieve denuclearization. Blinken also called for international cooperation to pressure North Korea to return to negotiations.

I. PART III. DAILY PRESS

1. JANUARY

Sunday, January 1, 2023

NK leader calls for 'exponential' increase in nuke arsenal; NK leader skips New Year message for four straight years

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un and daughter inspect mass-produced missiles at Pyongyang factory](#) (NK News, 1/1/2023)

[Kim Jong Un calls for exponential increase in North Korea's nuclear arsenal amid threats from South, US](#) (CNN, 1/1/2023)

[Kim Jong Un orders new ICBM, bigger nuclear arsenal](#) (Reuters, 1/1/2023)

[Kim Jong Un vows to 'exponentially' increase nuke production to counter US, ROK](#) (NK News, 1/1/2023)

[N. Korea distributes propaganda calendars in China](#) (Yonhap, 1/1/2023)

[N. Korea fires one SRBM into East Sea: S. Korean military](#) (Yonhap, 1/1/2023)

[N. Korea replaces party secretary, defense minister in major reshuffle](#) (Yonhap, 1/1/2023)

[N. Korean leader calls for 'exponential' increase in nuclear arsenal](#) (Yonhap, 1/1/2023)

[NKorea's Kim orders 'exponential' expansion of nuke arsenal](#) (AP News, 1/1/2023)

[North Korean leader skips New Year message for four straight years](#) (The Korea Times, 1/1/2023)

[North Korea ends year with ballistic missiles launch](#) (BBC, 12/31/2022)

[North Korea fires 3 missiles into East Sea following South's test](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/31/2022)

[North Korea places tactical nukes front and center with New Year's Day launch](#) (NK News, 1/1/2023)

[North Korea tests 'nuclear-capable' rocket launcher to ring in new year](#) (NK News, 1/1/2023)

[North launches missile on New Year's Day](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 1/1/2023)

[Nukes, missiles and satellites: What to make of North Korea's plenum outcome](#) (NK News, 1/1/2023)

In South Korea:

[\[Editorial\] Defending against missile provocations](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 1/1/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Any NK attempt at nuclear attack will bring end to regime, Defense Ministry says](#) (The Korea Herald, 1/1/2023)

[Defense ministry warns any North Korean nuclear use attempt would result in Kim regime's end](#) (Yonhap, 1/1/2023)

[North Korea missile tests are grave provocation, must stop, South Korea military says](#) (Reuters, 12/31/2022)

[Seoul warns use of nuclear weapons would end Kim Jong-un regime](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 1/1/2023)

[South Korea's Yoon says North Korea faces retaliation for provocations](#) (Reuters, 1/1/2023)

[Yoon calls for ready-to-fight spirit, firm retaliation against N.K. provocations](#) (Yonhap, 1/1/2023)

International:

[Chief nuke envoys of S. Korea, U.S., Japan criticize N.K. push to bolster 'self-defensive' capabilities](#) (Yonhap, 1/1/2023)

[S. Korea, Japan considering sharing radar information on N.K. missiles in real time: report](#) (Yonhap, 1/1/2023)

In North Korea

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his young daughter recently inspected dozens of intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) at what appears to be a factory near Pyongyang, according to NK News analysis of a new image released in state media Sunday. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is calling for an “exponential increase” in his country’s nuclear weapons arsenal in response to what he claims are threats from South Korea and the United States, Pyongyang’s state media reported Sunday. (Brad Lendon, Gawon Bae, [CNN](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un called for developing new intercontinental ballistic missiles and a larger nuclear arsenal to counter U.S.-led threats, state media said on Sunday, amid flaring tension between the rival Koreas. (Hyonhee Shin, Joyce Lee, [Reuters](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said he will “exponentially increase” nuclear weapon production in 2023 to counter perceived threats from the U.S. and South Korea, according to state media on Sunday. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has distributed 2023 calendars, including one with photos of a massive military parade, to its citizens and others in China in an apparent move to highlight its military might. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea fired one short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) into the East Sea on Sunday, South Korea's military said. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has carried out a reshuffle of its top military officials, including the dismissal of Pak Jong-chon, secretary of the ruling party's Central Committee (CC) and vice chairman of the party's Central Military Commission, according to its state media Sunday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un stressed the need to "exponentially" increase the number of the country's nuclear arsenal and develop a new intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in the new year, Pyongyang's state media reported Sunday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un ordered the “exponential” expansion of his country’s nuclear arsenal and the development of a more powerful intercontinental ballistic missile, state media reported Sunday, after he entered 2023 with another weapons launch following a record number of testing activities last year. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un did not deliver a New Year's message for the fourth consecutive year, replacing it with a speech at the Workers' Party of North Korea (WPK). (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea has fired three short range ballistic missiles towards the sea to the east of the Korean peninsula, South Korea's military says. (George Wright, [BBC](#))
- North Korea fired three short-range ballistic missiles into the East Sea on Saturday, a day after South Korea tested a space rocket in a surprise launch. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea wasted little time jump-starting work on its missile ambitions in the new year. Early on New Year's Day, the Korean People's Army test-fired its "super-large multiple launch rocket system" (MLRS). Known to the U.S. intelligence community as the KN-25, this 600mm system first appeared in 2019 and has been a mainstay of short-range missile testing and exercises by North Korea ever since. (Ankit Panda, [NK News](#))
- North Korea tested a nuclear-capable "super-large multiple launch rocket system (MLRS)" early in the morning on New Year's Day, according to state media, a day after leader Kim Jong Un joined a ceremony to hand over the "offensive" weapons to the military. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- North Korea launched a missile into the East Sea less than three hours into the new year, South Korean defense officials said. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea's latest party plenum wrapped up on Saturday, with state media releasing detailed information about discussions and decisions from the multi-day event on Sunday. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))

In South Korea

- As long as the North is bent on ratcheting up tensions through nuclear missile threats, we must have an unflinching determination to protect our security based on reinforcing our joint defense posture with Uncle Sam. ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un urged the country to exponentially increase its nuclear arsenal and mass-produce tactical nuclear weapons able to strike within South Korean territory, labeling South Korea as an "undoubted enemy" at a key party meeting, North Korean state media reported Sunday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The defense ministry warned Sunday that any attempt by North Korea to use nuclear weapons would lead to the "end" of its regime, after North Korean leader Kim Jong-un called for an "exponential" increase in the country's nuclear arsenal. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's series of missile tests are grave provocations that hurt peace and stability of the Korean peninsula and beyond, South Korea's military said, urging Pyongyang to stop them. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- South Korea's Defense Ministry warned that any attempts by North Korea to use nuclear weapons will mean the end of the Kim Jong-un regime Sunday. (Sarah Kim, Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's President Yoon Suk-yeol said on Sunday that North Korea will continue to conduct constant nuclear and missile provocations, and the South's military should respond with clear retaliation, his office said. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))

- President Yoon Suk Yeol ordered military commanders Sunday to punish any North Korean provocations without fail with a "firm determination not to avoid going to war," an official said. ([Yonhap](#))

International

- The chief nuclear envoys of South Korea, the United States and Japan decried North Korea's renewed push to strengthen "self-defensive" capabilities as a "challenge" to the international community on Sunday, Seoul's foreign ministry said. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and Japan are considering sharing radar information on North Korean missile launches in real time, a Japanese newspaper reported Sunday, as Pyongyang stepped up missile launches in recent months. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Hyunjo Lee, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240407015701/https://mailchi.mp/24a2cf1ccf6f/hrnk-news-items-nk-leader-calls-for-exponential-increase-in-nuke-arsenal-nk-leader-skips-new-year-message-for-four-straight-years?e=8a9aae5198>

Monday, January 2, 2023

Seoul boasts of space vehicle launch as it looks to better surveil North Korea; Yoon: US, South Korea Discussing 'Nuclear Exercises'

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un calls for exponential increase in North Korea's nuclear arsenal amid threats from South, US](#) (CNN, 01/02/2023)

[N. Korean leader visits late father's mausoleum](#) (Yonhap, 01/02/2023)

[New North Korean luxury department store opens in capital after years of delays](#) (NK News, 01/02/2023)

[North Korea's Kim sacks No. 2 military official](#) (Reuters, 01/02/2023)

[North Korea likely to conduct nuclear test no later than Feb. 16: analyst](#) (The Korea Times, 01/02/2023)

[North Korea Replaces Key Military Official](#) (VOA, 01/02/2023)

[Rumours swirl on North Korea succession as Kim Jong-un tours missile factory with daughter](#) (The Telegraph, 01/02/2023)

In South Korea:

[Joint Chiefs of Staff start unit to deal with North's threats](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/02/2023)

[Ministry sorry for poor communication after public alarmed by rocket test](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/02/2023)

[ROK military welcomes sharing intel with Japan on North Korean missile launches](#) (NK News, 01/02/2023)

[Seoul boasts of space vehicle launch as it looks to better surveil North Korea](#) (NK News, 01/02/2023)

[South Korea, U.S. discussing nuclear exercises as tensions flare with North, Yoon says](#) (Reuters, 01/02/2023)

[Yoon: US, South Korea Discussing 'Nuclear Exercises'](#) (VOA, 01/02/2023)

[Yoon says S. Korea, U.S. in talks over joint nuclear exercises](#) (Yonhap, 01/02/2023)

International:

[Five political trends that could make 2023 a momentous year](#) (CNN, 01/02/2023)

[Seoul, Washington urged to cut North Korea's purse strings through cryptocurrency regulations](#) (The Korea Times, 01/02/2023)

In North Korea

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is calling for an “exponential increase” in his country’s nuclear weapons arsenal in response to what he claims are threats from South Korea and the United States, Pyongyang’s state media reported Sunday. (Brad Lendon, Gawon Bae, [CNN](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un visited the mausoleum of his late grandfather and father in his first reported public activity this year, according to Pyongyang's state media Monday. ([Yonhap](#))
- A major department store project in North Korea previously linked to a Singaporean luxury goods acquisition network has finally opened its doors, photos obtained by NK Pro reveal, though under a different name than originally planned. (Chad O' Carroll, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has sacked Pak Jong Chon, the second most powerful military official after leader Kim Jong Un, state media reported. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- With intelligence reports showing North Korea is set for another nuclear weapons test, when — rather than whether — it will proceed has become a geopolitical guessing game. One expert believes that the test will be conducted within the next seven weeks. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea has replaced its second most powerful military official, state media reported. The reshuffling took place at last week’s ruling party annual meeting with Ri Yong Gil replacing Pak Jong Chong, the official KCNA news agency said Sunday. ([VOA](#))
- Kim Jong-un, the North Korean leader, toured a ballistic missile factory with his young daughter, fuelling speculation over succession in the pariah state. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))

In South Korea

- The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) started a dedicated unit to respond to military threats from North Korea. The Chief Directorate of Countering Nuclear and Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) will focus on responding to the North’s missile and nuclear threats and also develop South Korea’s so-called “K-3” deterrence strategy, according to the JCS. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- The South Korean military on Monday belatedly apologized for triggering public alarm last week by test-launching a solid-fuel space launch vehicle unannounced and pledged to find ways to prevent a recurrence of similar incidents. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The South Korean military assessed that sharing more information with Japan on North Korean missile launches would improve ROK responses to such tests, after Japanese media reported that the two neighbors could start sharing real-time radar intelligence by the end of this year. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- South Korea's surprise test of a homegrown solid-propellant space launch vehicle last week was part of the military's efforts to develop space-based reconnaissance capabilities, the defense ministry said Monday, as Seoul looks to better surveil North Korea in the future. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- South Korea and the United States are discussing possible joint exercises using U.S. nuclear assets, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol said, as North Korean leader Kim Jong Un labeled the South its "undoubted enemy" in flaring cross-border tensions. (Soo-Hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))
- The United States and South Korea are engaged in talks that could give Seoul a bigger role in the operation of U.S. nuclear forces, according to South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol. (William Gallo, [VOA](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol has said South Korea is in talks with the United States to carry out joint planning and joint exercises involving U.S. nuclear forces to counter North Korea's nuclear threats. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

International

- Biden has his hands full elsewhere. An alarming airborne near miss between a Chinese jet and US military jet over the South China Sea over the holiday hints at how tensions in the region, especially over Taiwan, could trigger another superpower standoff. Biden also faces burgeoning nuclear crises with Iran and North Korea, which, along with Russia's nuclear saber rattling, suggests the beginning of a dangerous new era of global conflict and risk. (Stephen Collinson, [CNN](#))
- North Korea made headlines in 2022 by firing more ballistic missiles than any other year — 38 launches. But besides its ceaseless saber-rattling, the isolated country was also in the spotlight for its illegal cyber activities that allegedly raked in billions of dollars. (Kang Seung-woo, [The Korea Times](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502130142/https://mailchi.mp/044b03b7192c/hrnk-news-itemsseoul-boasts-of-space-vehicle-launch-as-it-looks-to-better-surveil-north-koreayoon-us-south-korea-discussing-nuclear-exercises>

Tuesday, January 3, 2023

US not discussing 'joint nuclear exercises' with South Korea, Biden says; North Korea: What we can expect from Kim Jong-un in 2023

In North Korea:

[North Korea: What we can expect from Kim Jong-un in 2023](#) (BBC, 01/02/2023)

In South Korea:

[Moon says preceding gov't established anti-drone system](#) (Yonhap, 01/03/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Seoul approves over \\$4M in private humanitarian aid to North Korea in 2022](#) (NK News, 01/03/2023)

[S. Korea OKs 5.52 bln won worth of private humanitarian aid to N.K. in 2022](#) (Yonhap, 01/03/2023)

International:

[Biden says U.S. not discussing joint nuclear exercise with S. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 01/03/2023)

[Seoul, Washington urged to cut North Korea's purse strings through cryptocurrency regulations](#) (The Korea Times, 01/03/2023)

[South Korea: Talks with US on management of nukes underway](#) (AP News, 01/03/2023)

[South Korea, US in talks over joint plans on N.Korean nukes](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/03/2023)

[S. Korea, US allay jitters over possible rift in extended deterrence against NK](#) (The Korea Times, 01/03/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. not discussing joint nuclear exercises: White House](#) (Yonhap, 01/03/2023)

[US not discussing 'joint nuclear exercises' with South Korea, Biden says](#) (NK News, 01/03/2023)

[Yoon, Biden get nuclear exercise signals tangled](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/03/2023)

In North Korea:

- It fired more missiles than ever before in a single year. In fact, a quarter of all missiles North Korea has ever launched hit the skies in 2022. It was also the year that Kim Jong-un declared that North Korea had become a nuclear weapons state and that its weapons were here to stay. (Jean Mackenzie, [BBC](#))

In South Korea:

- Former President Moon Jae-in has said his administration established a system to counter North Korean drone infiltrations, according to officials of the main opposition Democratic Party. ([Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea greenlit a shipment of humanitarian aid for North Korea worth around \$240,000 (300 million won) in December, the unification ministry said Tuesday, without

providing further details about the assistance or how much aid was successfully delivered in 2022. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

- South Korea approved a total of 5.52 billion won (US\$4.32 million) worth of private humanitarian aid deliveries to North Korea last year, the unification ministry said Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- U.S. President Joe Biden said Monday his country has no ongoing discussions with South Korea on joint nuclear exercises against North Korea's threats. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea made headlines in 2022 by firing more ballistic missiles than any other year — 38 launches. (Kang Seung-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea confirmed Tuesday that Seoul and Washington are discussing its involvement in U.S. nuclear weapons management in the face of intensifying North Korean nuclear threats, after President Joe Biden denied that the allies were discussing joint nuclear exercises. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- South Korea and the United States said Tuesday they had been discussing the joint operation of US nuclear assets to enhance the alliance's capabilities to counter North Korean threats, clarifying that an option to stage nuclear exercises was off the table. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Seoul and Washington tried to dispel what is seen as a rift between the two allies in their stances on extended deterrence to thwart North Korea's nuclear threats. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea and the United States are not discussing "joint nuclear exercises" against North Korean threats, the White House confirmed Tuesday, hours after President Joe Biden said "no" to a reporter's question about whether the allies have been talking about the issue. ([Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. is not discussing "joint nuclear exercises" with South Korea, President Joe Biden said Monday, seemingly contradicting claims from ROK President Yoon Suk-yeol that the allies may re-envision extended deterrence on the Korean Peninsula. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Seoul and Washington officials said they are not planning to hold "joint nuclear exercises" Tuesday, after contradictory remarks from the countries' leaders. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

[/web/20240502130638/https://mailchi.mp/08c236d40fe2/hrnk-news-items-us-not-discussing-joint-nuclear-exercises-wi](https://mailchi.mp/08c236d40fe2/hrnk-news-items-us-not-discussing-joint-nuclear-exercises-with-south-korea-biden-says-north-korea-what-we-can-expect-from-kim-jong-un-in-2023)
[th-south-korea-biden-says-north-korea-what-we-can-expect-from-kim-jong-un-in-2023](https://mailchi.mp/08c236d40fe2/hrnk-news-items-us-not-discussing-joint-nuclear-exercises-wi)

Wednesday, January 4, 2023

Yoon threatens to suspend 2018 military pact with North

In North Korea:

[Debate reopens over loudspeaker broadcasts in DMZ](#) (The Korea Times, 01/04/2023)
[Former N.K. Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho likely executed last year](#) (Yonhap, 01/04/2023)
[Is Kim Jong-un's 'Most Beloved Daughter' North Korea's Next Leader?](#) (New York Times, 01/04/2023)
[Kim's missile inspection with daughter hints at possible succession plans](#) (The Korea Times, 01/03/2023)
[New North Korean drama leans on violence and foul language to appeal to viewers](#) (NK News, 01/04/2023)
[North Korea: What missiles does it have?](#) (BBC, 01/04/2023)
[North Korean Plenary Meeting Sets Stage for 2023](#) (Cato Institute, 01/04/2023)
[North Korea's economic reforms were a wild success. Just ask defectors.](#) (NK News, 01/04/2023)

In South Korea:

[President Yoon warns North Korea of suspension of Sept. 19 military agreement](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/04/2023)
[South Korea's Yoon warns of ending military pact after North drone intrusion](#) (Reuters, 01/04/2023)
[Yoon considers suspension of military agreement on reducing tensions with NK](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/04/2023)
[Yoon orders top officials to review suspending military deal with North Korea](#) (NK News, 01/04/2023)
[Yoon says S. Korea should consider suspending 2018 tension reduction deal](#) (Yonhap, 01/04/2023)
[Yoon threatens to suspend 2018 military pact with North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/04/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Inter-Korean tensions in 2023 expected to worsen: think tank](#) (The Korea Times, 01/03/2023)
[\[Editorial\] North should stop and return to dialogue](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/04/2023)
[S. Korea OKs 5.52 bln won worth of private humanitarian aid to N.K. in 2022](#) (Yonhap, 01/03/2023)

International:

[Negotiations alone cannot denuclearize N. Korea: Harry Harris](#) (Yonhap, 01/04/2023)
[U.S. fully committed to defending S. Korea against N. Korean hostility: White House](#) (Yonhap, 01/04/2023)
[US, ROK affirm joint planning on DPRK nukes, but no 'joint nuclear exercises'](#) (NK News, 01/04/2023)

In North Korea:

- The resumption of loudspeaker broadcasts has been emerging as a possible counter-measure in response to North Korea's security threats as South Korea has limited options to take in response to the North's recent use of drones to cross the inter-Korean border, infiltrating the South for the first time in five years. (Kang Seung-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- Former North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho appears to have been executed last year, a Japanese newspaper reported Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean state media has not revealed much about the cherub-faced young girl who has made several appearances with Kim Jong-un, the country's leader, in recent weeks. (Choe Sang-Hun, [New York Times](#))
- Women's roles are expected to expand in North Korean politics, expert says. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- Bloody murders and a foul-mouthed antagonist feature prominently in a new North Korean television drama that debuted this week, in what appears to be the DPRK's latest attempt to appeal to younger generations with more provocative propaganda content. (Seung-Yeon Chung, [NK News](#))
- North Korea significantly increased the number of missile tests it conducted in 2022, firing more than in any previous year. It's thought North Korea's military may also be planning to test another nuclear device. ([BBC](#))
- In the closing days of 2022, North Korea's political leadership held a plenary meeting of the ruling Workers' Party's central committee, which reviewed policy successes in 2022 and set goals for 2023. (Eric Gomez, [Cato Institute](#))
- Regime's aborted experiment with marketization increased food consumption, counter to pessimistic economic assessments (Andrei Lankov, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- President Yoon Suk Yeol warned Wednesday that the South Korean government will consider suspending the September 19 military agreement if North Korea commits another territorial invasion. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol said on Wednesday he would consider suspending a 2018 inter-Korean military pact if the North violates its airspace again, his office said, amid tension over a recent intrusion by North Korean drones. (Hyon-hee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- President Yoon Suk-yeol ordered the nation's spy chief to consider suspending an inter-Korean military agreement signed in 2018 to reduce military tensions if North Korea commits provocations again. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Seoul is weighing whether to suspend a 2018 inter-Korean military agreement, the presidential office announced Wednesday, after North Korea sent several drones across ROK territory and test-fired a variety of other weapons that breached the terms of the deal. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol ordered aides to consider suspending a 2018 inter-Korean military tension reduction agreement if North Korea violates the South's territory again, an official said Wednesday. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol warned that he would suspend a 2018 inter-Korean military agreement if North Korea intrudes into South Korea's territory. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The security situation on the Korean Peninsula is likely to return to the 2017 days of "fire and fury" when the United States and North Korea came closer to war or get even worse as Pyongyang is set to take aggressive actions against South Korea by expanding its nuclear arsenal, according to a Seoul-based think tank. (Kang Seung-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- In a closed-door meeting, Yoon ordered our military to overwhelmingly respond to any additional provocations from North Korea. North Korea must not ignore his stern warning. We urge Pyongyang to return to the negotiating table as soon as possible. ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea approved a total of 5.52 billion won (US\$4.32 million) worth of private humanitarian aid deliveries to North Korea last year, the unification ministry said Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- Negotiations alone will not rid North Korea of its nuclear ambition, former U.S. ambassador to South Korea Harry Harris argued Tuesday, insisting that U.S. policy of using negotiations to remove North Korea's nuclear weapons is no longer useful. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States remains fully committed to defending South Korea against any hostility, including a nuclear attack by North Korea, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. and South Korea are devising plans for how to respond if North Korea uses nuclear weapons, the White House said Tuesday, following conflicting accounts of whether the allies are exploring "joint nuclear exercises." (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502132106/https://mailchi.mp/a7c1671eaf7b/hrnk-news-itemsyoon-threatens-to-suspe-nd-2018-military-pact-with-northnorth-korean-plenary-meeting-sets-stage-for-2023>

Thursday, January 5, 2023

**With Col. David Maxwell, Suzanne Scholte and Dede Laugesen;
Frank Gaffney is Joined by Greg Scarlatoiu;**

Top News:

[With Col. David Maxwell, Suzanne Scholte and Dede Laugesen](#) (Securing America Podcast, 12/20/2022)

[Frank Gaffney is Joined by Col. David Maxwell Pt. 2](#) (Real America's Voice, 12/19/2022)

[Frank Gaffney is Joined by Greg Scarlatou](#) (Real America's Voice, 12/26/2022)

In South Korea:

[NIS says North's Ri Yong-ho was purged, possibly executed](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/05/2023)

[NIS says Ri Yong-ho purged, unclear whether executed: lawmakers](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/05/2023)

[North Korea drone entered no-fly zone near Yoon's office, South says](#) (Reuters, 01/05/2023)

[Seoul concedes North Korean drone breached no-fly zone near presidential office](#) (NK News, 01/05/2023)

[Seoul: Kim's daughter reveal hints at prolonged family rule](#) (AP News, 01/05/2023)

[South Korea may opt for psychological warfare in response to NK threats](#) (The Korea Times, 01/05/2023)

[S. Korean military admits N.Korean drone entered presidential office no-fly zone](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/05/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[North Korean drone entered no-fly zone near Seoul's presidential office](#) (The Washington Post, 01/05/2023)

[North Korean drone intruded on no-fly zone near presidential office](#) (The Korea Times, 01/05/2023)

[President Yoon warns North Korea of suspension of Sept. 19 military agreement](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/05/2023)

[Yoon's office considers suspending 2018 inter-Korean summit agreement](#) (Yonhap, 01/05/2023)

[Yoon Suk Yeol may walk away from joint declaration with Pyongyang](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/05/2023)

International:

[South Korea: Talks with US on management of nukes underway](#) (AP News, 01/05/2023)

[US bans imports from three Chinese firms for using North Korean labor](#) (NK News, 01/05/2023)

[U.S. concerned about N. Korea's disregard of military agreement with S. Korea: State Dept](#) (Yonhap, 01/05/2023)

[U.S. will continue to enhance defense readiness against N. Korean threats: Kirby](#) (Yonhap, 01/05/2023)

Top News:

- Host of Securing America, Frank Gaffney interviews Suzanne Scholte, HRNK Co-Vice-Chair of the Board. Podcast Time Stamp: 23:21 - 35:06. ([Securing America Podcast](#))
- Host of Securing America, Frank Gaffney interviews COL David Maxwell, HRNK Board Member. ([Real America's Voices](#))
- Host of Securing America, Frank Gaffney interviews Greg Scarlatou, HRNK Executive Director. ([Real America's Voice](#))

In South Korea:

- “Since being summoned to the State Affairs Commission in April 2020, there has been not a single mention of Ri,” an official at the South Korean Unification Ministry said Thursday. The NIS also reported that North Korean leader Kim is showing strong signs of extending the Kim family’s dynastic rule through his children. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The lawmakers of the National Assembly’s intelligence committee said in a closed-door briefing that the National Intelligence Service was able to confirm that Ri was purged by the regime. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- A North Korean drone briefly entered a no-fly zone surrounding South Korea’s presidential office when it intruded into the South’s airspace last week, Seoul’s military said on Thursday, fuelling criticism over its air defences. (Soo-Hyang Choi, Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- The ROK military has conceded that a North Korean drone breached a special no-fly zone near the presidential office in Seoul in late December, after repeatedly and forcefully denying media reports that the security violation had occurred for more than a week. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un’s disclosure of his daughter in recent public events was likely an attempt to show his people that one of his children would one day inherit his power in what would be the country’s third hereditary power transfer, South Korea’s spy service told lawmakers Thursday. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- South Korea is considering resuming psychological warfare operations, such as propaganda broadcasts or propaganda leaflets, against North Korea in the wake of the North’s drone infiltration into South Korean airspace, according to a government official, Thursday. (Kang Seung-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- The South Korean military on Thursday belatedly confirmed an uncrewed North Korean aerial vehicle flew over no-fly zones designated around the presidential office and residence in central Seoul, walking back on earlier remarks that it did not do so. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- A North Korean drone entered a no-fly zone surrounding Seoul’s presidential office last week, South Korea’s military said Thursday, in the latest example of the growing military threat from Pyongyang, which has also ramped up missile testing and sent planes near the border. (Min Joo Kim, [The Washington Post](#))
- Members of the National Assembly’s intelligence committee, Rep. Yoo Sang-bum of the ruling People Power Party and Rep. Youn Kun-young of the Democratic Party of Korea, later said the possibility of the drone taking pictures of the presidential complex cannot be ruled out, citing intelligence officials. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol warned Wednesday that the South Korean government will consider suspending the September 19 military agreement if North Korea commits another territorial invasion. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The possibility of suspending it comes after Yoon instructed the presidential National Security Office on Wednesday to consider suspending a military tension reduction agreement, which was signed as an annex to the Pyongyang Joint Declaration, in the event the North carries out a provocation similar to its drone infiltration of South Korean airspace last week. ([Yonhap](#))

- The Pyongyang Declaration called for the cessation of cross-border military hostilities and for inter-Korean cooperation and exchanges to promote permanent peace on the peninsula. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- South Korea maintained that Seoul and Washington are discussing its involvement in U.S. nuclear weapons management in the face of intensifying North Korean threats, after President Joe Biden denied that the allies were discussing joint nuclear exercises. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- Customs agency says it began detaining merchandise last month for violating 2017 law against items made by DPRK workers. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- "We are concerned about the DPRK's apparent disregard of the 2018 comprehensive military agreement, and we call on it to end its irresponsible and escalatory behavior," department press secretary Ned Price said during a daily press briefing. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States will continue to enhance its joint defense readiness with South Korea and Japan by conducting additional joint military exercises against growing North Korean threats, a White House official said Wednesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502132448/https://mailchi.mp/435e528f97f8/hrnk-news-items-with-col-david-maxwell-suzanne-schulte-and-dede-laugesenfrank-gaffney-is-joined-by-greg-scarlatoiu>

Friday, January 6, 2023

N. Korea Holds Mass Rally to Create Support for 2023 Goals

In North Korea:

[Ask a North Korean: Were you exposed to outside information in the DPRK?](#) (NK News, 01/06/2023)

[N. Korea holds mass rally to drum up support for 2023 policy goals](#) (Yonhap, 01/06/2023)

[North Korea's big year ahead: Will the country emerge from its COVID isolation?](#) (NK Pro, 01/06/2023)

[What Can Deter North Korea?](#) (19FortyFive, 01/06/2023)

[Will Deterrence Hold Against North Korea In 2023?](#) (19FortyFive, 01/06/2023)

In South Korea:

[Opposition leader Lee to appear for questioning next week](#) (Yonhap, 01/06/2023)

[Opposition refutes claims about secret relations with NK over drone infiltration](#) (The Korea Times, 01/06/2023)

[S. Korea to hold public hearing on wartime forced labor issue next week](#) (Yonhap, 01/06/2023)
[S.Korean military denies allegations of covering up NK penetration into no-fly zone amid growing criticism](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/06/2023)
[Seoul's spy agency can't confirm fate of North Korea's ex-foreign minister](#) (NK News, 01/06/2023)
[South Korea Revives Nuclear Debate as Tensions With the North Rise](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 01/06/2023)
[Yoon's office considers suspending 2018 inter-Korean summit agreement](#) (Yonhap, 01/06/2023)

International:

[How US humanitarian assistance could break the impasse with North Korea](#) (NK Pro, 01/06/2023)
[Kissinger stresses cooperation between S.Korea and US for NK denuclearization](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/06/2023)
[N. Korea to be on agenda of U.S.-Japan security talks: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 01/06/2023)
[Top diplomats of S. Korea, Malaysia discuss defense industry, infrastructure cooperation](#) (Yonhap, 01/06/2023)
[U.S. will work closely with S. Korea to monitor threat posed by N. Korea: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 01/06/2023)

In North Korea:

- Joshua Kim, who was born and raised in North Korea and lived there until he defected in 2019 — writes about discovering a balloon from South Korea, what he learned from an anti-regime flier and more. (Joshua Kim, [NK News](#))
- North Korea held a mass rally in Pyongyang earlier this week to call for the thorough implementations of policy goals laid out during a major ruling party meeting late last year, its state media said Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's extreme COVID-19 border controls have shaped nearly every facet of life in the country, from its ability to import fertilizer to its diplomatic engagement with friends and foes. But as the rest of the world moves on, and after the DPRK suffered its own nationwide outbreak, could 2023 be the year that Pyongyang finally takes steps toward pre-pandemic normalcy? ([NK Pro](#))
- At the end of 2022, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un made two dramatic announcements. He first claimed that because "South Korea has become 'our undoubted enemy,' it highlights the importance and necessity of a mass-producing of tactical nuclear weapons and calls for an exponential increase of the country's nuclear arsenal." (Bruce Bennett, [19FortyFive](#))
- Kim Jong Un's 2022 was quite a year. North Korea set a new annual record for missile launches. Short-range, medium range and intercontinental-range devices were all included. These are often called "tests" in the news media, but perhaps "demonstration" is a more accurate term. No other similarly armed nation goes to the expense of such repeated "tests". (Wallace Gregson, [19FortyFive](#))

In South Korea:

- Main opposition Democratic Party (DP) leader Lee Jae-myung will appear at a prosecutors' office for questioning next week in connection with a corruption investigation surrounding a football club, a party spokesperson said Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- The presidential office, the ruling People Power Party (PPP) and the main opposition Democratic Party of Korea (DPK) are in a battle over the source of a DPK lawmaker's claim that a North Korean drone entered a no-fly zone around the presidential office. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea will hold a public hearing next week to discuss ways to resolve the long-standing issue of compensating victims of Japan's forced labor during World War II, according to officials and representatives of the victims Friday, amid strong opposition by victims to a "proposed" resolution on the matter. ([Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean military on Friday denied claims that it sought to cover up the entrance of an uncrewed North Korean aerial vehicle into a no-fly zone around the presidential office in Seoul, as its belated confirmation of the penetration has drawn blistering criticism from the main opposition party. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea's spy agency has concluded former North Korean foreign minister Ri Yong Ho was demoted in recent years but cannot confirm whether he was executed, lawmakers briefed by the agency said Wednesday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula and Pyongyang's spree of weapons tests are fueling a debate in South Korea over the deployment and development of nuclear weapons as a deterrent. (Dasl Yoon, [The Wall Street Journal](#))
- The office of President Yoon Suk Yeol is considering suspending a 2018 inter-Korean summit agreement if North Korea violates the South's territory again, officials said Thursday. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- Throughout 2022, a dramatic increase in North Korean missile testing and other activities have driven tensions on the peninsula higher than they've been in years. But despite increased appetite for the U.S. and South Korea to address the situation, neither have made much headway on new solutions. (Monet Stokes, [NK Pro](#))
- Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger stressed solid cooperation between South Korea and the US for the denuclearization of North Korea in a luncheon held with Chung Mong-joon, honorary chairman of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies in New York on Thursday (local time), according to the organization on Friday. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The continuing threat posed by North Korea will be on the agenda of an annual U.S.-Japan security dialogue to be held here next week, a state department spokesperson said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The top diplomats of South Korea and Malaysia held consultations over the phone Friday on strengthening ties in areas of the defense industry and infrastructure, Seoul's foreign ministry said. ([Yonhap](#))
- The United States continues to work closely with South Korea to monitor threats posed by North Korea, a Pentagon spokesperson said Thursday, after a group of North Korean drones infiltrated South Korea before returning home. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Tessa Aguilar, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502133125/https://mailchi.mp/d5ba49fd3ff1/hrnk-news-itemswith-col-david-maxwell-suzanne-schulte-and-dede-laugesenfrank-gaffney-is-joined-by-greg-scarlatoi-11190782>

Saturday, January 7, 2023

How to Respond to a NK Nuclear Test; NK Likely to Lift Pandemic Border Restrictions in 2023

In North Korea:

[Is Kim Ju-ae North Korea's heir apparent?](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/07/2023)

[Key developments on North Korea this week](#) (Yonhap, 01/06/2023)

[North Korea Likely to Lift Pandemic Border Restrictions in 2023](#) (The Diplomat, 01/06/2023)

[North Korea's former ambassador to Britain 'put to death'](#) (Telegraph, 01/06/2023)

[Summary of domestic news in North Korea this week](#) (Yonhap, 01/06/2023)

In South Korea:

[Because It Is Good for South Korea: Public Support for Defector Entrepreneurship](#) (38 North, 01/05/2023)

[Shame on the military for drone infiltration](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/06/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[South Korea Embraces 'Tit for Tat' Approach to North's Provocations](#) (VOA, 01/06/2023)

[Summary of inter-Korean news this week](#) (Yonhap, 01/06/2023)

International:

[Asan Institute's honorary chairman meets with Henry Kissinger](#) (The Korea Times, 01/06/2023)

[How to Respond to a North Korean Nuclear Test](#) (The National Interest, 01/06/2023)

[North Korea likely to take advantage of new 'Cold War' paradigm: experts](#) (The Korea Times, 01/07/2023)

[Summary of external news of North Korea this week](#) (Yonhap, 01/06/2023)

[Trilateral cooperation with S. Korea, Japan most important to U.S.: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 01/06/2023)

In North Korea:

- Some analysts see Ju-ae's public appearances as an attempt to solidify the regime's security. Others tentatively suggest that Ju-ae may be cementing her role as heir apparent to carry on

a fourth generation of the Kim dynasty and someday take control of the North's nuclear weapons. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- The following are key developments regarding North Korea this week. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's quest to strengthen its military power will require financial backing – which means reopening borders for trade and migrant workers. (Sangsoo Lee, [The Diplomat](#))
- Spies claim that Ri Yong-ho, not seen in public since 2019, removed by Pyongyang despite unverified reports he was killed last year (Julian Ryall and Nicola Smith, [Telegraph](#))
- The following is a summary of domestic news in North Korea this week. ([Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- The reality is that for a government policy in support of resettling North Koreans to be broadly accepted, it has to be economically advantageous and offer something “good for South Korea.” (Steven Denney and Christopher Green, [38 North](#))
- No matter how cutting-edge weapons our military has, it can never win against the enemy unless it is trusted by the people. President Yoon must hold all related military officers and soldiers accountable for the ominous security breach before it's too late. ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- In June, after North Korea fired eight short-range ballistic missiles into the ocean, South Korea and the United States responded by sending the exact same number of missiles into the sea. (William Gallo, [VOA](#))
- The following is a summary of inter-Korean news this week. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- Kissinger said that South Korea and the United States must deal with the North Korean nuclear problem through solid cooperation. He also mentioned that the denuclearization of North Korea is necessary not only for Northeast Asia but also for China. (Kim Jae-heun, [The Korea Times](#))
- In the long term, the Kim family's massive investment in acquiring its nuclear and missile capability will be an almost total loss. The regime must understand that it can't employ nuclear weapons without bringing disaster on itself, nor can it use them as effective blackmail. (Daniel Sneider, [The National Interest](#))
- With the global order shifting to a new "Cold War" paradigm, where North Korea partners with China and Russia against a U.S.-led trilateral alliance with South Korea and Japan, Pyongyang is expected to go its own way of advancing its nuclear program, according to diplomatic observers. (Kang Seung-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- The following is a summary of external news of North Korea this week. ([Yonhap](#))
- Close cooperation between South Korea, Japan and the United States is crucial in dealing with a range of challenges facing the allies in the Indo-Pacific, including the security threat posed by North Korea, a state department spokesperson said Friday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502133535/https://mailchi.mp/7dfc57e7c03a/hrnk-news-items/show-to-respond-to-a-n-k-nuclear-test/nk-likely-to-lift-pandemic-border-restrictions-in-2023>

Sunday , January 8, 2023

S. Korea considering buying Israeli drone detection system: source; NK media silent on leader Kim's birthday

In North Korea:

[NK media silent on leader Kim's birthday](#) (Yonhap, 01/08/2023)

In South Korea:

[Internal battle over the drone infiltration](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/08/2023)

[Ministry refutes DP's claim military's action against N.K drone infiltration was armistice breach](#) (Yonhap, 01/08/2023)

[S. Korea considering buying Israeli drone detection system: source](#) (Yonhap, 01/08/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea's state-controlled media made no mention of leader Kim Jong-un's birthday Sunday. ([Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- After the infiltration of North Korean drones into our air space over Seoul on Dec. 26, the government, military and politicians must concentrate on finding the reasons for our lethargic response and devising effective ways to prevent it. Regrettably, however, the People Power Party (PPP) and the Democratic Party (DP) are stuck in a political mud fight after a PPP lawmaker raised the possibility of a DP lawmaker staying in touch with North Korea. ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's defense ministry on Sunday refuted the main opposition party's claim that the South's action against North Korea's latest drone infiltration was a violation of the armistice agreement that halted the 1950-53 Korean War. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's military is considering the purchase of an Israeli "electric eye" as part of efforts to bolster its capabilities to detect small North Korean drones, a defense source in Seoul said Sunday. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

Monday , January 9, 2023

Defector group says it will use drones for leaflet campaign; New North Korean propaganda posters focus on economy over missiles

In North Korea:

[Is Kim Yo-jong a spare for Kim Jong-un?](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/09/23)

[More in North Korea becoming disillusioned with regime: Tae](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/09/23)

[N. Korea again on virus alert as cases rise in S. Korea, China](#) (Yonhap, 01/09/23)

[New North Korean propaganda posters focus on economy over missiles](#) (NK News, 01/09/23)

In South Korea:

[Three individuals accused of working with North Korean agents](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/09/23)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Defector group says it will use drones for leaflet campaign against N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 01/09/23)

[Tit-for-tat action not restricted by armistice agreement, ministry claims](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/09/23)

[UN Command investigating armistice violations after North Korean drone intrusion](#) (NK News, 01/09/23)

[Yoon threatens to send drones 'deep' into North Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/09/23)

[Yoon's office keeps open communication channel with NK rights activists](#) (Korea Times, 01/09/23)

International:

[Kenneth Rowe, North Korean pilot who defected in Soviet plane, dies at 90](#) (NK News, 01/09/23)

In North Korea:

- Kim Yo-jong a successor to Kim Jong-un? Or a top spare for the Kim dynasty? asked Yoshihiro Makino, a reporter and former Seoul bureau chief of the Asahi Shimbun, one of the four largest newspapers in Japan, in his recently published book titled “Kim Jong-un to Kim Yo-jong.” The Korean edition hit shelves on Dec. 23. (Hwang Dong-hee, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea's elite and younger generations are growing increasingly disillusioned with the Kim Jong-un regime, according to emigre-turned-assemblyman Rep. Tae Yong-ho. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

- North Korea has called for strengthening quarantine measures against the COVID-19 pandemic, citing the fast spread of the virus in such neighboring countries as South Korea and China, according to its state media Monday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea rolled out new propaganda posters over the weekend designed to “arouse all people to implement” the ruling party’s new year economic goals, according to state media, after kicking off a campaign to study the goals at a massive rally for 100,000 Pyongyang residents. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Three South Koreans affiliated with the minor Progressive Party and a farmers' group in Jeju are under investigation for allegedly establishing an underground network that collaborated with North Korean agents for over five years. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- A North Korean defectors' group said Monday it plans to fly unmanned aerial vehicles soon carrying anti-Pyongyang leaflets across the border. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea’s Defense Ministry on Monday said that the military’s response to the cross-border infiltration by North Korean drones did not breach the armistice agreement, stressing that the countermeasure was essential to its right of self-defense enshrined in the UN Charter. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The United Nations Command (UNC) is investigating inter-Korean drone intrusions that occurred last month, after North Korea flew five drones into ROK airspace and South Korea responded by sending its own unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) into the DPRK. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Seoul could send drones deep into North Korea if Pyongyang stages another drone incursion into the South, a high-ranking presidential official told the JoongAng Ilbo on Monday. (Park Tae-in, Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Presidential officials have granted meetings with North Korean human rights activists last year and will continue to keep dialogue channels with them open in a departure from the preceding Moon Jae-in administration, an official said Monday. ([Korea Times](#))

International:

- Kenneth Hill Rowe, a North Korean pilot who defected in his Soviet MiG-15 aircraft across the Demilitarized Zone shortly after the Korean War, passed away last month at his home in Daytona, Florida. (Oliver Jia, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Claire McCrea, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502135031/https://mailchi.mp/3eccc8564c43/hrnk-news-itemsdefector-group-says-it-will-use-drones-for-leaflet-campaign-new-north-korean-propaganda-posters-focus-on-economy-over-missiles>

Tuesday, January 10, 2023

HRNK Mourns the Passing of Ronald (Ronnie) Lawrence Bohmuller

Top News:

[HRNK Mourns the Passing of Ronald \(Ronnie\) Lawrence Bohmuller](#) (HRNK, 01/10/2023)

[North Korea Discloses "New" Nuclear Capabilities: Should we be Worried?](#) (19FortyFive, 01/10/2023)

[*In the New Year, North Korean human rights organizations raise their voices around the world](#) (Radio Free Asia, 01/04/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text below

In North Korea:

[Beyond propaganda: New exhibit spotlights North Korea's 'hidden' oil paintings](#) (NK News, 01/10/2023)

[North Korea builds replica of Pyongyang's Kim Il Sung Square on Chinese border](#) (NK News, 01/10/2023)

[North Korea built secret network of over 50 COVID isolation facilities: Imagery](#) (NK News, 01/10/2023)

[N. Korea says it will never compromise over sovereignty](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/10/2023)

[Only 67 North Korean defectors reach South in 2022, second fewest ever](#) (NK News, 01/10/2023)

[Pyongyang Chronicles: The North Korean roommates who spied on foreign students](#) (NK News, 01/10/2023)

In South Korea:

[The costs and risks of Korea's nuclear armaments](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/10/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Activist says he will send drones into North Korea carrying anti-regime leaflets](#) (NK News, 01/09/2023)

[Ministry requests defectors' restraint for anti-Pyongyang leaflet campaign using drones](#) (Yonhap, 01/10/2023)

International:

[Interview: How North Korean defector Timothy Cho became a believer in democracy](#) (NK News, 01/09/2023)

[Japan to build up defenses from 2023, with China and North Korea in mind](#) (The Japan Times, 01/09/2023)

[North Korea and France have no official ties. That doesn't mean they don't talk.](#) (NK News, 01/09/2023)

Top News:

- Ronald (Ronnie) Lawrence Bohmuller passed away January 4, 2023, at Duke University Medical Center following heart surgery, after an extended illness. All members of our HRNK team are deeply saddened by Ronnie's passing. For several years, he applied his extraordinary knowledge of satellite imagery to investigating North Korea's detention facilities, making terrific contributions to HRNK's efforts to bring truth, freedom, peace, justice, and human rights to the people of North Korea. Arrangements are by Bryan-Lee Funeral Home in Garner. Online condolences may be made to the family at www.bryanlee.funeralhome.com. (HRNK)
- What Is North Korea Planning? As part of a significant speech Kim Jong-un gave on the last day of 2022, he made several key disclosures. Kim stated that his nation would develop a new ICBM and “exponentially” increase its nuclear capability. In the same speech, he also stated that North Korea’s nuclear weapons could now be used for offensive operations. (Bruce E. Bechtol Jr., [19FortyFive](#))
- Anchor: In this New year, we are looking forward to the continued active efforts of North Korean human rights groups. The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), located in Washington, DC, will hold events not only in the United States but also around the world to report on the human rights crisis in North Korea and call for action and improvement. The first event of the year will be held on February 28 at the DACOR Bacon House in Washington, DC. In March, there are plans to hold international conferences in Geneva, Switzerland, Brussels, Belgium, and Seoul, South Korea. On the 3rd, Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, told Radio Free Asia (RFA) that he would work internationally to ensure that human rights, a common value of allies of liberal democracy, are guaranteed in North Korea. Executive Director Scarlatoiu: We will be quite busy. We have been preparing in advance since the end of last year. We have been researching, publishing reports for the past 22 years, but this year we will be even more active at the United Nations, publishing reports and holding international seminars for a human rights-first approach. (Shim Jae-hoon, [Radio Free Asia](#))

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom.

In North Korea:

- A stream pours through a cloud-covered valley, majestic mountains towering above. A worker, arms crossed and forehead wrapped with cloth, poses for a portrait. The tentacles of two squid spill off a dish, alongside the rigid bodies of fish also waiting to be cooked. The

phrase “North Korean art” typically evokes images of colorful socialist propaganda. But a new exhibition in Seoul aims to turn that assumption on its head, showcasing DPRK paintings that reflect the interests and talents of artists more than the dictates of the state. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

- The North Korean border city of Sinuiju now has its own replica of Pyongyang’s Kim Il Sung Square to use for mass rallies and possibly even a military parade, according to NK News analysis of state media and satellite imagery. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has constructed more than 50 likely COVID-19 quarantine facilities throughout the country since the pandemic began, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery, a sign of extensive preparations to isolate patients long before the DPRK announced its first official outbreak last year. (Jacob Bogle, [NK News](#))
- North Korea will never compromise or concede on the fundamental interests and sovereignty of the country despite any challenges, North Korean state media said Tuesday, legitimizing the ruling party’s intransigence and determination to stand against foreign powers. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Just a few dozen North Korean defectors reached South Korea in 2022, the unification ministry announced Tuesday, as severe COVID-19 movement restrictions in the DPRK and China continued to make it difficult for people to escape. The 67 defectors that arrived in the ROK last year marks the second-lowest total on record and is only slightly higher than the 63 defectors that made it to South Korea in 2021, the ministry said in a statement to reporters. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- Foreign students in North Korea have the opportunity to live side-by-side with local Korean students known as “dongsuk-saeng” (동숙생), literally “students living in the same accommodation.” This enables a kind of cultural exchange, which in many cases can be highly enriching for both sides. And it’s quite the privilege: North Korea’s system is set up to rigorously prevent or at least closely manage interactions between locals and foreigners. (Alex Sigley, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- With the rapidly advancing North Korean nuclear threat and persistent questions about the reliability of the U.S. nuclear umbrella, it is understandable that South Koreans are debating whether to acquire their own nuclear weapons. (Robert Einhorn, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- High-profile defector Park Sang-hak plans to fly drones into North Korea to disseminate anti-regime leaflets and USB sticks in the near future, the activist told NK News on Tuesday, calling the technology a game-changer for leafleting. Park’s announcement comes weeks after five DPRK drones breached ROK airspace, with one even entering the no-fly zone near the presidential office in Seoul. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- South Korea’s unification ministry has asked a North Korean defectors’ group to refrain from carrying out a campaign to send anti-Pyongyang leaflets using drones, according to a ministry official Tuesday. The request came after Park Sang-hak, head of the Fighters for Free North Korea (FFNK), said Monday that the group plans to fly unmanned aerial vehicles soon carrying leaflets critical of the North across the inter-Korean border. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- As a North Korean defector, Timothy Cho followed a path into British politics that was far from typical. His parents fled the DPRK when he was a boy and left him an orphan whom the state branded a member of the hostile class. Repeated attempts to escape himself resulted in multiple stints in prison, where he says he witnessed shocking violations of human rights. (Harry Clynch, [NK News](#))
 - Japan will start strengthening its defense posture from this year based on three key documents that the government revised last December to better adapt to the deteriorating security environment in the surrounding region. (Reito Kaneko, [The Japan Times](#))
 - France's official stance toward North Korea is one of non-recognition, joining Estonia as the only European Union member states that don't have diplomatic relations with Pyongyang. The story of the two countries is far more complicated, however, with cultural and economic exchanges dating back to the establishment of a North Korean trade mission in Paris in 1968. (Nicolas Levi, [NK News](#))
-

[Translation] In the New Year, North Korean human rights organizations raise their voices around the world.

Anchor: In this New year, we are looking forward to the continued active efforts of North Korean human rights groups. Human rights organizations are anticipating events around the world, including Washington DC, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, and Belgium. Reporter Shim Jae-hoon reports.

With the addition of the economic and health crises to the North Korean regime's internal control and border blockade, which has been going on for more than 3 years now since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the human rights situation of the North Korean citizens is getting worse.

In 2023, in the midst of growing concerns from the United Nations and many governments around the world, international North Korean human rights groups are raising their voices even louder and striving to improve human rights in North Korea.

The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), located in Washington, DC, will hold events not only in the United States but also around the world to report on the human rights crisis in North Korea and call for action and improvement.

The first event of the year will be held on February 28 at the DACOR Bacon House in Washington, DC.

In March, there are plans to hold international conferences in Geneva, Switzerland, Brussels, Belgium, and Seoul, South Korea.

On the 3rd, Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, told Radio Free Asia (RFA) that he would work internationally to ensure that human rights, a common value of allies of liberal democracy, are guaranteed in North Korea.

Executive Director Scarlatoiu: We will be quite busy. We have been preparing in advance since the end of last year. We have been researching, publishing reports for the past 22 years, but this year we will be even more active at the United Nations, publishing reports and holding international seminars for a human rights-first approach.

The North Korea Freedom Coalition, headquartered in Virginia near Washington DC, also announced that it would strengthen cooperation with North Korean human rights activists around the world in the new year.

On the 4th, North Korea Freedom Coalition advisor Seo Ok-ja announced on Radio Free Asia (RFA) that they would meet with members from around the world via an online meeting at 7:00 pm on the last Thursday of every month. In addition, they will hold a demonstration in September against the forced repatriation of North Korean defectors in China.

Advisor Seo Ok-ja: When meeting in person, only people in the Washington DC region are able to gather. However, when hosting events online, we have the advantage of being able to gather North Korean human rights activists from the UK, Australia, South Korea, and Japan. North Korea Freedom Week will be held in September. I went to the Chinese embassy in Washington DC, called out all the North Korean defectors by name, opposed forced repatriation, and delivered a letter to the Chinese ambassador.

Missionary Pastor Star Lee Esther has been showing photos of North Korean political prison camps to Americans with members in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC every Tuesday from March 2021. On the 4th, she told Free Asia Broadcasting (RFA) that the meetings she holds, which inform Americans of the reality of human rights abuses in North Korea, had expanded to Atlanta, Chicago, and New York, and it would further be expanded to Los Angeles and Texas in the new year.

Pastor Star Lee: On the placard that we display, there are about 20 pictures of North Korean political prison camps as well as explanations in English. All Americans passing by stop to take pictures and videos of the placards. It informs Americans who do not know about the situation in North Korea and of the people who are suffering serious human rights violations. We are trying to spread this North Korean human rights movement to all 50 states in the United States.

In addition, there are also groups that engage in human rights activities undercover in North Korea and undisclosed to the media.

(We can't talk about the focus of our work for North Korea, for the safety of all concerned.)

Ben Cohen, a press manager at Open Doors, an international Christian missionary organization, told Radio Free Asia (RFA) on the 4th that he would avoid commenting on North Korea for the safety of North Korean organization members. (We can't talk about the focus of our work for North Korea, for the safety of all concerned.)

There is also a human rights group that is working to reveal the reality of the oppressed citizens based on the satellite observations of the interior of North Korea.

Human Rights Watch, which found in its observation of the North Korea-China border last year that "people's movement and trade are being restricted," said it plans to release the results of satellite imagery analysis of other regions early this year.

Reporter Shim Jae-hoon, editor Yang Sung-won, web team Kim Sang-il

Translated by Haeun Moon, HRNK Intern

Prepared by Kia Fatahi, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502135337/https://mailchi.mp/d1c74ce871bd/hrnk-news-items-hrnk-mourns-the-passing-of-ronald-ronnie-lawrence-bohmuller>

Wednesday, January 11, 2023

North Korea bans cellphones from public propaganda lectures; South Korea, U.S. plan February nuclear tabletop drills to deter North

In North Korea:

[North Korea bans cellphones from public propaganda lectures](#) (Radio Free Asia, 01/10/2023)

In South Korea:

[Ex-security chief hid North Korea killing South Korean to shield Moon: prosecutors](#) (Korea Herald, 01/11/2023)

[Is 'reunification of Korea' still a goal, 70 years on?](#) (Korea Herald, 01/11/2023)

[Korean leader cites North's serious threat](#) (AP, 01/11/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Possible drone spotted near DMZ, weeks after North Korean incursion](#) (NK News, 01/11/2023)

International:

[Judge raises legal avenue to stop extradition of man who raided DPRK Embassy](#) (NK News, 01/11/2023)

[S. Korea, US to conduct joint drills to respond to N. Korean nuclear attack](#) (Korea Times, 01/11/2023)

[South Korea, U.S. plan February nuclear tabletop drills to deter North](#) (Reuters, 01/11/2023)

[US keeping 'close eye' on North Korean chemical and biological weapons](#) (NK News, 01/11/2023)

U.S. monitoring N. Korea, others for potential chemical weapons proliferation: Pentagon (Yonhap, 01/11/2023)

US nuke delivery systems to play big role in joint drills with ROK: Yoon (NK News, 01/11/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Koreans are no longer allowed to bring their cellphones into propaganda lectures, which are a regular, mandatory part of life there, sources in the country say. (Hyemin Son, trans. Claire Shinyoung Oh Lee, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In South Korea:

- Suh Hoon, an ex-national security and intelligence chief, ordered the cover-up of the killing of a South Korean official by North Korean troops at sea in 2020 over concerns the incident would prompt criticism of then-President Moon Jae-in, according to an indictment Seoul prosecutors submitted to the National Assembly. (Kim Arin, [Korea Herald](#))
- Data suggests once-ironclad resolve to unite Korean Peninsula may be waning among young South Koreans. (Yoon Min-sik, [Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea's spike in missile tests, growing nuclear ambitions and other provocative acts pose a "serious threat" that could lead to a dangerous miscalculation and spark a wider conflict, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said Tuesday. (Adam Schreck, Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- A possible unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) circled South Korean skies near the inter-Korean border on Tuesday afternoon, footage recorded by NK News shows, raising questions about the frequency and origin of flights in the sensitive area weeks after a high-profile North Korean drone intrusion. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))

International:

- A federal judge has raised the possibility that the former U.S. Marine who stormed the North Korean Embassy in Madrid in 2019 may not be eligible for extradition after all, owing to ongoing hostilities between Washington and Pyongyang. (Ethan Jewell, [NK News](#))
- South Korea and the U.S. will conduct a joint military drill next month to deal with a possible North Korean nuclear attack. The exercise is part of the two countries' efforts to carry out extended deterrence. (Nam Hyun-woo, [Korea Times](#))
- South Korea and the United States will hold tabletop exercises next month as the allies move to better counter the North's nuclear threats, South Korea's defence minister said on Wednesday. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- The U.S. is closely monitoring North Korea and others to counter the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons, the Department of Defense (DoD) said Tuesday, ahead of the release of Washington's inaugural Biodefense Posture Review. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The United States continues to keep a close watch on North Korea and others for possible use or proliferation of illegal chemical and biological weapons, a Pentagon spokesperson said Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

- South Korea envisions U.S. nuclear weapons delivery systems as playing a large part in combined exercises going forward, President Yoon Suk-yeol said Wednesday, as Seoul continues to seek enhancements to defend against North Korean military threats. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Myriam Aribaud, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502140310/https://mailchi.mp/596e337abec5/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-bans-cell-phones-from-public-propaganda-lectures-south-korea-us-plan-february-nuclear-tabletop-drills-to-deter-north>

Thursday, January 12, 2023

ROK investigating progressive groups for establishing pro-North Korea spy cells; US, Japan unveil plans to strengthen the alliance

In North Korea:

[Experts: North Korea's Purge of Top Official Shows Loyalty May Be Insufficient](#) (VOA, 01/11/2023)

[Rehearsal for Pyongyang military parade spotted](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/12/2023)

In South Korea:

[ROK investigating progressive groups for establishing pro-North Korea spy cells](#) (NK News, 01/12/2023)

[Unification minister to meet chiefs of int'l organs on sidelines of Davos forum](#) (Yonhap, 01/12/2023)

[Unification minister to seek support for Yoon's 'audacious' initiative at Davos forum](#) (Yonhap, 01/11/2023)

[Yoon's comment on nuclear armament indication of will to defend nation: official](#) (Yonhap, 01/12/23)

[Yoon says Seoul could rapidly acquire nukes if North Korean threats increase](#) (NK News, 01/12/2023)

International:

[Libyan hospital welcomes dozens of North Korean medical workers](#) (NK News, 01/12/2023)

[US backs Japan's push for counterstrike capabilities to counter North Korea](#) (NK News, 01/12/2023)

[U.S., Japan, S. Korea enhancing trilateral cooperation against N. Korean provocations: Blinken](#) (Yonhap, 01/12/2023)

[US, Japan unveil plans to strengthen the alliance](#) (AP News, 01/12/2023)

[‘Woman King’ Statue Has Role in Sanctions Controversy](#) (VOA, 01/12/2023)

International:

- UN sanctions forbid DPRK laborers from working abroad, but country's doctors have been active in Africa during pandemic. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- Foreign and defense officials reaffirm extended deterrence and cooperation with South Korea in annual security meeting. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- "In the face of the DPRK's unlawful and reckless missile launches, including the launch of a long range ballistic missile over Japan in October, we are deepening our trilateral cooperation with the Republic of Korea to deter and, if necessary, defend against aggression," Blinken said in a joint press conference with Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi and Japanese Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States and Japan unveiled plans Wednesday to strengthen their alliance to help counter threats from North Korea and China, which they called the greatest security challenge in the region. (Lolita C. Baldor, Mathew Lee, [AP News](#))
- A statue in Benin of one of the female warriors of Dahomey, which appeared in the Hollywood film 'The Woman King,' was likely built by a sanctioned North Korean company, according to evidence discovered by VOA's Korean Service. In an exclusive interview with VOA, the Beninois government denies the statue was constructed by North Korea. Henry Wilkins reports from Cotonou, Benin. (Henry Wilkins, [VOA](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502140514/https://mailchi.mp/5e21aea0dbfb/hrnk-news-itemsrok-investigating-progressive-groups-for-establishing-pro-north-korea-spy-cellsus-japan-unveil-plans-to-strengthen-the-alliance>

Friday , January 13, 2023

US quickly downplays Yoon's 'nuclear prospect'; N. Korea stresses Cabinet's role as economic command tower

In North Korea:

[N. Korea stresses Cabinet's role as economic command tower](#) (Yonhap, 01/13/2023)

[N.K. science commission's 2023 research to focus on agriculture, key industries](#) (Yonhap, 01/13/2023)

[North Korea has 80-90 nuclear weapons: Seoul researchers](#) (UPI, 01/13/2023)

[North Korea's child mortality and stillbirth rates improve in 2021: UN report](#) (NK News, 01/13/2023)

In South Korea:

[Ex-intel chief deleted records to conceal North Korean murder of South Korean: prosecutors](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/13/2023)

[Yoon Suk-yeol's remarks on South Korea acquiring nuclear arms](#) (NK Pro, 01/13/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[NK human rights groups urge president to allow loudspeaker broadcasts, leaflets](#) (The Korea Times, 01/13/2023)

International:

[N. Korea likely to continue provocations despite completely failed economy: Amb. Cho](#) (Yonhap, 01/13/2023)

[UN chief says onus on North Korea to return to denuclearization talks](#) (NK News, 01/13/2023)

[US quickly downplays Yoon's 'nuclear prospect'](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/13/2023)

[U.S. remains fully committed to defense of S. Korea with extended deterrence: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 01/13/2023)

[US rules out South Korean nukes as it reaffirms extended deterrence](#) (NK News, 01/13/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea on Friday stressed the Cabinet's role as a control tower for economic policy as it pushes to implement economic goals laid out for this year, according to its state media Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's commission in charge of science and technology has set the development of agriculture and the country's key industries as its main research goals for the new year, Pyongyang's main newspaper said Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea currently has 80 to 90 nuclear weapons and is targeting a stockpile of 300, according to a new analysis by a South Korean state-run think tank. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- North Korea's child mortality rate improved in 2021 but remained five times higher than neighboring South Korea, according to a new U.N. report. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- The former head of the National Intelligence Service of Korea, Park Jie-won, ordered the deletion of all intelligence reports on North Korean troops killing South Korean government official Lee Dae-jun on Sept. 22, 2020 at sea, according to an indictment submitted to the National Assembly on Thursday. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- President Yoon Suk-yeol stated this week that South Korea could acquire nuclear weapons if North Korean threats increase, the first time an ROK leader has broached the possibility since the U.S. withdrew its nuclear weapons from the peninsula more than 30 years ago. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK Pro](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korean human rights groups urged President Yoon Suk Yeol to revise the current government guideline in order to resume loudspeaker broadcasts and let activists send anti-regime leaflets across the inter-Korean border. (Lee Yeon-woo, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- North Korea is widely expected to continue its provocations this year, presenting a very serious challenge for the entire international community, South Korea's ambassador to the United States Cho Tae-yong said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the responsibility for resuming denuclearization talks lies squarely with North Korea, condemning Pyongyang's nuclear development. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The US said Thursday it is still committed to a completely denuclearized Korean Peninsula and that South Korea has made it clear it is not seeking nuclear weapons, a day after President Yoon Suk Yeol openly backed a nuclear buildup if North Korea poses a bigger threat than now. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The United States remains ready and capable to deter and counter any potential aggression against South Korea under its extended deterrence, a Pentagon spokesperson said Thursday, in apparent opposition to possible nuclear armament of its Asian ally. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The Pentagon reiterated its commitment to extended deterrence to counter North Korean "aggression" on Thursday, appearing to reject ROK President Yoon Suk-yeol's suggestion that South Korea could acquire its own nuclear weapons. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Myriam Aribaud, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502141142/https://mailchi.mp/30bbd9acd868/hrnk-news-items-us-quickly-downplays-yoons-nuclear-prospect-n-korea-stresses-cabinets-role-as-economic-command-tower>

Saturday, January 14, 2023

Biden, Kishida call for denuclearization of N. Korea; N. Korea's silent leadership reshuffle supports push to solve 'food problem'

In North Korea:

[N. Korea slams U.N. secretary-general's comment on its 'unlawful' nuclear weapons program](#) (Yonhap, 01/14/2023)

[North Korea's silent leadership reshuffle supports push to solve 'food problem'](#) (NK Pro, 01/13/2023)

In South Korea:

[As Seoul weighs nukes to counter North Korea, it pays to consider the costs](#) (NK Pro, 01/13/2023)

[FULL TEXT: Yoon Suk-yeol's remarks on South Korea acquiring nuclear arms](#) (NK Pro, 01/13/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[North Koreans struggle to escape, thanks to covid and Kim](#) (The Washington Post, 01/13/2023)

International:

[Biden, Kishida call for denuclearization of N. Korea, reaffirm cooperation with S. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 01/14/2023)

[S. Korea's advanced Army unit, U.S. Stryker team hold joint drills near border with N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 01/14/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea on Tuesday denounced United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres who has said Pyongyang's "unlawful" nuclear weapons program is a "clear and present" danger to the world. The comments came after Guterres called on North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons program and return to talks during a Security Council meeting on Thursday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's recent party plenum made an open show of reshuffling senior military officials, as Kim Jong Un sacked his second-most powerful military leader. But while the images of Pak Jong Chon hanging his head in shame may have attracted the most attention, a quieter series of personnel changes reinforced major economic goals set forth at the party meeting — in particular the regime's focus on agriculture as it seeks solutions to the "food problem." (Martin Weiser, [NK Pro](#))

In South Korea:

- As North Korean threats continue to grow, the South Korean debate on nuclear options is louder than ever — a reality driven home on Wednesday when President Yoon Suk-yeol raised the possibility of Seoul acquiring its own nuclear weapons. The allies should take this as an opportunity; the worst scenario for the ROK-U.S. alliance would be neglect from South Koreans regarding North Korean threats. Neglect has always been a trigger for hostility rather than for dialogue. (Cho Dongyoun, [NK Pro](#))
- President Yoon Suk-yeol stated this week that South Korea could acquire nuclear weapons if North Korean threats increase, the first time an ROK leader has broached the possibility since the U.S. withdrew its nuclear weapons from the peninsula more than 30 years ago. While falling short of an official policy declaration, the president's suggestion has kicked off debate about his administration's nuclear posture and raised concerns that Seoul's willingness to entertain an indigenous nuclear program risks compromising its alliance with Washington and the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK Pro](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Just 67 North Koreans arrived in South Korea last year, the Unification Ministry announced this week, marking the second year of record-low refugee arrivals as North Korea remains shuttered and more reclusive than ever in the coronavirus pandemic. Most of those who arrived in the South in 2022 were not escapees fleeing North Korea directly but instead were people who were in China or Russia, according to groups who support defectors upon entering the country. (Michelle Ye Hee Lee, Min Joo Kim, [The Washington Post](#))

International:

- U.S. President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida reaffirmed their commitment to completely denuclearize the Korean Peninsula in their bilateral summit held here in Washington on Friday. The leaders also reaffirmed their commitment to further enhancing trilateral cooperation among their countries and South Korea to that end, according to their joint statement, released by the White House. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's advanced Army unit armed with cutting-edge weapons has staged a joint field exercise with a Stryker Brigade Combat Team from the U.S. 2nd Infantry Division near the inter-Korean border. Around 800 troops from South Korea's TIGER Demonstration Brigade and the Stryker brigade, deployed here in November last year as rotational force, have been taking part in the battalion-level drills aimed at bolstering their combined operational capabilities against North Korea's military threats. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502141525/https://mailchi.mp/baf27e0742a5/hrnk-news-itemsbiden-kishida-call-for-denuclearization-of-n-korea-n-koreas-silent-leadership-reshuffle-supports-push-to-solve-food-problem>

Sunday, January 15, 2023

OPINION | GUEST WRITER: Under siege; North Korea to hold key parliamentary meeting this week; North Korean nuclear test inevitable

Top News:

[OPINION | GUEST WRITER: Under siege](#) (NWA, 1/14/2023)

In North Korea:

[\[Column\] How not to keep fighting yesterday's war](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 1/15/2023)

[Eyes on NK leader at upcoming parliamentary meeting](#) (The Korea Herald, 1/15/2023)

[N. Korea to hold key parliamentary meeting this week](#) (Yonhap, 1/15/2023)

In South Korea:

[Yoon Suk Yeol takes economic diplomacy to Davos Forum](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 1/15/2023)

International:

[Japanese prime minister vows to resolve any issues with Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 1/15/2023)

[N. Korean nuclear test inevitable, China unwilling and unable to help: Victor Cha](#) (Yonhap, 1/15/2023)

[S. Korea seeks formal consultations with U.S., EU on NK human rights](#) (Yonhap, 1/15/2023)

[Why Asia's arms race risks spinning out of control](#) (CNN, 1/15/2023)

Top News:

- While people across the globe are understandably focused on the tragedy unfolding in Ukraine, what many may not realize is that people in other parts of the world are also under siege. The situations vary greatly, with some regions facing crimes against humanity and/or war crimes, while others are facing genocide or circumstances seemingly slouching toward genocide. North Korea is virtually a prison and, in many ways, a human abattoir. A recent report by the International Bar Association's War Crimes Committee and the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea cited "evidence of arbitrary executions, infanticide, and forced abortions being commonplace in detention centers." (Samuel Totten, [NWA](#))

In North Korea:

- The buzzwords at the Ministry of National Defense last month were "Defense Innovation 4.0" aimed at transforming our military into an AI-based, cutting-edge armed force. The ministry completed the "Basic Plans for Defense Innovation 4.0" — a roadmap to achieve the ambitious goal — in December by holding a number of meetings and seminars with military experts and civilian brains on science and technology. The army, navy, air force and marines are all busy drawing up their basic strategies and plans to keep pace with the defense ministry's outline for defense reform. The presidential office will set up a national defense innovation committee chaired by President Yoon Suk Yeol to help spur the bold makeover of the military. (Min-seok Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Eyes are riveted on whether North Korean leader Kim Jong-un will convey another key message on the country's nuclear buildup and hard-line foreign policy at a parliamentary meeting scheduled to be held this week. But experts have said the focus of the meeting is to discuss key domestic issues, including annual economic plans and the state budget, as well as preparations for nationwide events marking key anniversaries this year. (Da-gyum Ji, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea is slated to convene a key parliamentary meeting this week amid keen attention to whether its leader Kim Jong-un will issue another message related to the country's development of nuclear and other major weapons. The Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) will hold the meeting Tuesday to discuss policy tasks, state budget issues and organizational matters for 2023, the North's state media said last month. ([Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- President Yoon Suk Yeol will make his debut at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in the Swiss resort town of Davos this week, joining over 50 other foreign leaders and some 600 CEOs to discuss challenges facing the world. Since Saturday, Yoon has been on a two-country, eight-day trip: first, a state visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and then to Switzerland to attend the so-called Davos Forum. The trip is heavy on economic diplomacy to help Korean businesses expand overseas. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- Prime Minister of Japan Fumio Kishida said he will resolve any issues with Korea during his visit to Washington D.C. on Friday. “You may be worried about the relationship between Japan and the Republic of Korea, but I intend to resolve the bilateral issues of concern as quickly as possible, to restore sound Japan-ROK relations and then to further promote them,” he said while addressing an audience at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, referring to Korea by the acronym of its full name, the Republic of Korea. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- A North Korean nuclear test might be inevitable while China, despite its perceived influence in Pyongyang, may be unwilling to help prevent such a test from taking place, former U.S. nuclear negotiator Victor Cha said. Cha also insisted that Beijing may not have the means to prevent North Korea from conducting a nuclear test even if it wanted to in a recent interview with Yonhap News Agency. (Duk-kun Byun, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea is pushing for the resumption of bilateral consultations with the United States on the North Korean human rights problem following a six-year hiatus, multiple diplomatic sources said Sunday. The allies had two rounds of working-level discussions in 2016 on ways to promote human rights in the reclusive nation. Since the 2017 launch of the Moon Jae-in administration, which proactively sought dialogue with Pyongyang, Seoul and Washington had no such formal diplomatic discussions. ([Yonhap](#))
- It’s an arms race bigger than anything Asia has ever seen – three major nuclear powers and one fast-developing one, the world’s three biggest economies and decades-old alliances all vying for an edge in some of the world’s most contested land and sea areas. In one corner are the United States and its allies Japan and South Korea. In another corner, China and its partner Russia. And in a third, North Korea. (Brad Lendon, [CNN](#))

Prepared by Juntae Rocker, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502141712/https://mailchi.mp/f6e987dbf49f/hrnk-news-itemsopinion-guest-writer-under-siege-north-korea-to-hold-key-parliamentary-meeting-this-week-north-korean-nuclear-test-inevitable>

Monday, January 16, 2023

Why South Korea’s President is Talking About Nuclear Weapons; US invests millions to expose regime to North Koreans

In North Korea:

[Despite its flaws, North Korea makes progress in women's rights: expert](#) (The Korea Times, 01/16/2023)

[North Korean museum targets drug use, K-pop in campaign against social ills](#) (NK News, 01/16/2023)

In South Korea:

[Why South Korea's President is Talking About Nuclear Weapons](#) (VOA, 01/16/2023)

International:

[By his own measures, Biden's North Korea policy has been a failure](#) (NK News, 01/16/2023)

[Biden, Kishida discuss joint efforts to combat North Korean 'provocations'](#) (NK News, 01/16/2023)

[Eye of the TIGER: ROK drone unit holds drills with US on North Korean border](#) (NK News, 01/16/2023)

[US invests millions to expose regime to North Koreans](#) (DW, 01/16/2023)

[Yoon, Biden not quite in step on nukes for South Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/16/2023)

In North Korea:

- Despite its awful track record of human rights violations, North Korea is making progress in one area: women's rights. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- A North Korean museum is warning the public against drug use and foreign media consumption, images published in state media reveal, offering rare insights into the government's approach to addressing such internal social issues after passing laws on the problems in recent years. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol is accelerating a once unthinkable debate over whether his country should acquire nuclear weapons – a move that would transform the U.S.-South Korea alliance and upend regional security dynamics. (William Gallo, [VOA](#))

International:

- It doesn't take an expert to recognize that the Biden administration's policy on North Korea has been a failure. Tensions on the Korean Peninsula are at their highest level since 2017. Last year, North Korea tested an unprecedented number of missiles, and the U.S., South Korea and Japan ramped up joint military exercises. (Colleen Moore, [NK News](#))
- U.S. President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida pledged to strengthen cooperation to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific despite "growing challenges" like "provocations by North Korea," meeting for a bilateral summit in Washington. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- A new South Korean army unit trained in drone warfare and other emerging technologies held its first joint drills with a U.S. brigade combat team near the inter-Korean border, not

far from where at least five North Korean drones infiltrated ROK airspace late last month. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

- The United States will invest \$50 million (€46 million) over the next five years to surreptitiously bring information about the outside world into North Korea — hoping to improve the image of the US and South Korea for North Koreans. (Julian Ryall, [DW](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol's comments about nuclear weapons as a potential option for Seoul have run into headwinds from Washington, which insists its goal is the total denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502141944/https://mailchi.mp/5415e6ffd071/hrnk-news-itemswhy-south-koreas-president-is-talking-about-nuclear-weaponsus-invests-millions-to-expose-regime-to-north-koreans>

Tuesday, January 17, 2023

Experts on North Korean Human Rights Welcome South Korea's Review of Using Loudspeaker Broadcasts and Sending Leaflets to North Korea

Top News:

[*Experts on North Korean Human Rights Welcome South Korea's Review of Using Loudspeaker Broadcasts and Sending Leaflets to North Korea](#) (Radio Free Asia, 01/09/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom .

In North Korea:

[In North Korea, an influencer might also be a propagandist](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/17/2023)

[N. Korea to hold key parliamentary meeting this week](#) (Yonhap News Agency, 01/17/2023)

[Pyongyang's rubber stamp parliament convenes](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/17/2023)

[Russian Embassy in North Korea denies report it will close due to COVID controls](#) (NK News, 01/17/2023)

In South Korea:

[ROK police arrest ex-underwear boss for alleged business deal with North Korea](#) (NK News, 01/17/2023)

['Swallow thumb drives if you get caught': Suspected NK spies reportedly under probe](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/17/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Everything that will happen if Seoul suspends 2018 inter-Korean military deal](#) (NK Pro, 01/17/2023)

International:

[Leaders of S. Korea, UAE adopt joint declaration to deepen partnership](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/17/2023)

[US defense chief to visit Seoul ahead of bilateral exercise against NK nuclear attacks](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/17/2023)

Top News:

- The South Korean government under President Yoon Suk-yeol has adopted the issue of improving North Korean human rights as a national agenda and has been consistently emphasizing this issue by adopting new policy positions. Greg Scarlatou, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), also told RFA on January 9th that “Seoul’s North Korea policy has been changing 180 degrees since the inauguration of the Yoon administration” and added that “this is the right thing to do.” (Jamin Anderson, [Radio Free Asia](#))

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text below

In North Korea:

- Analysts say North Korea is training YouTubers as a strategy to increase government propaganda. Yu Mi mentions that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un is making an effort to improve the lives of Pyongyang residents. (Chung Yeong-Gyo, Sohn Dong-Joo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea is scheduled to convene a key parliamentary meeting this week amid keen attention over whether its leader Kim Jong-un will attend it to issue another message of the country's development of nuclear and other major weapons. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap News Agency](#))
- North Korea's rubber-stamp parliament met on Tuesday amid weeks of silence on the direction of its external relations and military policy. The Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) meets once or twice a year in Pyongyang to approve budgets, amendments to current laws and personnel appointments. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The Russian Embassy in Pyongyang told NK News on Tuesday that it is “impossible” to suspend activities in North Korea, denying a recent report that it could soon shut its doors. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korean authorities arrested the former CEO of an underwear company and business conglomerate on Tuesday on allegations that he conducted illegal business dealings with North Korea, after the man spent months overseas on the run. (Ifang Bremer, Yeji Chung, [NK News](#))
- South Korean authorities are investigating suspected operatives working for North Korea on Jeju Island and in Changwon, South Gyeongsang Province, who told each other to “swallow

thumb drives” if they get caught, a vernacular newspaper reported Monday. (Kim So-hyun, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- In response to North Korea’s drone intrusion late last year, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol began 2023 by ordering officials to review the possibility of suspending a landmark inter-Korean military agreement signed in Sept. 2018. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK Pro](#))

International:

- President Yoon Suk Yeol and Emirati leader Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan adopted a joint declaration to deepen the special strategic partnership between the two countries on Monday. It stated the Middle East country’s promise to invest \$30 billion to Asia’s fourth-largest economy, the presidential office said. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The South Korean and US defense chiefs will meet in Seoul before the end of next month to discuss ways to reinforce the alliance’s deterrence and readiness against escalating North Korean threats and enhance trilateral security cooperation with the US and Japan. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

[Translation] Experts on North Korean Human Rights Welcome South Korea’s Review of Using Loudspeaker Broadcasts and Sending Leaflets to North Korea

Anchor: The South Korean government under President Yoon Suk-yeol has adopted the issue of improving North Korean human rights as a national agenda and has been consistently emphasizing this issue by changing its policies. U.S. human rights experts are welcoming such changes and developments. This is Jamin Anderson reporting.

Last July, the Yoon government appointed a new envoy on North Korean human rights after nearly five years of vacancy with support for many activities. It is also currently pushing to establish a North Korean Human Rights Foundation for improving human rights in and humanitarian assistance to North Korea, placing constant emphasis on the issue of North Korean human rights.

According to *Yonhap News*, an official from South Korea’s presidential office said on January 9th that they “held meetings last year with several affiliates from civic groups such as the Fighters for a Free North Korea (FFNK) upon their request” and that “they have not met as of this year but they are still keeping options open.”

On January 5th, the Ministry of Unification also announced that they are looking into the resumption of loudspeaker broadcasts and leaflets to North Korea in case of the suspension of the September 19 military agreement, as President Yoon recently instructed to consider suspending the military agreement if North Korea commits another territorial invasion.

In a phone call with Radio Free Asia (RFA), Lee Hyun-seung, a research fellow at the Global Peace Foundation (GPF) who fled North Korea in 2014 and currently resides in the United States, expressed

his approval concerning the South Korean government's recent moves toward permitting the distribution of leaflets to North Korea.

He added that there is no point in keeping the anti-leafleting law because it is an amendment to the Development of Inter-Korean Relations Act, which North Korea has consistently violated.

Lee Hyun-seung: "Never for once did North Korea keep an agreement with South Korea upon agreeing to it nor consider it as something inviolable which must be kept. This is because the North believes it can violate the Inter-Korean Relations Act at any time and takes it for granted that it does not abide by it..."

Lee called upon the South Korean government to offer economic and technological support, so that the activities of North Korean human rights organizations and North Korean refugees can yield tangible benefits for the North Korean people.

Lee went on to say that with its advanced technologies, South Korea should freely share more diverse information with the North Korean people.

Mentioning North Korea's drone provocation last year, Lee commented that South Korea should also fly drones in response, targeting information penetration, which the North fears the most.

Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), also told RFA on January 9th that "Seoul's North Korea policy has been changing 180 degrees since the inauguration of the Yoon administration" and added that "this is the right thing to do."

He appreciated that many North Korean escapee-run organizations have been communicating not only with the presidential office, but also with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Unification. He also commented that North Korean refugees are encouraged by the current government's active work regarding North Korean human rights.

Moreover, he welcomed the possibility of legally resuming loudspeaker broadcasts and the distribution of leaflets into North Korea.

Greg Scarlatoiu: "It makes perfect sense to restore means of transmitting information to the North. This aligns with the Yoon government's proposals to improve human rights in North Korea."

In step with Seoul's policies, Scarlatoiu added that HRNK will continue highlighting the importance of improving North Korean human rights by hosting seminars aimed at the international community, including the United Nations, the European Union, and other relevant decision-makers.

Suzanne Scholte, head of the North Korea Freedom Coalition, also told the RFA that President Yoon is well aware of the fact that North Korean refugees understand North Korea and Kim Jong-un more than anyone else. She also pointed out that it is very important and prudent for the South Korean government to interact and communicate with the North Korean escapees.

(Journalist Jamin Anderson, Editor Yang Seongwon, Web Team)

Translated by Yesun Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Venesia Delancy, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502142155/https://mailchi.mp/adb437551cee/hrnk-news-items-experts-on-north-korean-human-rights-welcome-south-koreas-review-of-using-loudspeaker-broadcasts-and-sending-leaflets-to-north-korea>

Wednesday , January 18, 2023

Korean Subtitles Available for Recording of Oct. '22 UN Side Event; North Korean hackers try offloading crypto and partly succeed

Top News:

[Korean Subtitles Available for Recording of Oct. '22 UN Side Event](#) (HRNK, 01/17/2023)

In North Korea:

[Infighting in North Korean sympathizer group leads Dutch branch to split](#) (NK News, 01/18/2023)

[N. Korea's state media outlets keep mum on key parliamentary meeting](#) (Yonhap, 01/18/2023)

[New book highlights 'ambitious' sister behind North Korea's leader](#) (The Korea Times, 01/18/2023)

[North Korea suspected of plagiarizing South Korean girl group's song](#) (The Korea Times, 01/18/2023)

[North Korean hackers try offloading crypto and partly succeed](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/18/2023)

[Stable genius? Kim Jong Un's secret military horse program revealed](#) (NK Pro, 01/18/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea spy agency, police raid major labor group over alleged espionage](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/18/2023)

International:

[Pfizer offers to sell COVID vaccines and medicines to North Korea at low cost](#) (NK News, 01/18/2023)

[Unification minister meets UNICEF, WFP chiefs over N. Korea's humanitarian situations](#) (Yonhap, 01/18/2023)

Top News:

- Korean-language subtitles have been added to the recording of the side event that HRNK co-hosted on the margins of the UN GA 3rd Committee session last October. To view the subtitles, please click on 'Settings' at the bottom right of the screen and select 'Korean' from the Subtitles menu. ([HRNK](#))

In North Korea:

- Netherlands chief leads one-man rebellion from Korean Friendship Organization, which promotes DPRK internationally. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's state media outlets on Wednesday remained silent about whether it convened a key parliamentary meeting earlier this week, raising the possibility that the gathering could run for at least two days. ([Yonhap](#))
- Who will succeed North Korean leader Kim Jong-un if something suddenly happened to him? This has become one of the most frequently asked questions about the reclusive state since his health issues came to light three years ago. The book, authored by Yoshihiro Makino, former Seoul bureau chief of the Asahi Shimbun, a Japanese newspaper, provides no clear-cut answer to that question. However, it does provide some useful insights in that, given the opportunity, Kim Yo-jong is more than willing to take the mantle. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- Kang Dong-wan, a political science professor at Dong-A University, posted a video on his YouTube channel, Jan. 9, showing North Korean singer Jeong Hong-ran singing an arranged version of "Envy Us" (direct translation) during a New Year's Eve celebration event. (Kim Rahn, [The Korea Times](#))
- According to a blockchain sleuth who goes by the Twitter handle ZachXBT on Monday, the hacker organization — known to intelligence officials and cybersecurity experts as the Lazarus Group — moved approximately 41,000 ETH (\$63.5 million) from Jan. 13 to 14 onto cryptocurrency exchanges Binance, OKX and Huobi. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Throughout last year, North Korea launched a record number of missiles and openly took steps toward its goal of deploying tactical nuclear weapons. But behind the scenes, the DPRK military also invested significant resources in an instrument of war that fell to the wayside in the early 20th century — horses. (Colin Zwirko, [NK Pro](#))

In South Korea:

- The South Korean spy agency and police raided the headquarters of a major umbrella labor union in central Seoul on Wednesday morning, on suspicion that some members had violated anti-communist laws. (Lee Jung-Youn, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- American firm expands not-for-profit program to DPRK, but expert says Pyongyang unlikely to take up the offer. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- Kwon held talks with Catherine Russell, executive director of the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), and David Beasley, head of the World Food Program (WFP) on Tuesday (Swiss time) on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, according to the unification ministry. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502142551/https://mailchi.mp/d84ea296f890/hrnk-news-itemskorean-subtitles-available-for-recording-of-oct-22-un-side-eventnorth-korean-hackers-try-offloading-crypto-and-partly-succeed>

Thursday, January 19, 2023

How NK's thought police hunt down foreign influences

In North Korea:

[How North Korea's thought police hunt down foreign influences](#) (The Washington Post, 01/19/2023)
[New report shines light on secret North Korean groups fighting against K-pop](#) (NK News, 01/19/2023)
[North Korea calls for normalising factories, economy after COVID 'upheaval'](#) (Reuters, 01/19/2023)
[North Korea cracks down on speech with new law to counter foreign influence](#) (NK News, 01/19/2023)
[N. Korea holds key parliamentary meeting without leader Kim's attendance](#) (Yonhap, 01/19/2023)
[North Korea sentences 5 police officers to hard labor for attacking their superior](#) (Radio Free Asia, 01/18/2023)
[North Korea sustains high defense spending with new budget](#) (Associated Press, 01/19/2023)
[North Korea's trade with China in Q4 hits three-year pandemic high](#) (NK News, 01/19/2023)

In South Korea:

[Defector-turned-lawmaker declares bid for Council](#) (Yonhap, 01/19/2023)
[Detention warrant applied for ex-SBW boss](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/19/2023)
[Experts: South Korea Seeks Enhanced US Nuclear Assurances Against North Korea](#) (VOA, 01/18/2023)
[Google Earth offers clear views of where Kim Jong-un works, lives](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/19/2023)
[Seoul to allow private groups to interview new North Korean defectors again](#) (NK News, 01/19/2023)
[Unions raided for second day in a row](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/19/2023)

International:

[U.S. should prepare for possible deployment of nuclear assets to S. Korea: U.S. think tank](#) (Yonhap, 01/19/2023)
[Yoon arrives in Switzerland to attend Davos forum](#) (Yonhap, 01/18/2023)

In North Korea:

- The enforcers rely on fear, bribery and extortion to help Kim maintain his grip on society, and can be quickly mobilized to quash activities deemed problematic, according to a report by the Seoul-based Database Center for North Korean Human Rights that was first provided exclusively to The Washington Post. (Michelle Ye Hee Lee, Min Joo Kim, [The Washington Post](#))
- Without notice, the secretive North Korean police would barge into schools and homes. They'd conduct body checks on students, searching even their socks and under their belts for flash drives carrying foreign media. Anyone found with such illicit content they would take away. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

- North Korea's parliament has outlined plans to normalise industrial production and meet its economic goals this year, despite the "worst-ever upheaval" amid the coronavirus pandemic in 2022, state media said on Thursday. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea's rubber-stamp parliament passed a new law on "protecting" the country's language from what authorities see as threatening foreign influence, as it met for an annual full session to discuss state budget measures this week. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has convened a two-day parliamentary session in Pyongyang to discuss budgetary and other issues, including legislation against foreign cultural influences, its state media said Thursday. (Kim Soo-yeon, Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has punished five policemen for attacking a superior officer during a departmental review, with leader Kim Jong Un personally ordering them to hard labor sentences, sources in the country told Radio Free Asia. (Chang Gyu Ahn, trans. Claire Shinyoung Oh Lee, Eugene Whong, Malcolm Foster, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- North Korea's rubber-stamp parliament has passed a budget that sustains a high level of defense spending despite economic troubles as leader Kim Jong Un pushes for an aggressive expansion of his nuclear arsenal amid stalled diplomacy. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [Associated Press](#))
- North Korea capped off last year with its strongest quarter of trade with China since 2019, customs data shows, signaling less anxiety about inbound goods despite mass COVID-19 caseloads just across the country's northern border. (Ethan Jewell, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Rep. Tae Yong-ho, a North Korean defector-turned-lawmaker of the ruling People Power Party, announced his bid to run for the party's Supreme Council on Thursday. ([Yonhap](#))
- Prosecutors on Thursday applied for a pre-trial detention warrant for the former chairman of SBW Group after grilling him for nearly 25 hours about corruption. (Lee Sung-Eun, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- By expressing an interest in acquiring nuclear weapons, South Korea is demonstrating an urgent determination to secure enhanced security assurances from the United States as the nuclear threat from North Korea grows, experts say. (Christy Lee, [VOA](#))
- Commercial satellite imagery can clearly capture North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's office, residence and other key facilities of Pyongyang, US state-owned broadcaster Voice of America reported Wednesday, as it released Google Earth images of those locations. (Kim So-hyun, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Private organizations will soon have the opportunity to conduct surveys at South Korea's resettlement center for newly arrived defectors, the unification ministry announced Thursday. (Ifang Bremer, Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Police on Thursday raided the offices of construction unions affiliated with two major umbrella labor organizations, a day after they raided ten locations to investigate separate allegations that trade union officials collaborated with North Korean agents. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- The United States should consider possible deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons to South Korea in the future, a U.S. think tank said Wednesday, in what it called "pre-decisional" efforts to lay groundwork for the possible deployment in the future. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

- President Yoon Suk Yeol arrived in Zurich, Switzerland, on Tuesday on a four-day visit that will include his attendance at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Yesun Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502142814/https://mailchi.mp/15554d748538/hrnk-news-items-20220119>

Friday, January 20, 2023

What does persecution look like in North Korea?, North Korea intensifies war against South Korean culture, No more diplomatic hiccups

Top News:

[What does persecution look like in North Korea?](#) (Open Doors, 2023)

In North Korea:

[How the ROK's education obsession puts North Korean defectors at a disadvantage](#) (NK News, 01/20/2023)

[North Korea intensifies war against South Korean culture](#) (The Korea Times, 01/19/2023)

[North Korea's bleak budget for 2023 hints COVID and trade controls will stay](#) (NK News, 01/20/2023)

[Summary of external news of North Korea this week](#) (Yonhap News Agency, 01/20/2023)

In South Korea:

[Five North Korean agents with KCTU ties are described](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/20/2023)

[In trial on border killing, ex-Moon officials deny cover-up](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/20/2023)

[Military ends search for drone near Thaad base, citing 'low' espionage possibility](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/20/2023)

[South Korea inks deal to develop drones after North Korea's UAV intrusion](#) (NK News, 01/20/2023)

International:

[No more diplomatic hiccups \(KOR\)](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 1/20/2023)

[US launches private sponsorship program for refugees, including North Koreans](#) (NK News, 1/20/2023)

Top News:

North Korea remains a brutally hostile place for Christians to live. If discovered by the authorities, believers are either sent to labour camps as political prisoners where the conditions are atrocious, or killed on the spot. A report issued in 2022 by The International Bar Association and The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea said that Christians are particularly targeted and exposed to torture in North Korean prisons. "Detention periods have been documented as being longer for Christians than other groups, and witnesses have reported that 'identified Christians are

interrogated for longer periods, usually under torture', and subjected to some of the worst forms of torture to force them to incriminate others during interrogation," it said. ([Open Doors](#))

In North Korea:

- One similarity between North and South Korea is that both take formal education extremely seriously. A college education at a prestigious institution is what most children on the peninsula work toward, and North Korean defectors are no exception. Some even decided to escape from the DPRK because they wanted a better education for their kids. (Andrei Lankov, [NK News](#))
- According to a new report released Thursday, the regime under Kim Jong-un has intensified its campaign against such people, particularly those who enjoy South Korean pop music or TV content, which it increasingly views as a threat to its stability in recent years. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea's Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) held its annual session this week to review the country's finances and economic prospects for the coming year, and the outlook is far from auspicious. (Peter Ward, [NK News](#))
- The following is a summary of external news of North Korea this week, including events such as President Yoon's reaffirmed commitment to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and Unification Minister Kwon Young-se meeting with UNICEF to discuss North Korea's humanitarian situations. ([Yonhap News Agency](#))

In South Korea:

- The intelligence agency and police are reported to have identified five suspected North Korean agents that made contact with top officials at the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU). (Kim Min-Joong, Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Former top intelligence and security officials of the previous Moon Jae-in administration denied at the first hearing held Friday that they tried to cover up North Korean troops killing a South Korean government official at sea in 2020. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea's military has withdrawn from a fruitless search for a drone thought to have crashed near a U.S. missile defense unit in a southern county earlier this week, its officials said Friday, citing "low" chances that it was used for spying activities. ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) has inked a deal with a U.S. defense firm to develop high-tech unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) for South Korean navy destroyers, the state-backed enterprise announced Thursday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- Diplomatic repercussions are getting bigger after President Yoon Suk Yeol made controversial remarks defining Iran as "the enemy of the UAE" during his state visit to the small Middle East country on January 15. ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The U.S. State Department unveiled a new private sponsorship program for refugees Thursday, potentially paving the way for U.S. citizens and residents to play a direct role in supporting the resettlement of refugees from around the world — including North Korea. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Venesia Delancy, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240503095142/https://mailchi.mp/223fc800b634/hrnk-news-items-11190862>

Saturday, January 21, 2023

**N. Korea continues to provide ammunition to Russia in violation of UNSC sanctions:
White House**

In North Korea:

[North Korean civilians start military parade training, imagery shows](#) (NK Pro, 01/21/2023)

[North Korea's Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Site: No Signs of an Imminent Test](#) (38 North, 01/20/2023)

In South Korea:

[Over 3,600 'separated' S. Koreans died last year without family reunions: gov't data](#) (Yonhap, 01/21/2023)

[The Disastrous Downsides of South Korea Building Nuclear Weapons](#) (38 North, 01/20/2023)

International:

[China's exports to North Korea more than tripled in 2022](#) (Reuters, 01/20/2023)

[First North Korean Extradited to US Is Sentenced](#) (VOA, 01/20/2023)

[First North Korean extradited to US gets 4-year sentence for money laundering](#) (NK News, 01/21/2023)

[New photos show North Korea sent weapons to Russian paramilitary group: Pentagon](#) (NK News, 01/21/2023)

[N. Korea continues to provide ammunition to Russia in violation of UNSC sanctions: White House](#) (Yonhap, 01/21/2023)

[US should prepare to redeploy tactical nukes in Korea, says group of US experts](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/20/2023)

In North Korea:

- In sub-zero temperatures at Pyongyang's Kim Il Sung Square Saturday morning, thousands of civilians were seen practicing in giant formations of slogans and symbols which they will have to perform during an upcoming military parade, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery. (Colin Zwirko, [NK Pro](#))
- Recent commercial satellite imagery indicates ongoing activity at North Korea's Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Site, including the presence of a large number of personnel on site and ongoing activity around the Main Administrative Area. Snow clearing and foot trails around the entrance of Tunnel No. 3 (formerly known as the South Portal) suggest activity continues in and around the tunnel. Some reports suggest the tunnel may have been test-ready since last summer. What is clear is that the tunnel can be easily readied for use if and when a decision to test is made. (Jack Liu, Olli Heinonen, Peter Makowsky, Jenny Town, [38 North](#))

In South Korea:

- More than 3,600 South Koreans died last year without having a chance to reunite with their family members in North Korea after the 1950-53 Korean War-driven separation, government data showed Saturday. ([Yonhap](#))
- In a wide-ranging interview on January 11, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol warned Pyongyang that if North Korea's nuclear threat continues to advance, South Korea would consider building nuclear weapons of its own or ask the United States to redeploy them on the Korean Peninsula. Although President Yoon walked back these comments at the World Economic Forum in Davos, they were published in the South Korean press and reinforced by some Republic of Korea (ROK) defense analysts. Cheon Seong-whun said, "President Yoon's comment could turn out to be a watershed moment in the history of South Korea's national security." (Siegfried S. Hecker, [38 North](#))

International:

- Chinese outbound shipments to North Korea surged 247.5% year-on-year to \$894 million, trade data released by China's General Administration of Customs showed on Friday. The top export items in terms of value were soybean oil, rubber tyres, granulated sugar, tobacco and unnamed medicines. (Ellen Zhang, Ryan Woo, [Reuters](#))
- Businessman Mun Chol Myong was sentenced Friday in federal district court in Washington to time served of 45 months in prison. (Masood Farivar, [VOA](#))
- US judge agrees to more lenient sentence for Mun Chol Myong after he spent years in Malay and American prisons. (Ethan Jewell, [NK News](#))
- Images appears to show rail shipment from North Korea to Russia late last year, but content of containers unclear. (Ethan Jewell, [NK News](#))
- John Kirby, strategic communications coordinator for the National Security Council, said the U.S. has shared its intelligence on the delivery of North Korean ammunition to Russia with the UNSC Panel of Experts on North Korea sanctions. (Bun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States should consider laying the groundwork with South Korea for a potential redeployment of its tactical nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula to ramp up pressure on North Korea and clear up South Korean doubts over the credibility of the US commitment to extended deterrence, a group of US experts and former US senior officials said Thursday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://mailchi.mp/d4c2fbff5525/hrnk-news-itemsn-korea-continues-to-provide-ammunition-to-russia-in-violation-of-un-sc-sanctions-white-house>

Sunday, January 22, 2023

Vice unification minister calls on N. Korea to return to dialogue

In North Korea:

[Parade Training in Full Swing](#) (38 North, 01/22/2023)

In South Korea:

[Vice unification minister calls on N. Korea to return to dialogue](#) (Yonhap, 01/22/2023)

International:

[Xi thanks N.K. leader for condolence message after Jiang's death](#) (Yonhap, 01/22/2023)

In North Korea:

- Commercial satellite imagery from January 21 reveals extensive parade preparations are underway, as a few state holidays draw near. This includes drills and rehearsals both in Kim Il Sung Square in downtown Pyongyang and at the Mirim Parade Training Ground. (Peter Makowsky, Jack Liu, [38 North](#))

In South Korea:

- The vice minister urged the North to choose the right path, saying all of Seoul's offers, including its proposal for talks on arranging reunions for families separated by the 1950-53 Korean War, remain valid. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- Chinese President Xi Jinping sent a message to North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, thanking him for his condolence message following the death of former Chinese leader Jiang Zemin, the North's state media said Sunday. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ava Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240503095726/https://mailchi.mp/fb2c13fb1cc5/hrnk-news-itemsvice-unification-minister-calls-on-n-korea-to-return-to-dialogue>

Monday, January 23, 2023

Russia says it shipped grain to North Korea, Time running out for inter-Korean family reunions

In North Korea:

[A kinder, gentler North Korea? How the DPRK's popular culture embraced humanism](#) (NK News, 01/23/2023)

[North Korean military parade to celebrate Feb. 8 army anniversary: Imagery](#) (NK News, 01/23/2023)

In South Korea:

[Why are South Koreans losing faith in America's nuclear umbrella?](#) (CNN, 01/21/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[INTERVIEW: 'The loneliest time is New Year's Day and other major holidays'](#) (Radio Free Asia, 01/22/2023)

[North Korean drone incursion rattles nerves in Seoul over air defences](#) (Financial Times, 01/21/2023)

[Time running out for inter-Korean family reunions, ROK official warns](#) (NK News, 01/23/2023)

[55 years after sending a hit squad on a deadly raid in Seoul, North Korea has found new ways to threaten South Korea](#) (Business Insider, 01/22/23)

International:

[Japan wants stronger defenses against North Korea, but will citizens pay for it?](#) (NK News, 01/23/2023)

[Russia says it shipped grain to North Korea, but doesn't say how much](#) (NK News, 01/23/2023)

In North Korea:

- Amid unprecedented hardships, several films and dramas promoted a surprising spirit of acceptance and forgiveness (Tatiana Gabroussenko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea appears to have scheduled its upcoming military parade for Feb. 8 to celebrate the 75th founding anniversary of the Korean People's Army (KPA), according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Ten years ago, calling for South Korean nuclear weapons was a fringe idea that garnered little serious coverage. Today it has become a mainstream discussion. (Paula Hancocks, [CNN](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Over the years more than 33,000 people who fled poverty and oppression in North Korea have come to live in the South. Though most would say they are glad to have left their oppressive homeland, many still long for home when the holiday season rolls around. (Soram Cheon, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- At 10:25am on December 26, five North Korean surveillance drones crossed the demarcation line into South Korean airspace, exposing the dilemmas posed by Pyongyang's increasingly diverse and versatile weaponry. (Christian Davies, [Financial Times](#))
- Seoul's vice unification minister has warned that there is "no time to lose" when it comes to reuniting divided families in the two Koreas, as data shows that thousands of South Koreans died last year without seeing their loved ones in the North. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

- North Korea no longer sends death squads across the DMZ — though it has practiced [raids on a replica](#) of the Blue House — but it continues to menace South Korea's leaders. (Benjamin Brimelow, [Business Insider](#))

International:

- Despite wide support for new security plans, public resistance to new taxes threatens to leave them dead in the water (Justin Yeo, [NK News](#))
- The Russian border region of Primorsky Krai has confirmed that it sent shipments of grain to North Korea in 2022, without stating the total amount. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240503100245/https://mailchi.mp/54751f1eb11b/hrnk-news-itemsrussia-says-it-shipped-grain-to-north-koreatime-running-out-for-inter-korean-family-reunions>

Tuesday, January 24, 2023

National Strategy for Countering North Korea; New US Envoy for North Korea Rights an 'Ideal' Fit, Activists Say

Top News:

[National Strategy for Countering North Korea](#) (National Institute for Public Policy, 01/23/2023)

[New US Envoy for North Korea Rights an 'Ideal' Fit, Activists Say](#) (VOA, 01/23/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korea issues cold weather warning as mercury plunges as low as -20 F](#) (NK News, 01/24/2023)

[North Korea issues 'extreme cold' weather alert](#) (BBC, 01/24/2023)

[N. Korean media airs documentary touting successful pandemic response](#) (Yonhap, 01/24/2023)

[N. Korean media decries Yoon's remarks on Iran](#) (Yonhap, 01/24/2023)

[Panic-buying reported in Pyongyang amid rumors of new lockdown order](#) (NK News, 01/24/2023)

International:

[Biden looks to fill long-vacant North Korean human rights post](#) (UPI, 01/24/2023)

[Biden nominates new North Korea human rights envoy](#) (Radio Free Asia, 01/24/2023)

[Biden nominates new special envoy for N. Korean human rights](#) (Yonhap, 01/24/2023)

[Biden nominates North Korea human rights envoy, first since 2017](#) (Reuters, 01/24/2023)

[Biden nominates Turner as North Korea human rights envoy](#) (The Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/24/2023)

[FBI says N. Korea-related hacker group behind U.S. crypto firm heist](#) (Reuters 01/24/2023)

[US nominates State Department veteran as North Korean human rights envoy](#) (NK News, 01/24/2023)

[U.S. House calls for North Korea to return captured USS Pueblo](#) (UPI, 01/24/2023)

[U.S. House resolution calls for return of USS Pueblo seized by N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 01/24/2023)

[U.S., S. Korea working to hold N. Korea accountable for supporting Russian war in Ukraine: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 01/24/2023)

Top News:

- "While insisting on complete and verifiable denuclearization," it argues, "the foundation of U.S. strategy should be a human rights upfront approach, a comprehensive information and influence campaign, and the advancement of the strategic aim of a free and unified Korea." (Robert Joseph, Robert Collins, Joseph DeTrani, Nicholas Eberstadt, Olivia Enos, David Maxwell, Greg Scarlatoiu, [National Institute for Public Policy](#))
- Human rights activists are welcoming the United States' appointment of an envoy for North Korean human rights, a position that had been vacant for six years. The White House late Monday announced it would appoint Julie Turner, a veteran State Department foreign affairs officer, who has long focused on North Korea human rights issues. Greg Scarlatoiu, executive director for the Washington D.C.-based Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, said Turner is "a truly great scholar and champion of North Korean human rights." Once confirmed, Scarlatoiu said he hopes the new envoy will adopt a "human rights up front approach" to North Korea. "It's the darkest period in the history of human rights in North Korea, believe it or not," Scarlatoiu said. (William Gallo, [VOA](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean authorities issued extreme cold weather warnings for the entire country on Tuesday, as a cold wave sweeping the peninsula pushes temperatures to dangerous lows in some of the DPRK's most vulnerable regions. The DPRK's central radio broadcaster reported in the morning that northern regions are forecast to dip below -20 degrees F (-30 C). The capital city of Pyongyang reportedly reached -2 F (-19 C) earlier this morning, nearly 16 degrees F below average. (Ethan Jewell, [NK News](#))
- While North Korea has been affected by extreme or adverse weather much like other places, little is known about the impact of this on its people. Ryanggang, North Hamgyong and South Hamgyong, the country's poorest provinces and those expected to be most vulnerable to climate shocks, are all located in the north. (Kelly Ng, [BBC](#))
- North Korea's state TV has aired a documentary film praising the country's success in tackling the coronavirus pandemic last year amid efforts to prevent another outbreak. The documentary, aired on the Korean Central Television on Monday night, introduced Pyongyang's antivirus measures since the country announced its first COVID-19 case in May last year, recalling the pandemic period as the greatest "disturbance since the founding of the country." ([Yonhap](#))
- A North Korean propaganda outlet on Tuesday criticized President Yoon Suk Yeol's recent remarks on Iran's relations with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), noting they drew Tehran's wrath and created a "commotion" in the South. ([Yonhap](#))
- Source in capital also reports more temperature checks at stores, though officials have not announced new virus controls. (Chad O'Carroll, Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

International:

- U.S. President Joe Biden nominated a career diplomat as a new special envoy for North Korean human rights, moving to fill a post that has been vacant for six years. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- U.S. President Joe Biden has nominated Julie Turner, a longtime State Department official, as special envoy on North Korean human rights issues, a role left unfilled for more than five years. (Alex Willemyns, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- Julie Turner, director of East Asia and the Pacific at the state department's bureau of democracy, human rights and labor, has been nominated to serve as special envoy for North Korean human rights issues, according to the White House."Turner has served more than 16 years in the Office of East Asia and the Pacific, in positions of increasing responsibility, primarily focused on initiatives related to promoting human rights in North Korea, including a tour as special assistant in the Office of the Special Envoy on North Korean Human Rights Issues," it said in a press release. ([Yonhap](#))
- he White House on Tuesday nominated a special envoy for human rights in North Korea, moving to fill a post that has been empty since 2017 amid debate over how rights issues fit with efforts to counter Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programme. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- If appointed, Turner will be succeeding Robert King, who served nearly seven years in the Barack Obama administration from November 2009 to January 2017. The post has been empty ever since - all throughout the Donald Trump administration and two years into the Biden administration. (Lee Sung-Eun, [The Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- A hacker group associated with North Korea, the Lazarus Group, also known as APT38, was responsible for the theft last June of \$100 million from U.S. crypto firm Harmony's Horizon bridge, the Federal Bureau of Investigation said on Monday. ([Reuters](#))
- If approved by the Senate, Julie Turner will be the first woman to fill a key role that has been vacant for over six years. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The U.S. House of Representatives introduced a resolution calling on North Korea to return a navy ship that it seized 55 years ago and now keeps on display as a tourist attraction. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- The House "maintains North Korea's seizure of the vessel USS Pueblo and its detention of the crew were in violation of international law," says the resolution. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- "It's fair to say that of course, we have the closest of relations with our South Korean allies. There is a nexus to the DPRK, in this case, given the provision of arms and other military wares from the DPRK to Wagner entities for use in Ukraine," the department spokesperson said, referring to North Korea by its official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502144319/https://mailchi.mp/304aebb02fab/hrnk-news-itemsnational-strategy-for-countering-north-koreanew-us-envoy-for-north-korea-rights-an-ideal-fit-activists-say>

Wednesday, January 25, 2023

9 North Korean workers in Russia defected to South Korea; 'Respiratory illness' prompts lockdown of N. Korean capital

Top News:

[*U.S. Department of State establishes 'individual sponsorship program to help unsettled refugees... North Korean defectors also eligible for support](#) (RFA, 01/19/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text below

In North Korea:

['Dramatic' construction underway at N.Korea's main rocket launch site](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/25/2023)

['Respiratory illness' prompts lockdown of N. Korean capital](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/25/2023)

['Rising' illness in North Korea triggers 5-day lockdown in capital](#) (NK News, 01/25/2023)

[9 N. Korean workers in Russia defected to S. Korea last year: professor](#) (Yonhap, 01/25/2023)

[9 North Korean workers in Russia defected to South Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 01/25/2023)

[Kim Jong Un's 2023 "master plan" is all about weapons, nothing about food](#) (RFA, 01/25/2023)

[N.K. propaganda outlet slams S. Korea's plan to hold defense meeting with UNC members](#) (Yonhap, 01/25/2023)

[North Korea locks down capital city over 'respiratory illness'](#) (Reuters, 01/25/2023)

[North Korea orders five-day lockdown in capital over 'respiratory illness'](#) (The Telegraph, 01/25/2023)

[North Korea Orders Lockdown in Capital After Spread of 'Respiratory Illness'](#) (VOA, 01/25/2023)

[Report: North Korean hackers stepping up crypto attacks](#) (UPI, 01/25/2023)

International:

[Arms control talks likely to hurt alliance between Seoul and Washington](#) (The Korea Times, 01/25/2023)

[From China to Japan, extreme cold is gripping East Asia. Experts say it's the 'new norm'](#) (CNN, 01/25/2023)

[Japan and North Korea sound warning as deadly cold snap sweeps across Asia](#) (The Guardian, 01/25/2023)

[Kim Jong-un said he needed USFK to protect him from China: Pompeo](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/25/2023)

[No need for full-time North Korea envoy without 'active diplomacy,' US says](#) (NK News, 01/25/2023)

[U.S. closely monitoring N. Korea for possible nuclear test: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 01/25/2023)

[U.S. may appoint special envoy solely dedicated to N. Korea if dialogue resumes: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 01/25/2023)

[U.S. military presence in S. Korea does not bother N. Korea at all: Pompeo](#) (Yonhap, 01/25/2023)

[US pins \\$100M crypto heist on North Korea, backing private sector attributions](#) (NK News, 01/25/2023)

Top News:

- Regarding this new program, Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), told Radio Free Asia (RFA) that the 'Welcome Corps' program preliminarily seemed to be a good system that would benefit more refugees, but included that he would have to wait a little longer to judge the real effectiveness of support for North Korean refugees. (Jamin Anderson, [VOA](#))

In North Korea:

- Satellite imagery showed "dramatic and ongoing" construction in North Korea's main missile and rocket launching station on the west coast, a Washington-based think tank said Tuesday, noting that the site could be used for a satellite launch "in the near future." (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Pyongyang entered a five-day lockdown on Wednesday to combat a rise in cases of respiratory illness, according to an official North Korean government notice seen by NK News. Although the government notice mentioned several illnesses spreading in Pyongyang, including the common cold, it did not mention Covid-19. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korean authorities have ordered a five-day lockdown for Pyongyang residents starting Wednesday due to "rising" cases of respiratory illness, according to an official DPRK government notice seen by NK News. (Chad O'Carroll, Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- Nine North Korean workers dispatched to Russia for dollar earnings defected to South Korea late last year amid Moscow's protracted war with Ukraine, according to a professor in the South on Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- Nine North Korean workers dispatched to Russia as part of the regime's efforts to collect U.S. dollars recently defected to South Korea amid Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine, according to an expert familiar with the issue Wednesday. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Koreans forced to study supreme leader Kim Jong Un's newly published "master plan" for 2023 say it is a rehash of old tropes and offers nothing on how to address the most pressing concern on people's minds: overcoming the country's chronic food shortage, sources tell Radio Free Asia. (Jieun Kim, [RFA](#))
- A North Korean propaganda outlet on Wednesday denounced South Korea's plan to hold a defense ministerial meeting with members of the U.S.-led U.N. Command (UNC), accusing it as an attempt to wipe out Pyongyang. ([Yonhap](#))
- Authorities in the North Korean capital Pyongyang have ordered a five-day lockdown due to rising cases of an unspecified respiratory illness, the Russian embassy and Seoul-based NK News reported on Wednesday, citing a government notice. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- The North Korean capital of Pyongyang was placed under a five-day lockdown on Wednesday due to a "rising number" of respiratory illness cases, according to a government notice seen by the news outlet NK News. (Erin Hale, [The Telegraph](#))
- North Korean authorities have ordered a five-day lockdown in the capital, Pyongyang, amid an increase in unspecified respiratory illnesses, according to Russian diplomats and a Seoul-based news outlet. (William Gallo, [VOA](#))
- North Korean hackers are displaying a "startup mentality" as they experiment with new methods to pull off cryptocurrency heists, a report by cybersecurity firm Proofpoint said Wednesday. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))

International:

- Against the backdrop of 38 ballistic missiles launched last year, North Korea has shown its intention not to give up on its nuclear ambitions, raising speculation that nuclear arms control is emerging — in the United States — as an alternative method to contain Pyongyang's evolving nuclear program. (Kang Seung-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- Tens of millions of people across East Asia braved a severe cold snap Wednesday as subzero temperatures and heavy snow brought travel chaos during the Lunar New Year holiday, with climate experts warning that such extreme weather events had become the “new norm.” (Heather Chen, Yoonjung Seo, Paula Hancocks, Jake Kwon, Junko Ogura, [CNN](#))
- Frigid conditions are also being experienced across the Korean peninsula. South Korea's meteorological administration issued a special “cold wave” warning on Tuesday, as temperatures dropped as low as -16 C in Seoul and -25 C near the North Korean border on the coldest day of the season so far. (Helen Davidson, Justin McCurry, [The Guardian](#))
- Former US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo wrote in his new memoir that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un told him in 2018 that he needed US forces in South Korea to protect himself from China. (Kim So-hyun, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The U.S. does not need to nominate a full-time North Korea pointperson in the absence of “active diplomacy” with Pyongyang, the State Department said Tuesday, a day after the White House nominated a new special envoy on DPRK human rights. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The United States continues to closely monitor North Korea for a possible nuclear test, a Pentagon spokesperson said Tuesday. The spokesperson, Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder, said the U.S. is also working closely with its allies in preparation for a potential nuclear test. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States may consider appointing a special envoy solely dedicated to issues related to North Korea should there be active dialogue with the reclusive country, a state department spokesperson said Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea and its leader Kim Jong-un are not bothered at all by the U.S. military presence in South Korea, former U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo argued in a memoir published Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. says North Korea was behind the June 2022 theft of \$100 million from a major blockchain, confirming earlier attributions by private-sector security researchers. (Ethan Jewell, [NK News](#))

[Translation] "U.S. Department of State establishes 'individual sponsorship program to help unsettled refugees... North Korean defectors also eligible for support'" (Jamin Anderson, [VOA](#))

Anchor: The US Department of State has created a new privately sponsored program to help settle refugees entering the United States. The State Department has stated that North Korean defectors may also be eligible for assistance. Reporter Zamin Anderson reports with more details.

The State Department announced on the 19th that it would introduce a private sponsorship system called “Welcome Corps,” which helps refugees who have entered the country through the government's refugee acceptance program settle down and integrate into American society.

A group of at least five U.S. citizens or permanent residents, approved by the U.S. government, is independently funded to provide necessary support for refugee settlement in the U.S., such as housing, food, employment, education, and public welfare, for the first 90 days of refugee settlement.

The State Department set a goal of having 10,000 Americans sponsor at least 5,000 refugees in the first year of 'Welcome Corps'.

In the early stages of the 'Welcome Corps' program, refugees selected through the United Nations and US embassies in various places will be connected with civilians, and from the second half of this year, refugees introduced by non-profit organizations (NGOs) and refugees who want to be directly sponsored by civilians will also be included in the support target of the program.

In a telephone interview held on the 19th, a senior U.S. State Department official said that North Korean defectors can also receive help from this program.

Asked by Radio Free Asia (RFA) whether North Korean refugees waiting to obtain U.S. refugee status in a third country could also benefit, the senior official said: "The system is meant to benefit refugees around the world who, regardless of country of origin, are among the cases of resettlement requests made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to the United States Refugee Entry Program."

He added that people from North Korea can also get help entering and resettling in the United States through private sponsorship if they pass UNHCR's refugee eligibility test.

North Korean refugees who are being held at UN refugee facilities in Bangkok, Thailand, go through several years of interviews, security checks, and health checks before being allowed entry into the United States.

Regarding this new program, Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), told Radio Free Asia (RFA) that the 'Welcome Corps' program preliminarily seemed to be a good system that would benefit more refugees, but included that he would have to wait a little longer to judge the real effectiveness of support for North Korean refugees.

Executive Director Scarlatoiu: I think that if ordinary citizens and civic groups participate in this process through this new program, more North Korean defectors will be able to settle in the United States. (But a program like this) is quite difficult to run, so we will have to see. The most difficult thing in the North Korean defector process is to escape North Korea and settle in the United States after passing through a second or third country.

In fact, according to data released by the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, since the enactment of the North Korean Human Rights Act in the United States in 2004, only 224 North Korean defectors have entered the United States as official refugees, with the four defectors who settled in November of 2021 being the last of them.

On the other hand, in 2022, the total number of refugees accepted by the United States, including those from Congo, Afghanistan, Myanmar, and Ukraine, was 25,465.

In the midst of these developments, Lee Hyun-seung, a researcher at the Global Peace Foundation who defected from North Korea in 2014 and currently resides in the United States, told RFA that he hoped that the Welcome Corps program would complement the North Korean refugee resettlement support programs currently being carried out at the church and private organization level.

He said that it would be of great help if the U.S. government provided North Korean defectors with language education, job opportunities, and other systematic programs to help them adapt to the capitalist society of the United States.

Meanwhile, a senior official from the State Department answered a Radio Free Asia (RFA) question about whether there will be any changes in the refugee screening process with the start of the Welcome Corps program, saying, “There is no change in the qualifications for refugee screening,” but “we are working to speed up the review process while maintaining the integrity and security of the refugee reception process.”

Reporter Jamin Anderson, editor Yang Sung-won, web team Lee Kyung-ha

Translated by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240505100251/https://mailchi.mp/f6ef574e9484/hrnk-news-items9-north-korean-worker-s-in-russia-defected-to-south-korea-respiratory-illness-prompts-lockdown-of-n-korean-capital>

Thursday, January 26, 2023

Economic Sanctions During Humanitarian Emergencies: The Case of N. Korea; UNC says SK military’s tit-for-tat action not legitimate

Top News:

[Economic Sanctions During Humanitarian Emergencies: The Case of North Korea](#) (East-West Center, 01/06/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korean capital Pyongyang on lockdown as COVID spreads through the city](#) (Radio Free Asia, 01/25/2023)

[North Korean hacking group scaled up phishing attacks late last year: Report](#) (NK Pro, 01/26/2023)

[North Korea pushes ahead with military parade training despite virus lockdown](#) (NK Pro, 01/26/2023)

[N. Korea urges antivirus efforts amid apparent preparations for military parade](#) (Yonhap, 01/26/2023)

[Top North Korean spy tasked with recruiting union leaders](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/26/2023)

In South Korea:

[Communication failure derailed response to North Korean drones, JCS finds](#) (NK News, 01/26/2023)

[Democratic Party ramps up attacks on Yoon over North Korean drone incursion](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/26/2023)

[Military says it initially regarded N.K. drone intrusion as non-emergency situation](#) (Yonhap, 01/26/2023)

[S.Korean military admits flaws in anti-drone operations, information sharing](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/26/2023)

[Yoon to meet NATO chief, U.S. defense secretary next week](#) (Yonhap, 01/26/2023)

International:

[S. Korean nuclear envoy, senior IAEA official discuss N.K. nuclear issue](#) (Yonhap, 01/26/2023)

[S. Korea, US to discuss NK, trade dispute](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/26/2023)

[UN Command says both Koreas violated armistice with drone intrusions](#) (NK News, 01/26/2023)

[UNC says both Koreas breached armistice by flying drones in each other's territory](#) (Yonhap, 01/26/2023)

[UNC says S. Korean military's tit-for-tat action not legitimate](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/26/2023)

[UNICEF delivers 25 containers of medical and nutritional aid to North Korea](#) (NK News, 01/26/2023)

[US-ROK forces carry out anti-nuclear weapon drills near North Korean border](#) (NK News, 01/26/2023)

Top News:

- North Korea is experiencing yet another cycle of humanitarian distress. While sanctions are not the primary cause, they are a contributing factor. This essay examines the channels through which sanctions affect the North Korean economy and reaches four conclusions. (Marcus Noland, Stephan Haggard, [East-West Center](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean authorities have locked down the capital city of Pyongyang due to 'rising' cases of an unspecified respiratory illness according to media reports citing a central government notice, and sources confirmed to Radio Free Asia that multiple people in the city have tested positive for COVID-19. (Hyemin Son, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- A North Korea-linked threat group significantly increased its phishing attacks at the end of 2022, while suddenly diversifying the file types it uses to disguise malware, according to cybersecurity researchers. (Ethan Jewell, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korean soldiers conducted marching practice in Pyongyang on Wednesday despite the start of a five-day virus-related lockdown, suggesting that the leadership looks to push ahead with a military parade next month. (Colin Zwirko, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korea is making all-out antivirus efforts, its official media said Thursday, amid a news report that it has imposed a lockdown on the capital city of Pyongyang apparently ahead of a military parade to mark the army founding anniversary next month. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea tasked one of its most experienced intelligence agents with recruiting leaders of a militant South Korean umbrella labor organization, intelligence sources have told the JoongAng Ilbo. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- A major communications breakdown between branches of the South Korean military hamstrung its response to a North Korean drone that entered Seoul airspace last month, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) told parliament on Thursday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The opposition Democratic Party of Korea went after the Yoon Suk Yeol administration's national security strategy on Thursday in a bid to keep the ruling People Power Party on the defense. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea's front-line troops initially viewed North Korea's drone infiltrations last month as a non-emergency situation, an assessment that caused a delay in the military's overall response, Seoul officials said Thursday. ([Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean military on Thursday has publicly conceded overall defects in its counter-unmanned aircraft operations and the absence of real-time information-sharing between the army and air forces on airborne objects. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol plans to hold meetings next week with Jens Stoltenberg, secretary general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, a presidential official said Thursday. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- South Korea's chief nuclear envoy met with a senior official of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Thursday to discuss cooperation in dealing with the North Korean nuclear stalemate, the Seoul foreign ministry said. ([Yonhap](#))
- Foreign Minister Park Jin is set to hold talks with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in early February, sources said Thursday, as the two allies step up efforts to curb North Korea's nuclear ambitions and resolve a trade dispute involving US tax rules that its allies say favor locally made electric vehicles. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The United Nations Command (UNC) has concluded that both North and South Korea violated the Korean Armistice Agreement when they flew drones into each other's territory last month, according to a press release Thursday. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The U.S.-led U.N. Command (UNC) announced Thursday both South and North Korea violated the armistice by sending drones into each other's territory last month. ([Yonhap](#))
- South and North Korea breached the armistice agreement by flying drones across the inter-Korean border last December, said the United Nations Command on Thursday. (Ji Da-Gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- UNICEF shipped 25 containers of medical supplies and nutritional assistance to North Korea through the port city of Nampho this month, the international organization told NK News on Thursday. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- U.S. and South Korean troops carried out weapons of mass destruction (WMD) removal drills this week to strengthen combined readiness against such threats, amid continuing concerns that North Korea may soon conduct its seventh nuclear test. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240505101530/https://mailchi.mp/d7ba5852288a/hrnk-news-itemseconomic-sanctions-during-humanitarian-emergencies-the-case-of-n-koreaunc-says-sk-militarys-tit-for-tat-action-not-legitimate>

Friday, January 27, 2023

The UN COI at 10 Years - Strategic Priorities & Considerations

Top News:

[The UN COI at 10 Years: Strategic Priorities & Considerations](#) (HRNK, 01/27/2023)

In North Korea:

[Mane supplier? Russia reveals stable that may have sent horses to Kim Jong Un](#) (NK Pro, 01/27/2023)

[N. Korea likely to continue provocations, threats in 2023: U.S. intelligence official](#) (Yonhap, 01/27/2023)

[N. Korean leader's sister condemns U.S. provision of tanks to Ukraine](#) (Yonhap, 01/27/2023)

[North Korea celebrates Cold War capture of US ship](#) (NK Pro, 01/27/2023)

[Why North Korean state media remains silent about the Pyongyang lockdown](#) (NK News, 01/27/2023)

[S. Korea to seek normalization of relations with N. Korea this year: unification ministry](#) (Yonhap, 01/27/2023)

In South Korea:

[Seoul to expand access to North Korean media at info centers this year](#) (NK News, 01/27/2023)

[South Korean president plays dangerous game by wading into party leadership race](#) (NK News, 01/27/2023)

[Two Chinese warplanes entered KADIZ earlier this week: S. Korean military](#) (Yonhap, 01/27/2023)

[Unification Ministry seeks to disclose more N. Korean information to public](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/27/2023)

[Yoon calls for raising awareness of N.K. human rights situation](#) (Yonhap, 01/27/2023)

[Yoon may revisit law letting police handle espionage cases: ruling party](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/27/2023)

International:

[Blinken looks forward to any opportunity to engage with S. Korean FM: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 01/27/2023)

[In new book, Mike Pompeo talks tough about 'bloodthirsty toad' Kim Jong Un](#) (NK News, 01/27/2023)

[Japan launches intelligence satellite to monitor North Korean military activity](#) (NK News, 01/27/2023)

[Secretary Austin to highlight U.S. commitment to S. Korea during upcoming trip to Seoul: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 01/27/2023)

Top News:

- Next year will mark the 10th anniversary of the report issued by the UN Human Rights Council's Commission of Inquiry (COI) on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). Discussions have begun in Seoul, Washington D.C., and other capitals about the steps that might be taken to commemorate and reflect upon this milestone. The goal of these efforts would be to revive knowledge about the COI report and its detailed recommendations, and to rekindle a commitment to remedial action by the international community. (Michael Kirby, [HRNK](#))

In North Korea:

- Russia gave the green light for a stable outside Moscow to export horses to North Korea last year, NK Pro analysis of official trade data shows, the first indication of who may have supplied the purebred horses for a recent shipment. (Ifang Bremer, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korea is well expected to continue making provocations and nuclear threats this year following its unprecedented number of missile tests in 2022 as it seeks to leverage its military capabilities diplomatically, a U.S. intelligence official insisted Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un issued a statement Friday criticizing the United States' decision to send tanks to Ukraine to help its fight against Russia's invasion, saying that Washington is crossing the "red line." ([Yonhap](#))
- State media celebrated the capture of the USS Pueblo 55 years ago this week, publishing articles about the Cold War incident and airing the testimony of a veteran who helped seize the American ship. (Seung Yeon-chung, [NK Pro](#))
- NK News exclusively reported Wednesday that North Korean authorities had ordered Pyongyang residents to bunker down for at least five days, after rumors of a pending lockdown drove panic shopping in the capital. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- South Korea will push to "normalize" inter-Korean relations this year by seeking to make both "direct and indirect" contact with North Korea, including supporting civilian exchanges, Seoul's unification ministry said Friday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea plans to expand public access to North Korea's primary state newspaper at designated facilities this year, Seoul's unification ministry announced on Friday. The ministry stated that it plans to expand access to DPRK state media in its new year work report to President Yoon Suk-yeol, alongside other plans such as updating the country's three-decade-old unification roadmap. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Former four-time lawmaker Na Kyung-won has announced her decision not to run for the People Power Party's (PPP) leadership position, turning what was once a dynamic race that could have resulted in various outcomes and controversy into what seems like a straightforward two-man contest. (John Lee, [NK News](#))
- Two Chinese fighter jets flew through the overlapping parts of the air defense identification zones of South Korea and China earlier this week, prompting the military here to put its warplanes on standby, officials here said Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- The Ministry of Unification aims to disclose more information on North Korea to the general public in 2023, it said Friday during a New Year's policy briefing to President Yoon Suk Yeol. (Park Jun-hee, [The Korea Herald](#))

- President Yoon Suk Yeol instructed the unification ministry Friday to raise awareness of North Korea's human rights situation both at home and abroad, his office said. Yoon gave the instruction while receiving a joint policy briefing from the unification ministry, the interior ministry, the veterans affairs ministry and the personnel management ministry. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol is rethinking the new law that will let police handle espionage cases, according to the ruling People Power Party spokesperson Yang Kum-hee. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken would welcome any future opportunity to engage with his South Korean counterpart, a state department spokesperson said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- Pompeo's book "Never Give an Inch" is the latest volume by a former Trump official, following the release of "So Help Me God" by former Vice President Mike Pence in November. And like Pence, the former chief diplomat credits Donald Trump's threats with keeping Kim Jong Un in line. (James Fretwell, [NK News](#))
- Japan launched an intelligence satellite Thursday as part of long-running efforts to monitor North Korean military activities and strengthen Tokyo's response to natural disasters. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin will underscore the U.S.' commitment to the security of South Korea during his upcoming trip to Seoul, a Pentagon spokesperson said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Tessa Aguilar, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240505101712/https://mailchi.mp/1e29e975e676/hrnk-news-itemseconomic-sanctions-during-humanitarian-emergencies-the-case-of-n-koreaunc-says-sk-militarys-tit-for-tat-action-not-legitimate-11190898>

Saturday, January 28, 2023

"America's North Korea Strategy Has Failed" by HRNK's Robert Joseph

Top News:

[America's North Korea Strategy Has Failed](#) (National Review, 01/27/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim Yo Jong says US putting Europe in danger by providing tanks to Ukraine](#) (NK News, 01/28/2023)

[North Korea slams US over decision to send tanks to Ukraine](#) (AP News, 01/27/2023)

In South Korea:

[Opposition leader blasts 'dictatorial regime,' says won't answer questions during interrogation](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/28/2023)

[Opposition leader Lee claims innocence in corruption probe](#) (Yonhap, 01/28/2023)

[S. Korea to support civilian aid to North in hopes of talks](#) (AP News, 01/27/2023)

[South Korea Leader Dials Back Comments on Developing Nuclear Weapons](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 01/19/2023)

[Yoon administration to push inter-Korean info exchanges](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/28/2023)

International:

[Mask-Wearing Champions Japan and South Korea Look to End the Habit](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 01/20/2023)

[Meet The F-15J Fighter: Built To Fight China And North Korea](#) (19FortyFive, 01/28/2023)

[U.N. rapporteur for N. Korea human rights to visit S. Korea next week](#) (Yonhap, 01/28/2023)

[World War III And IV? Why A U.S.-China War Might Have A Sequel](#) (19FortyFive, 01/26/2023)

Top News:

- In his New Year's Eve address, North Korea's dictator, Kim Jong-un, called for an "exponential increase" in his country's nuclear arsenal. This followed a year during which the North launched a record number of ballistic missiles of all ranges, including a new missile assessed to be capable of striking any city on the American homeland. Kim's intention to expand his nuclear stockpile should not come as a surprise. (Robert Joseph, [National Review](#))

In North Korea:

- The U.S. is "crossing the line" and putting Europe in danger by providing arms to Ukraine, the North Korean leader's powerful sister Kim Yo Jong said in a statement on Friday (U.S. time). (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- North Korea condemned on Friday the decision by the United States to supply Ukraine with advanced battle tanks to help fight off Russia's invasion, saying Washington is escalating a sinister "proxy war" aimed at destroying Moscow. (Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's main opposition party leader Lee Jae-myung called the Yoon Suk Yeol administration a "dictatorial regime" controlled by prosecutors as he appeared at a district prosecutors' office in Seoul on Saturday as a suspect to a high-profile land corruption scandal. (Son Ji-hyoung, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Opposition leader Lee Jae-myung on Saturday released a statement rejecting corruption allegations over a property development project after he appeared before prosecutors for questioning. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's government said Friday it will promote civilian efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to North Korea in hopes of softening a diplomatic freeze deepened by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's growing nuclear ambitions. (Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol dialed back recent remarks that Seoul could develop its own nuclear weapons, saying in an interview that his focus is on working closely with the U.S. on North Korean proliferation. (Matt Murray, [The Wall Street Journal](#))

- Mutual information dissemination between the two Koreas will be a key agenda item of the Yoon Suk Yeol administration, the unification minister said Friday. Sharing with reporters the results of his meeting with Yoon earlier in the day, Unification Minister Kwon Young-se said, "It will be important to not only inform the international community clearly about the human rights situation in the North, but also to help the North Koreans know the reality themselves." (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- Officials in Tokyo and Seoul on Friday called for easing of mask protocols, overriding concerns from some who say the practice still saves lives and keeps away a variety of ailments. (Miho Inada, [The Wall Street Journal](#))
- Back in December 2022, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida announced a plan to double Japan's military spending by 2028 — bringing the nation into line with the NATO standard of 2% of GDP. (Christian Orr, [19FortyFive](#))
- Elizabeth Salmon, the U.N. special rapporteur for North Korea's human rights, will visit South Korea next week, diplomatic sources here said Saturday. ([Yonhap](#))
- A war between China and the United States is horrible to contemplate, but we might hope that such a war would bring a degree of closure to US-China competition, and peace to the region. "The object in war is a better state of peace," or so said British military historian B.H. Liddell Hart. (Robert Farley, [19FortyFive](#))

Prepared by Tessa Aguilar, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240505102154/https://mailchi.mp/2c7dd5910217/hrnk-news-itemseconomic-sanctions-during-humanitarian-emergencies-the-case-of-n-koreaunc-says-sk-militarys-tit-for-tat-action-not-legitimate-11190902>

Sunday, January 29, 2023

FM Park, NATO chief discuss North Korea, expanding ties; North denies sending arms to Russia, slams U.S. for 'groundless rumors'

In North Korea:

[N. Korea rejects alleged arms trading with Russia, warns of 'undesirable result'](#) ([Yonhap](#), 01/29/2023)
[North denies sending arms to Russia, slams U.S. for 'groundless rumors'](#) ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#), 01/29/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea mistakenly fires machine gun near border with N. Korea](#) ([Yonhap](#), 01/29/2023)

International:

[FM Park, NATO chief discuss North Korea, expanding ties](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 01/29/2023)

[NATO chief stresses 'interconnected' security amid N. Korean support of Russian war efforts](#) (*Yonhap*, 01/29/2023)

[NATO to address North Korea-Russia arms trade](#) (*Korea JoongAng Daily*, 01/29/2023)

[What's behind N.Korean criticism of US' Ukraine support?](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 01/29/2023)

In North Korea:

- A senior North Korean official on Sunday rejected alleged weapons transactions with Russia, warning the United States of an "undesirable result" if it continues to spread such rumors. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea slammed U.S. allegations that it had conducted arms transactions with Russia Sunday, warning of an "undesirable result" if Washington continues to spread such "groundless rumors." (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- A South Korean soldier has mistakenly fired a machine gun during training near the border with North Korea, and the military has immediately informed North Korea that the shooting was not intentional, military officials said Sunday. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- Foreign Minister Park Jin and NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg on Sunday discussed jointly working on curbing North Korea's nuclear ambitions and bolstering ties between the Asian country and the 30-member military alliance. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said Sunday that North Korean support of Russia in the war in Ukraine reinforces the need for the rest of the world to stay "interconnected" in their security efforts. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's arms trade with Russia, and its nuclear brinkmanship, will be addressed by NATO and its Asian partners, said the military alliance's chief Jens Stoltenberg in Seoul on Sunday. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea on Sunday denounced the US' decision to provide advanced battle tanks to Ukraine once again, while denying Washington's accusation it was supplying weapons to Russia, which it labeled as a "grave provocation" that must be responded to. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240505102438/https://mailchi.mp/clad41364e5d/hrnk-news-itemsfm-park-nato-chief-discuss-north-korea-expanding-ties-north-denies-sending-arms-to-russia-slams-us-for-groundless-rumors>

Monday, January 30, 2023

Remembering Otto Warmbier; 7 of 10 S. Koreans Support Independent Development of Nuclear Weapons: Poll

Top News:

[Remembering Otto Warmbier](#) (HRNK Insider, 01/30/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea lifts respiratory illness-related lockdown in Pyongyang; Russian embassy](#) (Yonhap, 01/30/2023)

[N. Korea releases pictorial book of foreign gifts received by late leader](#) (Yonhap, 01/30/2023)

[N. Korea slams NATO chief's visit to S. Korea as 'prelude' to confrontation, war](#) (Yonhap, 01/30/2023)

[North Korea exports nearly 37 metric tons of wigs and hairpieces to China](#) (NK Pro, 01/30/2023)

[North Korea lifts lockdown in capital five days after 'rising' illness warning](#) (NK Pro, 01/30/2023)

In South Korea:

[7 of 10 S. Koreans support independent development of nuclear weapons: poll](#) (Yonhap, 01/30/2023)

[Accused spies for North Korea likely face imminent arrest](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/30/2023)

[Discussing ROK nuclear armament is 'inappropriate,' unification minister says](#) (NK News, 01/30/2023)

[ROK arrests broker who allegedly smuggled fuel worth \\$15 million to North Korea](#) (NK News, 01/30/2023)

[Seoul rights envoy urges attention to women in North Korea](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/30/2023)

International:

[NATO chief stresses continued need for U.S. 'extended deterrence' against N.K. threats](#) (Yonhap, 01/30/2023)

[Pentagon chief arrives in S. Korea for talks on deterrence against N.K.](#) (Yonhap, 01/30/2023)

['S. Korea, US both have roles to play on nuclear deterrence'](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/30/2023)

[US Defense Officials Not Losing Sight of China, North Korea](#) (VOA, 01/30/2023)

Top News:

- Many who are incarcerated in North Korea are forced to admit to fabricated charges or testify to some other fiction. Otto was also shown publicly apologizing in court. However, there is no evidence of subsequent cooperation with his torturers. Indeed, it is evident he did not cooperate any further. The North Korean regime would have made it public otherwise. Otto appears to have successfully resisted in a heroic manner, and we should remember him for that. (Robert Collins, [HRNK Insider](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea has notified diplomatic missions in Pyongyang of its move to lift a five-day lockdown in the capital area imposed due to rising cases of seasonal respiratory diseases, according to Russia's embassy in the North on Monday. On its official Facebook account, the

embassy has uploaded an image of an official letter sent by the North's foreign ministry on the country's decision to end the "special" quarantine mandate starting Monday. ([Yonhap](#))

- North Korea has released a pictorial book of gifts given to its late leader Kim Jong-il from foreign leaders and governments, including a basketball signed by former NBA superstar Michael Jordan, a Pyongyang propaganda website showed Monday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Monday denounced a visit to South Korea by the chief of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a "prelude" to war, saying the move could bring a "new Cold War" to the Asia-Pacific region. In an article carried by the North's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), Kim Tong-myong, a researcher of the North's organization on international political study, said NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg's current trip to Northeast Asia appears to be aimed at "instigating" the creation of the Asian version of NATO. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea exported nearly 37 metric tons of wigs, fake beards and eyelashes to China in Dec. 2022, making up over half of the country's total exports in the strongest-ever month for one of the DPRK's more niche industries. According to Chinese customs data, the hair exports were worth nearly \$9 million. By comparison, the sum of all the DPRK's hair exports between 2017, when China began publishing customs statistics, and last November was \$6.8 million. (Ethan Jewell, [NK Pro](#))
- Pyongyang instituted the lockdown last Wednesday due to "rising" cases of an unspecified respiratory illness. The original government notice announcing that lockdown added that the measure would be lifted Monday but that it could be extended for three additional days — a scenario apparently deemed unnecessary. State media never acknowledged the lockdown and, since last Thursday, avoided reporting the date of any specific event or meeting in the country, raising questions over whether the order applied to areas outside Pyongyang as well. (Chad O'Carroll, Colin Zwirko, [NK Pro](#))

In South Korea:

- According to the Gallup Korea poll of 1,000 adults, commissioned by the Chey Institute for Advanced Studies, 76.6 percent replied that the South needs to develop nuclear weapons independently to counter Pyongyang's intensifying nuclear threats and deter its provocations. The survey showed 77.6 percent of the respondents considered denuclearization of North Korea to be "impossible," while 78.6 percent said Pyongyang was likely to conduct its seventh nuclear test. ([Yonhap](#))
- Prosecutors will likely file arrest warrants Tuesday against four individuals accused of conducting seditious activities on behalf of North Korea after a court struck down earlier warrant requests. The four individuals were detained by officials from the National Intelligence Service (NIS) and police on Saturday on suspicion of violating the National Security Act, which bans behavior or speech that expresses support for the North Korean regime or communism or advocates the overthrow of the South Korean government. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Discussing a South Korean nuclear program is "inappropriate," unification minister Kwon Young-se said Sunday, weeks after President Yoon Suk-yeol said the country could rapidly acquire or develop nuclear weapons in a worst-case scenario. Bringing nuclear weapons to South Korea in any way will be the same as "demolishing the principle of Korean Peninsula denuclearization with our own hands," he said speaking in a live interview with KBS. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

- South Korea has arrested an oil broker for allegedly supplying around \$14.7 million (18 billion Korean won) worth of diesel fuel to North Korea without government approval, the coast guard announced Monday. Korea Coast Guard's West Sea regional division said in a press release that the unnamed broker carried out over 35 ship-to-ship transfers to smuggle around 18,000 tons of diesel between Oct. 2021 and Jan. 2022. The coast guard's investigation team found that the broker transported the diesel fuel from the ROK using a Russian oil tanker owned by a domestic oil company and then transferred the fuel to a Chinese ship in the South China Sea, which in turn would transfer the fuel to a North Korean vessel. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Lee Shin-hwa, South Korean ambassador for international cooperation on North Korean human rights, said the situation of women and girls in North Korea "deserves a special focus" ahead of a Seoul conference on Monday. "The state of human rights is alarming in North Korea, and especially so for women," she told The Korea Herald. "More North Korean women now contribute to the household economy as breadwinners and yet they still aren't treated as equals and expected to meet patriarchal demands." (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on Monday highlighted the importance of the United States' extended deterrence for South Korea, saying it has an "extremely important task" amid Pyongyang's growing nuclear threats. ([Yonhap](#))
- U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin arrived in Seoul on Monday for talks with his South Korean counterpart over deterrence against North Korean nuclear and missile threats, and other security issues, officials here said. ([Yonhap](#))
- NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said Monday that efforts for nuclear deterrence by South Korea and the US helped nonproliferation, and such readiness to deter aggression is required as long as authoritarian powers do not relinquish their control over atomic weapons. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Less than a week after helping secure billions of dollars in additional military assistance for Ukraine in its fight against Russia, including U.S.- and German-made battle tanks, top U.S. defense officials are shifting their focus to the Indo-Pacific and growing threats from China and North Korea. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin is making his sixth official visit to the region, starting late Monday with high-level meetings in Seoul, followed by a visit to the Philippines to meet with recently elected President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. and his new national security leadership team. (Jeff Seldin, [VOA](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240505102853/https://mailchi.mp/3e624f446e2e/hrnk-news-itemsremembering-otto-war-mbier7-of-10-s-koreans-support-independent-development-of-nuclear-weapons-poll>

Tuesday, January 31, 2023

Arrest looms for accused operators of North Korean spy ring; S. Korea, US agree to further step up military exercises

In North Korea:

[N. Korea seems to be wary of possible resurgence of COVID-19: Seoul ministry](#) (Yonhap, 01/31/2023)

[North Korea may have tested a solid-fuel rocket engine](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/31/2023)

In South Korea:

[Calls for nuclear buildup a chance to widen debate, experts say](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/31/2023)

[Majority supports development of South's own nukes](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/31/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Arrest looms for accused operators of North Korean spy ring](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/31/2023)

[DP chief denies payments made to North for visit](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/31/2023)

International:

[Austin reaffirms U.S. commitment, suggests more F-35 visits](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 01/31/2023)

[North Korean in US custody faces uncertain future due to DPRK's COVID controls](#) (NK News, 01/31/2023)

[Nuclear envoys of S. Korea, Japan hold consultations on N.K. provocations](#) (Yonhap, 01/31/2023)

[Pentagon chief says US-ROK drills will help them see 'eye to eye' on North Korea](#) (NK News, 01/31/2023)

[Pentagon chief stresses 'unwavering' security commitment to S. Korea, reassures full 'extended deterrence'](#) (Yonhap, 01/31/2023)

[S. Korea, US agree to further step up military exercises](#) (The Korea Herald, 01/31/2023)

[U.S. House resolution seeks to denounce socialism, N. Korean leaders](#) (Yonhap, 01/31/2023)

[U.S., S. Korea defense chiefs vow to step up military drills](#) (UPI, 01/31/2023)

[US, South Korea Ramping Up Exercises in Response to North Korean Threats](#) (VOA, 01/31/2023)

[US to increase weapons deployment to counter North Korea](#) (AP, 01/31/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea appears to remain wary of a possible resurgence in COVID-19 cases amid news reports that the North has recently lifted a dayslong lockdown in Pyongyang over respiratory diseases, South Korea's unification ministry said Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- Pyongyang may have tested a solid-fuel missile engine earlier this week, according to an analysis of recent satellite images of a testing site in the North. (Michael Lee, [Korean JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- Growing calls for South Korea's independent nuclear buildup, a discussion that had left the country more divided than united, now offer policymakers latitude to widen the nuclear debate, experts said Tuesday as South Korea steps up efforts for a more powerful military to contain North Korea. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- More South Koreans want the South to develop its own nuclear weapons to deter nuclear and missile threats from the North, according to a recent survey by the Chey Institute. (Kang Tae-Hwa, Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- An arrest warrant is being sought after four individuals accused of operating a spy ring for North Korea, according to a Seoul court on Tuesday. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Democratic Party leader Lee Jae-myung on Tuesday denied that an underwear company paid millions of dollars to Pyongyang in an attempt to secure for him a visit to North Korea. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin confirmed that deterrence assets such as F-22 and F-35 fighter jets will continue to be deployed to South Korea to address security threats from the North. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Mun Chol Myong, the first North Korean national extradited to the U.S., faces an uncertain legal future after completing his sentence on multiple charges of money laundering, as his home country shows little interest in opening its borders to its own people. (Ethan Jewell, [NK News](#))
- The top nuclear envoys of South Korea and Japan held a meeting Tuesday to discuss cooperation in dealing with North Korea's missile and nuclear threats, the Seoul foreign ministry said. ([Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. will continue deploying strategic assets such as advanced fighter jets and Carrier Strike Groups to South Korea in response to North Korean threats, U.S. defense chief said Tuesday in Seoul, while stating that upcoming tabletop exercises will ensure the allies see "eye to eye" on security issues. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Tuesday highlighted America's "ironclad" and "unwavering" security commitment to South Korea, as some raise doubts about Washington's "extended deterrence" commitment for the key ally amid evolving North Korean threats. (Song Sang-ho, Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the US on Tuesday agreed to further expand and reinforce combined exercises and training to counter escalating nuclear and missile threats from North Korea and to achieve "peace through strength" on the Korean Peninsula. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- A resolution proposed in the U.S. House of Representatives seeks to denounce socialism and socialist dictators, including North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and his predecessors, the resolution showed Monday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and his South Korean counterpart Lee Jong-sup agreed Tuesday to expand combined military drills and step up deterrence efforts to respond to evolving North Korean nuclear and missile threats. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))

- The United States and South Korea will increase the pace and scope of joint military exercises, and expand intelligence sharing, in response to repeated and more frequent missile tests by North Korea. (Jeff Seldin, [VOA](#))
- U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Tuesday said the United States will increase its deployment of advanced weapons such as fighter jets and bombers to the Korean Peninsula as it strengthens joint training and operational planning with South Korea in response to a growing North Korean nuclear threat. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP](#))

Prepared by Myriam Arbaud, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506050054/https://mailchi.mp/331c93956013/hrnk-news-items-arrest-looms-for-accused-operators-of-north-korean-spy-ring-s-korea-us-agree-to-further-step-up-military-exercises>

2. FEBRUARY

Wednesday, February 1, 2023

North Korea calls for abolishing UN human rights office in Seoul; North Korea arrests entire family after mother called South Korea

In North Korea:

[Behind the curtain: A photo journey through rural North Korea during COVID](#) (NK News, 2/1/2023)

[\[Column\] Don't abandon North Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 2/1/2023)

[Crypto hacks stole record \\$3.8 billion in 2022, led by North Korea groups - report](#) (Reuters, 2/1/2023)

[N. Korea highlights its ties with Vietnam on 73rd anniv. of diplomatic relations](#) (Yonhap, 2/1/2023)

[N.Korea prioritizes military buildup ahead of army anniversary](#) (The Korea Herald, 2/1/2023)

[North Korea arrests entire family after mother called South Korea](#) (RFA, 2/1/2023)

[Sprawling worker camp appears near North Korea's military nerve center](#) (NK News, 2/1/2023)

In South Korea:

[Democratic Party accuses Yoon of 'rolling back Moon's reforms' of top spy service](#) (The Korea Herald, 2/1/2023)

[\[Editorial\] Strengthening our military discipline first \(KOR\)](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 2/1/2023)

[Foreign minister to lobby for UN seat, nuke talks on US trip](#) (The Korea Herald, 2/1/2023)

[Letters requested invite to North for Lee Jae-myung](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 2/1/2023)

[South Korea's on-again, off-again relationship with nuclear weapons](#) (NK News, 2/1/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[North Korea calls for abolishing UN human rights office in Seoul](#) (NK News, 2/1/2023)

International:

[Ambassador to U.S. vows allies will strengthen joint deterrence against North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 2/1/2023)

[US Nomination of North Korea Rights Envoy Revives Hope for Divided Families](#) (VOA, 2/1/2023)

[U.S., S. Korea to enhance joint deterrence, improve N. Korean human rights: Amb. Cho](#) (Yonhap, 2/1/2023)

[Yoon asks US to strengthen deterrence against North Korea to dispel ROK concerns](#) (NK News, 2/1/2023)

In North Korea:

- In years past, resident humanitarian staff and tourists would visit far-flung rural areas of North Korea on a semi-regular basis, providing updates on goings-on outside the capital and producing photos of daily life. Since the start of the pandemic, the volume of unofficial

information and photos coming out of the DPRK has shrunk considerably. Next to nothing has emerged from the countryside in particular since Jan. 2020, and outside observers have had to rely almost entirely on satellite imagery and state media to understand the situation on the ground, even as the country dealt with a “food crisis.” ([NK News](#))

- Shortly after the start of Joe Biden’s administration in 2021, I met a former U.S. official in a foreign policy meeting. He expressed hope for Korea’s proactive participation in the U.S.-led sanctions on China. “The U.S. government puts top priority on dealing with China,” he said. “Therefore, the North Korean issues should be put aside for a while.” I immediately refuted it. “China may pose a graver risk to the U.S., but North Korea is a more imminent risk,” I said. “If the America cannot resolve the North Korean issue, it will have more trouble dealing with China.” The Biden administration soon came up with a North Korea policy review aimed at denuclearizing the recalcitrant state through “a calibrated, practical approach.” But the details were limited. (Byung-yeon Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Last year was the worst on record for cryptocurrency heists, with hackers stealing as much as \$3.8 billion, led by attackers linked to North Korea who netted more than ever before, a U.S.-based blockchain analytics firm said in a report on Wednesday. The report by Chainalysis found hacking activity that “ebbed and flowed” throughout the year, with “huge spikes” in March and October. October was the biggest single month ever for cryptocurrency hacking, with \$775.7 million stolen in 32 separate attacks, the report said. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea has highlighted its friendly relationship with Vietnam, hoping to continue to develop their ties on the occasion of the 73rd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, according to its state media Wednesday. Vietnam’s ambassador to North Korea and embassy staff members laid a flower basket at the statues of late North Korean former leaders Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il in Pyongyang the previous day to mark the anniversary, the Korean Central News Agency reported. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean state media has stepped up the rhetoric to justify military buildup despite lingering economic woes ahead of the army founding anniversary, saying that defending the country from “enemies” is its priority. “What comes first is to reinforce our own strength and national defense capabilities in order not to become a slave of imperialists,” the Rodong Sinmun, an organ of the ruling Workers’ Party of Korea, said Wednesday in a Korean-language article. “Only in that way can we protect the present and future of the country and people.” (Da-gyum Ji, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Authorities in North Korea have arrested a family of four after one of them was caught making banned telephone calls to her child in South Korea, a punishment that residents say is excessive, sources in the country told Radio Free Asia. While it is illegal for North Koreans to maintain contact with any family members who have escaped to the South, staying in touch with them through the use of cellular phones on the Chinese network is fairly easy in the areas near the Chinese border. (Myung Chul Lee, [RFA](#))
- A giant construction worker camp has appeared in recent weeks in a suburb of Pyongyang long thought to house the headquarters of the country’s military industry, likely indicating a new improvement project is underway. NK Pro analysis of Planet Labs satellite imagery shows the new project began on and near Kangdong Airfield located northeast of the capital in the first days of January, with the camp reaching a size of around 84 acres (34 hectares) by Jan. 30. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- The push by the administration of previous President Moon Jae-in to take away investigative powers from the National Intelligence Service is being rolled back under President Yoon Suk Yeol, Democratic Party of Korea lawmakers claimed Wednesday. Opposition party Reps. Youn Kun-young and Kim Eui-kyeom of the National Assembly's intelligence committee reiterated in a conference that the top spy service should not be allowed to continue investigations of North Korean espionage and meddling. (Arim Kim, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The breakdown of the military discipline of our armed forces spilled over to the navy. Following the uninterrupted infiltration of North Korean drones across the border last December, another case of lax military discipline in the navy has been disclosed. In the face of mounting security threats from North Korea's nuclear weapons, the navy's nonsensical behavior makes us dumbfounded. The shameful case occurred at sea. While patrolling in the southern seas in June 2022, the captain and four sailors aboard a 1,500-ton frigate reported an equipment failure to its headquarters. But that turned out a lie. The vessel hurriedly returned to the naval base in Jeju Island, but no technical glitches were found. ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Foreign Minister Park Jin set off on a five-day tour to the United States on Wednesday to drum up support for South Korea's bid to win a two-year seat on the United Nations Security Council while reinforcing bilateral efforts to denuclearize North Korea. Seoul, which last served on the UN body from 2013 to 2014, is eyeing another term starting next year -- a move it sees as part of its long-term Indo-Pacific strategy to lead the international conversation on peace by discussing more than an increasingly belligerent Pyongyang. The isolated country fired off a record number of missiles last year and shows no signs of dialing back its aggression. (Si-young Choi, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The JoongAng Ilbo has secured documents written by the Gyeonggi government in 2019 asking North Korea to invite then-governor Lee Jae-myung for a visit. The documents are currently being investigated by the Suwon District Prosecutors' Office. The JoongAng Ilbo has secured the first and final drafts of a letter sent to North Korea in Lee's name, as well as a follow-up letter officially requesting a visit by a delegation headed by the governor. (Jeong-won Heo, Ho-jeong Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- "We could acquire our own nuclear weapons." President Yoon Suk-yeol's comments earlier this year marked his most explicit to date about the possibility of South Korea going nuclear. His remarks alarmed many experts, yet they reflect concerns of many in the South about the ever-growing threat from North Korea, and whether the U.S. will really come to its defense when push comes to shove. (James Fretwell, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea's foreign ministry called for the U.N. to abolish its human rights office in Seoul on Tuesday, as the office co-hosted a conference featuring the U.N. special envoy for DPRK human rights. The statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) is attributed to Jang Chol Ho, a researcher at the Korean Association for Human Rights Studies, and accuses the U.N. Human Rights Office (Seoul) of seeking to "[tarnish] the external image of our country at the instigation of the U.S." (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

International:

- South Korea's ambassador to the United States said Tuesday the allies will work closely together to strengthen joint deterrence against threats from North Korea and also improve human rights in the North. Ambassador Cho Tae-yong also said the allies will cooperate to cut off sources of funding for Pyongyang's nuclear weapons and missile development programs. "South Korea and the United States are enhancing their joint deterrent and defense capabilities through close cooperation in all areas," Cho said in a meeting with reporters in Washington. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The nomination of the U.S. special envoy for human rights in North Korea, along with new legislation, has revived hopes for Korean Americans who want to see family in North Korea whom they have not seen since their separation during the Korean War. President Joe Biden nominated Julie Turner, a long-time State Department official, as the U.S. special envoy for human rights in North Korea on January 23. The position has been vacant for the past six years. (Christy Lee, [VOA](#))
- South Korea and the United States will seek to strengthen their joint deterrence against North Korea while also working to improve human rights conditions in the reclusive North, South Korea's ambassador to the U.S., Cho Tae-yong, said Tuesday. The allies will also work together to cut off North Korea's funding for its illicit weapons programs, according to the South Korean diplomat. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol asked the U.S. to push forward discussions about strengthening extended deterrence to allay ROK citizens' concerns about North Korean weapons of mass destruction. Yoon made the request to U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin during a meeting at the presidential office on Tuesday, a few weeks after the South Korean leader remarked that Seoul could rapidly develop nuclear weapons if DPRK threats become more "serious." (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Juntae Rocker, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506050514/https://mailchi.mp/bef75e0be79e/hrnk-news-itemsnorth-korea-calls-for-a-bolishing-un-human-rights-office-in-seoulnorth-korea-arrests-entire-family-after-mother-called-south-korea>

Thursday, February 2, 2023

North Korea-linked hackers stole \$1.7b in 2022; UN chief backs S. Korea's efforts to disarm N. Korea

In North Korea:

[Crypto theft: North Korea-linked hackers stole \\$1.7b in 2022](#) (BBC, 02/02/2023)

[N. Korea says it will take 'toughest reaction' to any U.S. military attempt](#) (Yonhap, 02/02/2023)

[N. Korea warns of 'overwhelming nuclear force' to counter US](#) (AP News, 02/2/2023)

[North Korean hackers stole nearly half of all crypto lost last year: Report](#) (NK Pro, 02/02/2023)

[North Korea holding off nuclear test for leverage: elite defector](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/02/2023)
[North Korea says U.S. drills threaten to turn region into 'critical war zone'](#) (Reuters, 02/02/2023)

In South Korea:

[Defector Thae Yong-ho: South Korea should have its own nukes](#) (UPI, 02/02/2023)
[South Korean expert says North Korea may test a new solid-fuel ICBM in February](#) (Radio Free Asia, 02/01/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Resetting the inter-Korean relationship](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/02/2023)
[South may place sanctions on North hacking groups](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/02/23)

International:

[Families of S. Koreans detained in N. Korea urge U.N. efforts for repatriation](#) (Yonhap, 02/02/2023)
[North Korea Shuts Door on US Talks, Raising Risk of Provocations](#) (Bloomberg, 02/02/2023)
[Pyongyang threatens eye-for-eye response as US B-1B bombers join drills in South Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 02/02/2023)
[S. Korea's top diplomat, UN chief discuss concerns over N. Korea's possible nuke test](#) (Yonhap, 02/02/2023)
[U.S. extends olive branch after North's 'nuke-for-nuke' comment](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/02/2023)
[U.S. will continue to work with UNSC members to hold N. Korea accountable: U.S. ambassador](#) (Yonhap, 02/02/2023)
[UN chief backs S. Korea's efforts to disarm N. Korea](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/02/2023)
[UN secretary-general warns against North's nuke test](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/02/2023)
[White House: U.S. has no hostile intent toward North Korea](#) (Reuters, 02/02/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea-backed hackers stole \$1.7bn (£1.4bn) of crypto in 2022, says blockchain analysis firm Chainalysis. This nearly quadruples the country's previous record for cryptocurrency theft - \$429m in 2021. (Kelly Ng, [BBC](#))
- North Korea said Thursday it will take the "toughest reaction" to any U.S. military attempt under the principle of "nuke for nuke and an all-out confrontation for an all-out confrontation." ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said Thursday it's prepared to counter U.S. military moves with the "most overwhelming nuclear force" as it warned that the expansion of the United States' military exercises with rival South Korea is pushing tensions to an "extreme red line." (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- North Korean hackers were responsible for nearly half of all cryptocurrency-related losses last year, a leading blockchain analytics firm has found, underlying the DPRK's rapid expansion of its cyber activities to fund its weapons programs. (Ethan Jewell, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korea is already prepared to conduct another nuclear test, but is biding its time to gain leverage in negotiations with China and other powers, according to Rep. Tae Yong-ho, a former North Korean diplomat who was elected into the South Korean parliament after defecting in 2016. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

- North Korea said on Thursday that drills by the United States and its allies have reached an "extreme red-line" and threaten to turn the peninsula into a "huge war arsenal and a more critical war zone." (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))

In South Korea:

- Thae Yong-ho, a high-profile North Korean defector who became a politician in South Korea, said Thursday that Seoul should acquire its own nuclear weapons despite Washington's policy of extended deterrence for its ally. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- North Korea may test a new type of solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile in February or in the first half of the year at the latest, a report by a South Korea-based researcher says. (Seung Wook Hong, [Radio Free Asia](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The former Korean Ambassador to Australia calls for treating North Korea as a normal state and demanding it complies with its obligations as a UN member in new column. (Lee Baek-Soon, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea may sanction the North over illicit cyber activities, according to several government sources. The Lazarus Group and Kimsuky, which intelligence officials and cybersecurity professionals say are major North Korean hacking groups, are on a list of groups being considered by the South Korean government as possible targets. (Park Hyun-Ju, Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- The families of South Korean detainees in North Korea on Thursday called for United Nations' efforts to win the release of their loved ones as they met a U.N. special rapporteur for the North's human rights. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's Foreign Ministry said the door remains shut for talks with the US on winding down its atomic arsenal, setting the stage for renewed provocations by pledging to respond to what it saw as threats from Washington. (Jon Herskovitz, [Bloomberg](#))
- North Korea threatened an eye-for-an-eye response to South Korea-U.S. combined military exercises, Thursday, when stealth fighter jets and strategic bombers took part in the two allies' first joint air drills of the year. (Jung Min-Ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korean Foreign Minister Park Jin met with United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Wednesday to discuss international concerns that North Korea may conduct a nuclear test in the near future. ([Yonhap](#))
- The United States is not seeking confrontation with North Korea and is open to discussions with the reclusive state, according to an unnamed source from the White House National Security Council quoted by Reuters. (Micheal Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The United States will continue to work with other members of the United Nations Security Council to hold North Korea accountable for its missile provocations, U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Linda Thomas-Greenfield said Wednesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United Nations is behind South Korea's efforts to denuclearize North Korea and its measures to deter the isolated country from repeating aggressive actions like another nuclear test, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said Wednesday at a meeting with Foreign Minister Park Jin in New York. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

- A seventh nuclear test from North Korea would be a “devastating blow” to global peace, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in his recent meeting with the foreign minister of Korea in New York. (Esther Chung, Park Hyun-Ju, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The White House on Wednesday rejected North Korean accusations that joint military exercises in the region are a provocation and said the United States has no hostile intent toward Pyongyang. ([Reuters](#))

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506051019/https://mailchi.mp/beab74b2a87f/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-linked-hackers-stole-17b-in-2022un-chief-backs-s-koreas-efforts-to-disarm-n-korea>

Friday, February 3, 2023

North Korea students get frostbite after 'patriotic' subzero mountain march

Top News:

[North Korea students get frostbite after 'patriotic' subzero mountain march](#) (The Mirror, 02/03/2023)

In North Korea:

[Cable TV channel says it was dropped over alleged pro-North Korea views](#) (NK News, 02/03/2023)

[N. Korea adopts law on protection of 'state secret'](#) (Yonhap, 02/03/2023)

[New North Korean cyber-espionage campaign targets medical and energy sectors](#) (NK Pro, 02/03/2023)

[North Korea enacts new laws on 'state secrets,' child prodigies and loan debts](#) (NK News, 02/03/2023)

[North Korea likely to celebrate Feb. 8 Army Day anniversary with nighttime event](#) (The Korea Times, 02/03/2023)

[North Korean espionage cases fuel debate about ROK spy agency reform](#) (NK News, 02/03/2023)

In South Korea:

[Unification minister asks for Buddhist circle's help in improving inter-Korean ties](#) (Yonhap, 02/03/2023)

International:

[Britain's trade with N. Korea more than doubles last year: report](#) (Yonhap, 02/03/2023)

[Nicaraguan leader defends North Korea's right to nuclear weapons](#) (NK News, 02/03/2023)

[S. Korea, US stage aerial drills with stealth fighters](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/03/2023)

[US, ROK hold second joint air drills in a week against North Korean threat](#) (NK News, 02/03/2023)

Top News:

- Students in North Korea have been injuring themselves and bribing officials so they can swerve going on a government tour of Mount Paektu – the country's national emblem and official birthplace of Kim Jong-Il. Greg Scarlatoiu, director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, said the news could point to a growing lack of faith in the regime. He said: “Kim Jong-il's birthday is February 16, and Kim Jong-un's is January 8. “Thus, the winter trips to Mount Paektu – the holy mountain of all Koreans, which the Kim family regime claims as its own – are critical to maintaining the Kim family cult.” While clamping down on all religious beliefs, especially Christianity, the Kim family regime has created its own quasi-religious personality cult. “The trip to Mount Paektu is the equivalent of Hajj in Muslim culture or a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and ‘Bethany beyond the Jordan’ for Christians. “If young people are indeed bailing out of these trips, this may indicate that North Koreans are losing their faith in the Kim family genesis myth, and all other elements of the personality cult.” (Ryan Fahey, [The Mirror](#))

In North Korea:

- A major South Korean cable company has dropped a small television network promoting inter-Korean unification over concerns of pro-North Korea bias, the network alleges. *Tongil TV*, which began service in Aug. 2021 and says it aims to promote peaceful reunification of the Koreas through its coverage, says the decision by cable operator KT has left it close to collapsing. (Chad O'Carroll, Yeji Chung, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has adopted a new law aimed at safeguarding state secrets at a parliamentary meeting, its state media said Friday, amid apparent efforts to tighten internal discipline. ([Yonhap](#))
- Report says Lazarus Group showed its hand by mistakenly connecting to victim's server from DPRK IP address. (Ethan Jewell, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korea's rubber-stamp parliament enacted new laws Thursday on “protecting state secrets,” nurturing “prodigies” and resolving issues with financial loans, according to state media, as the country continues a push in recent years to reinforce rule by law. The *Korean Central News Agency* (KCNA) said the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) Standing Committee also approved new laws on railroad management and protecting national symbols, and reviewed an existing law on “guaranteeing living conditions” for discharged military officers. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- A Jan. 28 satellite image revealed by NK News shows objects assumed to be large screens, projectors and light towers around Pyongyang's Kim Il-sung Square. Firework mortar tubes were being installed, indicating that the regime is preparing fireworks for the military parade during the upcoming 75th anniversary of its Army Day on Feb. 8. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- Opposition politician and legal group express concern that NIS opposes transfer of investigation authority to police. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Unification Minister Kwon Young-se on Friday asked for the Buddhist circle's support in helping improve strained inter-Korean ties and revive exchanges with North Korea, his office said. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korea's trade with Britain more than doubled on-year over the one-year period ending in September last year despite the COVID-19 pandemic, a report showed Friday. The value of Britain's transactions of goods and services with the North came to 104 million pounds (US\$127 million) in the cited period, up 116.7 percent from a year earlier, according to the report from the Department for International Trade. ([Yonhap](#))
- Daniel Ortega says US lacks 'authority' to tell DPRK or Iran that they cannot have the bomb. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- South Korea and the US on Friday staged another military air exercise over the west coast of South Korea by mobilizing their stealth fighters, just two days after US strategic bombers flew to the Korean Peninsula for combined aerial drills. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- US defense secretary pledged earlier this week to continue deploying strategic assets to Seoul. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506051610/https://mailchi.mp/affd8ece202e/hrnk-news-itemsnorth-korea-students-g-et-frostbite-after-patriotic-subzero-mountain-march>

Saturday, February 4, 2023

HLS Junior Julia Campbell uses the Global Leaders and Professionals Program to Secure Internship; Is South Korea Going Nuclear?

Top News:

[HLS Junior Julia Campbell uses the Global Leaders and Professionals Program to Secure Internship](#) (Hamilton Lugar School News, 02/03/2023)

In North Korea:

[Jets fly over Pyongyang overnight in likely training for military parade](#) (NK News, 02/04/2023)

[North Korea's Recent Foreign Ministry Statement: Cutting Through the Noise](#) (38 North, 02/03/2023)

[Radiant in new photobook, Kim Jong Un's wife depicted as part of the royal bloodline](#) (Radio Free Asia, 02/04/2023)

In South Korea:

[Is South Korea Going Nuclear?](#) (38 North, 02/03/2023)

International:

[Blinken: US Committed to Improving Allied Defense of South Korea](#) (VOA, 02/03/2023)

[Nuclear Envoys of US, South Korea Downplay Seoul's Nuclear Intent](#) (VOA, 02/04/2023)

[U.S. focused on preserving peace on Korean Peninsula, region: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 02/04/2023)

[U.S. remains committed to using full range of capabilities to defend S. Korea: Blinken](#) (Yonhap, 02/04/2023)

Top News:

- During the 2022 spring semester, Hamilton Lugar School junior Julia Campbell decided to enroll in the Global Leaders and Professionals Program (GLPP). After her time in the program, Campbell felt prepared to apply for her first internship with an organization she was passionate about: the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK). During her four-month internship with HRNK, Campbell had the opportunity to publish an original research article, author digital campaigns, and be featured on the organization's podcast. (Kaiscott, [Hamilton Lugar School News](#))

In North Korea:

- Videos seen by NK News show planes with flares and LED lights, while photos show preparations in Kim Il Sung Square. (Chad O'Carroll, Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- On February 2, the North Korean Foreign Ministry released a statement criticizing recent statements made by US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin during his visit to Seoul, where he outlined measures to bolster extended deterrence for the Republic of Korea (ROK or South Korea). In standard terms, North Korea condemned the visit and the news of US-ROK plans for additional exercises later this year. There were two key points in the statement. First, it mentioned it would not react to "every ill-boding movement shown by the US" in the name of extended deterrence. Second, it rejected any interest in "any contact or dialogue with the US as long as" these kinds of measures continue. ([38 North](#))
- The 100-page propaganda book – being used in educational sessions across the country – venerates the so-called "Paektu bloodline" going back to national founder Kim Il Sung, but in a more personable, family-friendly way than the more bombastic personality cult that Kim Jong Il, the current leader's father, built around himself. But what many North Koreans find jarring about the book is its attempt to burnish Ri's image, "praising her as a noble figure of the Paektu line and a protector of socialism," a source in South Pyongan province told Radio Free Asia on condition of anonymity for security reasons. (Hyemin Son, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In South Korea:

- Under these kinds of threats, South Koreans are seriously asking, can extended deterrence still work? Even the South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol raised the possibility of the Republic of Korea (ROK or South Korea) building its own nuclear weapons in response. US

strategists need to understand these concerns as well as the limits of extended deterrence and prepare for potential alternative futures. (Uk Yang, [38 North](#))

International:

- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said after meeting with his South Korean counterpart that the United States is committed to "improving its allied defense" of South Korea and called the alliance between the two nations the "linchpin" of peace in the region. ([VOA](#))
- South Korea's top nuclear envoy said an agreement with the United States to jointly bolster "extended deterrence" against North Korea gives the Yoon administration needed confidence that the alliance will be able to effectively defend against aggression from Pyongyang. (Eunjung Cho, Christy Lee, [VOA](#))
- The United States remains committed to preserving peace and security on the Korean Peninsula and will continue to work closely with South Korea to that end, a Pentagon spokesperson said Friday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States remains committed to using the full range of its military capabilities, including nuclear, to defend South Korea, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Friday, as people in South Korea are beginning to question the need for their country to consider its own nuclear armament. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506052130/https://mailchi.mp/6d3f6ab53080/hrnk-news-itemshls-junior-julia-campbell-uses-the-global-leaders-and-professionals-program-to-secure-internships-south-korea-going-nuclear>

Sunday, February 5, 2023

U.S. has failed to halt North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons

Top News:

[U.S. has failed to halt North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons](#) (The Washington Times, 02/02/2023)

In North Korea:

[They eat ice cream and read 'Harry Potter,' but these North Korean Youtubers aren't what they seem](#) (CNN, 02/05/2023)

International:

[Peace on Korean Peninsula without denuclearization is not real peace: S. Korean FM](#) (Yonhap, 02/04/2023)

[S. Korea, US vow action on N. Korea amid push for new ties](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/05/2023)

Top News:

- It should be clear that over the past 32 years, efforts by the U.S., with active support of South Korea and Japan, have failed to halt North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons. The withdrawal of U.S.-based tactical weapons from South Korea in 1991 and the North-South Nuclear Agreement of 1992 had no impact on North Korea's determination to build nuclear weapons. Moreover, the 1994 Agreed Framework, which committed the U.S. to provide North Korea with two light water nuclear reactors for peaceful energy in exchange for dismantling the Yongbyon nuclear facility, was violated by the North when the intelligence community discovered in 2002 that North Korea had a clandestine highly-enriched uranium program for nuclear weapons. (Joseph R. DeTrani, [The Washington Times](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean propaganda isn't new; previous campaigns have featured Soviet-style posters, videos of marching troops and missile tests, and images of Kim Jong Un on a white horse. But experts say the YouTube videos, and similar North Korean social media accounts on Chinese platforms like Weibo and Bilibili, illustrate a new strategy: Relatability. (Jessie Yeung, Gawon Bae, [CNN](#))

International:

- Peace without complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is not real peace, South Korean Foreign Minister Park Jin insisted Friday, with his U.S. counterpart, Antony Blinken, underscoring U.S. commitment to fully denuclearize the peninsula. (Byun Duk-Kun, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the United States, its biggest ally, have reaffirmed their commitment to using their full range of firepower, including US nuclear weapons, to contain North Korea, while also expanding economic and space exchanges in the latest joint push to mark 70 years of relations this year. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506054117/https://mailchi.mp/945686e7ae75/hrnk-news-items-us-has-failed-to-halt-north-koreas-pursuit-of-nuclear-weapons>

Monday, February 6, 2023

N. Korean leader Kim Jong-un goes missing ahead of military parade, N. Korean balloon flew into ROK airspace but didn't pose threat

In North Korea:

[\(LEAD\) N. Korea to hold ruling party plenary meeting on agriculture this month](#) (Yonhap News, 02/06/2023)

[North Korean leader Kim Jong-un goes missing ahead of military parade](#) (The Telegraph, 02/06/2023)

In South Korea:

[NIS forms interagency team to probe suspected ant-communist law violations](#) (Yonhap News, 02/06/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Democratic Party head Lee's alleged contact with North Korea 'clear violation': justice minister](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/06/2023)

[North Korean balloon flew into ROK airspace but didn't pose threat, Seoul says](#) (NK News, 02/06/2023)

[S. Korea closely watching N. Korea's 'increased' activities to prepare for military parade: Seoul official](#) (The Korea Times, 02/06/2023)

International:

[Blinken reiterates the U.S. commitment to defending Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/05/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea plans to hold a plenary meeting of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) in late February to discuss issues related to agricultural development, its state media said Monday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap News Agency](#))
- Kim Jong-un has not been seen in public for 35 days ahead of an expected mass parade in Pyongyang this week to celebrate the North Korean military's 75th anniversary. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))

In South Korea:

- The National Intelligence Service (NIS) said Monday it has formed a joint team with the prosecution and police to investigate suspected anti-communist law violation cases until the end of the year. ([Yonhap News Agency](#))

Inter- Korean Relationship:

- Minister of Justice Han Dong-hoon said Monday Democratic Party of Korea chair Rep. Lee Jae-myung's alleged interaction with North Korea in 2019 would be "a clear violation of the law." (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- A North Korean balloon crossed over the border into ROK airspace on Sunday, according to South Korea's defense ministry, days after a suspected Chinese spy balloon stirred up a major controversy by floating over the mainland U.S. The South Korean military "took measures" against the balloon but concluded the operation after determining that it did not pose a security threat, the defense ministry told NK News. (Jeongmin Kim, Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- South Korea's military is closely monitoring "increased activities" by North Korea in apparent preparations for a military parade, a Seoul official said Monday amid speculation that the reclusive regime may stage a nighttime parade in Pyongyang later this week. ([The Korea Times](#))

International:

- The United States remains committed to using all of its military capabilities, including nuclear, to defend South Korea, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Friday after talks with South Korean Foreign Minister Park Jin. ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Venesia Delancy, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506054312/https://mailchi.mp/915f12244209/hrnk-news-items-us-has-failed-to-halt-north-koreas-pursuit-of-nuclear-weapons-11190942>

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

N. Korea calls for 'perfecting' war readiness posture in meeting chaired by leader Kim; N. Korea unveils 'Missile General Bureau'

In North Korea:

[Brother of missionary detained in North Korea appeals to Biden for help](#) (NK News, 02/07/2023)

[Kim Jong Un calls for North Korea to expand preparations for war](#) (UPI, 02/07/2023)

[Kim Jong Un reappears at military meeting, orders 'intensified' training](#) (NK News, 02/07/2023)

[N. Korea calls for 'perfecting' war readiness posture in meeting chaired by leader Kim](#) (Yonhap, 02/07/2023)

[N. Korea unveils 'Missile General Bureau'](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/07/2023)

[N. Korean leader orders military to improve war readiness](#) (AP News, 02/07/2023)

[North's Kim returns after 40-day absence for military meeting](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/07/2023)

[North to display key weapons at parade Wednesday](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/07/2023)

[The possibly dangerous direction of North Korean economic policy](#) (North Korean Economy Watch, 02/07/2023)

[Understanding Kim Jong Un's Economic Policymaking: Foreign Trade Narrative](#) (38 North, 02/06/2023)

In South Korea:

[New South Korean 'anti-communism unit' to probe North Korean espionage](#) (NK News, 02/07/2023)

[S. Korean ministry vows all policy means to resolve separated families issue](#) (Yonhap, 02/07/2023)

[South Korea steps up efforts to resolve issue of aging separated families](#) (The Korea Times, 02/07/2023)

International:

[U.S. closely watching N. Korea for upcoming military parade: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 02/07/2023)

[U.S. to continue efforts to free S. Koreans detained by N. Korea: Washington official](#) (Yonhap, 02/07/2023)

In North Korea:

- Kim Jong-uk has been held for nearly 10 years and is one of six known South Korean nationals in DPRK captivity. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un led a meeting that called on the country's military to expand its combat drills and move toward "perfecting the preparedness for war," state media reported on Tuesday. The meeting of the military commission of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea "discussed in depth the major military and political tasks for 2023," according to state-run Korean Central News Agency. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- Meeting on eve of likely military parade marks North Korean leader's first appearance in over one month. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has convened a meeting of the ruling party's central military commission to discuss ways to expand operational combat drills and "more strictly perfect" its readiness posture for war, according to its state media Tuesday. North Korean leader Kim Jong-un presided over an enlarged meeting of the Central Military Commission of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) on Monday, according to the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea belatedly disclosed the establishment of the general bureau dedicated to missile development ahead of a widely expected military parade marking the founding anniversary of its armed forces. The choreographed move, Seoul-based experts said, shows the country's intent to openly reaffirm its goal of perpetuating missile buildup based on institutionalized processes run by the bureau. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has ordered his military to expand its combat exercises and strengthen war preparedness as he looks to escalate an already provocative run in weapons demonstrations in the face of deepening tensions with its neighbors and Washington. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- North Korea's ruling Workers' Party convened a meeting of its Central Military Commission to "perfect" its readiness for war, Pyongyang's state media reported Tuesday. North Korean leader Kim Jong-un presided over the meeting, according to the state-controlled Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). Photos released by the KCNA on Tuesday showed one of the flags behind Kim displaying the words "Missile Management Agency" along the edge of a circular logo that included a stylized depiction of the North's longest-range intercontinental ballistic missile, the Hwasong-17, being fired. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea is likely to display upgraded short-range ballistic missiles it has been aggressively testing, and possibly a solid-fuel version of its longest-range intercontinental ballistic missile, at a military parade expected to take place Wednesday. Feb. 8 marks the 75th anniversary of North Korea's founding of its military. (Cho Jung-Woo, Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- We've seen a clear retrenchment in overall economic policy, and the state has centralized foreign trade. But what if it wants to lower foreign trade overall? Self-reliance, after all, remains the core ideology. (Benjamin Katzeff Silberstein, [North Korean Economy Watch](#))
- Attention on North Korean external trade tends to focus on the numbers, the import-export balance or earnings from specific export commodities, such as coal. The most recent spate of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) sanctions was designed to limit export of commodities on the grounds that earnings from these have been funding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK or North Korea) weapons programs. (Robert Carlin, Racel Minyoung Lee, [38 North](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea is introducing a new “anti-communism unit” that will lead investigations into North Korean espionage, a development that follows controversy over an investigation into several alleged DPRK spy rings. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea plans to mobilize all available policy means to resolve the issue of families separated by the 1950-53 Korean War, prioritizing identifying whether their relatives in North Korea are alive, Seoul's unification ministry said Tuesday. Under the 2023-25 plan to deal with the long-pending issue, the ministry said it plans to focus on resuming exchanges of war-torn families and addressing issues stemming from the inter-Korean division, such as prisoners of war and South Koreans detained in the North. ([Yonhap](#))
- Only 30% of reunion applicants still alive; gov't desperate for any means of connection, (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- The United States is closely watching North Korea and its widely anticipated military parade, a state department spokesperson said Monday, while also highlighting U.S. commitment to the security of South Korea. The department spokesperson, Ned Price, noted the military parades are have more "propaganda value" than any material value to North Korea. "These are always exercises that we watch," Price told a daily press briefing. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- Jung Pak, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, stressed the U.S. has "closely coordinated" with Seoul on the issue at a meeting with South Koreans with family members detained across the inter-Korean border. "The U.S. calls for the immediate release of all those who are unlawfully detained, and remains committed to promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms for all," Pak said at the meeting held at the U.S. embassy in Seoul. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506054620/https://mailchi.mp/c7a6a4da3c9a/hrnk-news-itemsn-korea-calls-for-perfecting-war-readiness-posture-in-meeting-chaired-by-leader-kimn-korea-unveils-missile-general-bureau>

Wednesday, February 8, 2023

Kim Jong-un Gives Clearest Sign Daughter Is Heir Apparent; UN Experts - NK Hackers Stole Record Virtual Assets

In North Korea:

[Daughter-centered photos, title of honor reinforce speculation over North Korea succession](#) (*The Korea Times*, 02/08/2023)

[Frozen fingers and toxic fumes: How North Koreans endure the brutal winter cold](#) (*NK News*, 02/08/2023)

[Illuminated jets fly over Pyongyang in latest sign of imminent military parade](#) (NK News, 02/08/2023)
[Imported white horses burnish Kim's image and tie him to Korea's mythical past](#) (Radio Free Asia, 02/06/2023)
[Kim Jong Un and daughter dine with military commanders ahead of weapons show](#) (NK News, 02/08/2023)
[Kim Jong Un Hails His Military as 'Strongest in the World'](#) (VOA, 02/08/2023)
[Kim Jong Un's elite photographers spare no expense to get the best shot](#) (NK Pro, 02/08/2023)
[N. Korean leader visits barracks with his daughter to mark army founding anniv.](#) (Yonhap, 02/08/2023)
[North Korea's Kim Jong Un gives clearest sign daughter is heir apparent](#) (The Washington Post, 02/08/2023)
[North Korea's Kim lauds army ahead of expected military parade](#) (Reuters, 02/08/2023)
[North Korea party meeting set to discuss 'urgent' food issue](#) (AP News, 02/06/2023)
[Over dozen suspected missile shelters appear in Pyongyang before military parade](#) (NK Pro, 02/08/2023)
[Why balloons could be the next weapon in North Korea's ever-expanding arsenal](#) (NK News, 02/07/2023)
[Why Kim Jong Un held a banquet at Pyongyang's biggest hotel for foreigners](#) (NK News, 02/08/2023)

In South Korea:

[Kim again takes lead in PPP leadership race: poll](#) (Yonhap, 02/08/2023)
[ROK explores plan to expand civilian bunkers against North Korean attack](#) (NK News, 02/08/2023)
[Seoul proposes system to inform families if relatives in North Korea are alive](#) (NK News, 02/08/2023)
[S. Korea plans 1st formation flight of stealth drones around 2025](#) (Yonhap, 02/08/2023)
[S. Korea to hold nationwide civil air defense drills in May after 6-year hiatus](#) (Yonhap, 02/08/2023)
[Yoon presides over defense meeting, chides Moon for 'fake peace'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/08/2023)

International:

[Biden: US Will Act if China Threatens its Sovereignty](#) (KBS World, 02/08/2023)
[N. Korean leader sends condolences to Syria over quake](#) (Yonhap, 02/08/2023)
[North Korea: Deteriorating human rights situation calls for international attention](#) (Amnesty International, 02/07/2023)
[S. Korea, U.S., Japan to hold vice ministerial meeting in Washington next week](#) (Yonhap, 02/08/2023)
[S. Korea to attend IPEF's special negotiation round for talks on supply chain, economy](#) (Yonhap, 02/08/2023)
[S. Korean team arrives in quake-stricken Turkey to help search, rescue operations](#) (Yonhap, 02/08/2023)
[UN experts: North Korean hackers stole record virtual assets](#) (AP News, 02/08/2023)
[Vietnam War haunts S. Korea as it seeks to settle Japan dispute](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/08/2023)
[Washington and Seoul seek 'preemptive' action against North Korean cyberattacks](#) (NK News, 02/08/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's daughter made a public appearance again, Tuesday, this time with top military brass posing respectfully behind her at a banquet held the day before the 75th anniversary of the founding of its armed forces. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- Efforts to stay warm run up against fuel scarcity, while traditional coal briquettes can lead to poisoning deaths. (James Fretwell, [NK News](#))
- Illuminated jets and propeller planes flew low over Pyongyang around 1 a.m. Wednesday, videos taken in the capital and seen by NK News show, suggesting that North Korea has begun an anticipated military parade to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the foundation of the Korean People's Army. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- "The residents are getting hungrier and hungrier," Jihyun Park, a North Korean escapee who now lives in the United Kingdom, told RFA's Korean Service. "On top of making nuclear weapons and missiles, the North Korean authorities buy expensive horses. This is really infuriating." (Jinwoo Cho, trans. Claire Shinyoung Oh Lee and Leejin J. Chung, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- Mostly celebratory speech did not mention foreign policy or specific arms as large-scale military parade looms. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- Kim also hailed the Korean People's Army as the "strongest in the world," according to *Rodong Sinmun*, that "radiates an extraordinary sense of responsibility and an unbreakable superhuman willpower." (Eunice Kim, [VOA](#))
- Leader's news team uses expensive and potentially sanctioned hardware, while taking pains to conceal digital footprints. (Ángel García, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has visited the barracks of the country's general-grade officers together with his daughter to mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of the armed forces, according to state media Wednesday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has given the clearest signal yet that he is positioning his middle-school-aged daughter as his successor, analysts say, after a raft of official photos showed the girl holding center stage in a banquet hall full of military top brass. (Min Joo Kim, [The Washington Post](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un called for strengthening the country's military, state media reported on Wednesday, as he paid tribute to soldiers and met with troops amid expectations for a major military parade showcasing the latest weapons. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea has scheduled a major political conference to discuss the "urgent task" of improving its agricultural sector, a possible sign of worsening food insecurity as the country's economic isolation deepens amid a defiant nuclear weapons push. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- Over a dozen large shelters that could house North Korea's largest nuclear missiles appeared on Wednesday afternoon outside a central Pyongyang square, where a military parade looked set to take place in the coming hours, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery. (Colin Zwirko, [NK Pro](#))
- As the U.S. grapples with the flight of a suspected Chinese spy balloon over the mainland last week, the news that a North Korean balloon drifted into South Korea on Sunday has raised new questions about the capabilities Pyongyang could attain by investing in advanced balloon technology. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea travel experts express surprise at use of Yanggakdo Hotel, formerly the main accommodation for tourists. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Rep. Kim Gi-hyeon of the ruling People Power Party has reclaimed the front-runner position in the race for party leader in the wake of a row between his rival Rep. Ahn Cheol-soo and the office of President Yoon Suk Yeol, a poll showed Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- Seoul's unification ministry has proposed establishing a system that would allow South Koreans separated from family members in North Korea to confirm whether their relatives are still alive. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea plans to conduct its first formation flight of stealth drones around 2025, Korean Air Co. said Wednesday, as the aircraft development project gained traction following North Korea's drone infiltrations late last year. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea plans to stage nationwide civil air defense drills in May for the first time in six years, its military said Wednesday, in a move to reinforce public safety amid evolving North Korean nuclear and missile threats. ([Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol criticized the Moon Jae-in administration for neglecting to conduct proper integrated defense drills involving the government, the military, police and civilians in pursuit of a "fake peace," during a pan-government defense meeting Wednesday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- U.S. President Joe Biden has pledged to protect U.S. sovereignty in the face of a threat by China in his second State of the Union Address on Tuesday. Meanwhile, Biden made no mention of North Korea in his speech. ([KBS World](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has sent a message of condolences to his Syrian counterpart over the latest earthquake that has claimed more than 7,800 lives in Turkey and Syria, according to state media Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- The scale and gravity of violations in North Korea demand attention from the international community. In particular, the governments of South Korea, the United States and others must create opportunities for their human rights envoys to engage in dialogue with North Korea. (Boram Jang, [Amnesty International](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan will hold a vice ministerial meeting in Washington next week to discuss the security situation on the Korean Peninsula and ways to boost trilateral cooperation, Seoul's foreign ministry said Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea will participate in a special round of negotiations for the United States-led Indo-Pacific Economic Framework to be held in India this week to discuss supply chains, fair economy and green technologies, the industry ministry said Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- A team of more than 110 South Korean workers arrived in Turkey on Wednesday to support the country's ongoing search and rescue operations following a devastating earthquake earlier this week, according to Seoul's foreign ministry. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean hackers working for the government stole record-breaking virtual assets last year estimated to be worth between \$630 million and more than \$1 billion, U.N. experts said in a new report. (Edith M. Lederer, [AP News](#))
- South Korea is facing potential hurdles in its yearslong battle to put behind once and for all its longtime historical dispute with Japan over forced labor, as it is now forced to revisit a claim that the Korean military was responsible for murdering civilians during the Vietnam War. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Yesun Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506055129/https://mailchi.mp/54b88342c12c/hrnk-news-items-kim-jong-un-gives-clear-sign-daughter-is-heir-apparent-un-experts-nk-hackers-stole-record-virtual-assets>

Thursday, February 9, 2023

HRNK News Items: North Korea's Kim Jong Un shows off ICBMs, nuclear weapons in parade

In North Korea:

[Daughter of North Korean leader Kim shares spotlight with nuclear missiles](#) (Reuters, 02/09/2023)
[Kim Jong Un accelerates cult of personality with new mural of himself](#) (NK News, 02/08/2023)
[North displays enough ICBM launchers to defeat U.S. missile defense](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/09/2023)
[North Korea displays 'solid-fuel ICBM' at military parade](#) (NK News, 02/09/2023)
[N. Korea holds military parade in Pyongyang to mark armed forces' founding](#) (NK News, 02/08/2023)
[North Korea holds military parade to celebrate Korean People's Army](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/09/2023)
[North Korea's Kim Jong Un shows off ICBMs, nuclear weapons in parade](#) (The Washington Post, 02/09/2023)
[North Korean military parade kicks off as fireworks and jets soar over capital](#) (NK News, 02/08/2023)
[N. Korean leader attends military parade: ICBMs on display](#) (The Korea Times, 02/09/2023)
[North Korean leader attends military parade with daughter, doesn't give speech](#) (NK News, 02/09/2023)
[North Korean Leader Mum as Military Parade Rolls Out Largest ICBM Display](#) (Voice of America, 02/09/2023)
[North Korea rolls out most long-range nuclear missiles ever at military parade](#) (NK News, 02/09/2023)
[North Korea shows off largest-ever number of nuclear missiles at nighttime parade](#) (Reuters, 02/09/2023)
[Security tight in North Korean capital for military parade and Kim Jong Il's birthday](#) (Radio Free Asia, 02/08/2023)

In South Korea:

[Panel points to major holes in South's cyber security](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/09/2023)
[Seoul to launch microsatellite system to monitor North Korean nuclear threats](#) (NK News, 02/09/2023)
[Yoon visits Turkish embassy to mourn earthquake victims](#) (Yonhap News, 02/09/2023)

International:

[Australia to deploy long-range aircraft to monitor North Korea sanctions evasion](#) (NK News, 02/09/2023)

[UK reports trade with North Korea doubled last year despite border closures](#) (NK News, 02/09/2023)

[N. Korea's top diplomat sends condolence message to quake-hit Turkey](#) (The Korea Times, 02/09/2023)

[\(3rd LD\) S. Korean team rescues 5 survivors in quake-hit Turkey](#) (Yonhap News, 02/09/2023)

In North Korea:

- Sharing drinks, watching missile parades and dining with senior army commanders, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's daughter was center stage with her father and mother at major military events this week. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un appears to have recently approved the installation of just the second known large artistic mural of himself in the country, according to state media, replacing a previous mural that showed the country's former leaders and accelerating his own cult of personality. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea displayed the largest number of its longest-range intercontinental ballistic missile at a nighttime military parade on Wednesday, as well as mock-ups of a new solid-fuel missile under development, state media photos showed Thursday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un brought his daughter to a massive military parade showing off the regime's most advanced weapons, state media reported Thursday. Among the arms on display was what appeared to be a solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile. (Jung Min-Ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea held a military parade in Pyongyang Wednesday to mark the 75th founding anniversary of its armed forces, an informed source said, in what was seen as a highly choreographed event to flaunt its military might and foster national unity. ([The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea held a military parade late Wednesday, its first since April 2022, in celebration of the 75th foundation anniversary of the Korean People's Army (KPA). Maxar Technologies' satellite images show what appears to be a convoy of missiles, including North Korea's longest-range intercontinental ballistic missile Hwaseong-17 and slightly shorter-range missiles, passing through a huge crowd in front of the Kim Il Sung Square in Pyongyang. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has taken his "beloved daughter" to a huge military parade that, Pyongyang claims, showed off its most advanced weapons, including "tactical nuclear units" and intercontinental ballistic missiles. (Min Joo-Kim, [The Washington Post](#))
- A widely expected North Korean military parade kicked off at around 9 p.m. Wednesday, as fireworks over Pyongyang and multiple other indicators pointed to the start of the celebration for the country's military foundation day. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has staged a massive military parade in Pyongyang to mark the 75th founding anniversary of its armed forces, its state media confirmed Thursday, describing intercontinental ballistic missiles. ([The Korea Times](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un attended a military parade in Pyongyang on Wednesday featuring the country's largest nuclear missiles, with his daughter joining him on the viewing stand, according to state media. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- A grand nighttime event in Pyongyang Wednesday parading military hardware featured the largest contingent of North Korean intercontinental ballistic missiles to date, including a

handful believed to be mock-ups of nuclear-capable missiles that would run on solid-fuel engines. (Eunice Kim, [Voice of America](#))

- North Korea unveiled more nuclear weapons than it ever has at a single time during a military parade on Wednesday, including a new apparent solid-fuel long-range missile and at least 11 previously tested intercontinental ballistic missiles. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- Nuclear-armed North Korea showcased its missile production muscle during a nighttime parade, state media reported on Thursday, displaying more intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) than ever before and hinting at a new solid-fuel weapon. (Josh Smith and Soo Hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))
- North Korean authorities have ratcheted up security this month in Pyongyang, apparently to prevent travelers from bringing weapons or explosives into the capital that might mar a big military parade or the birthday of Kim Jong Un's father Kim Jong Il. (Chang Gyu Ahn, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's defenses against North Korean hackers are hampered by Seoul's lack of clear guidance for private companies and the country's balkanized cyber security market, a risk analyst said at an expert panel on Thursday. The discussion, titled "Deterring North Korean Cyber Attacks," was part of a two-day panel series at the Four Seasons Hotel in Jongno District, central Seoul, hosted by the British Embassy in Seoul as part of its Cyber Week that kicked off on Wednesday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea will develop a new microsatellite system to monitor North Korean activities and strengthen national security response capabilities by 2030, Seoul's defense procurement agency said Thursday. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol visited the Turkish Embassy in Seoul on Thursday to offer his condolences over the victims of this week's devastating earthquake in Turkey, his office said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Total trade in goods and services between North Korea and the U.K. reached \$127 million over a 12-month period ending last year, the U.K. government confirmed to NK News on Wednesday, more than double the amount during the previous period. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son-hui has sent a letter of condolence to her Turkish counterpart over a devastating earthquake that struck the nation, Pyongyang's state media reported Thursday. ([The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea's disaster relief team operating in quake-struck Turkey rescued five survivors Thursday, according to on-site team officials and Seoul's foreign ministry. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Jack Boone, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506055615/https://mailchi.mp/17bd0d24bbee/hrnk-news-items/hrnk-news-items-north-koreas-kim-jong-un-shows-off-icbms-nuclear-weapons-in-parade>

Friday, February 10, 2023

North Korea's Political Warfare Strategy Has Failed: ROK - U.S. Alliance Needs a Superior Strategy

Top News:

[North Korea's Political Warfare Strategy Has Failed: ROK - U.S. Alliance Needs a Superior Strategy \(1945, 02/09/2023\)](#)

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un's forgotten toys: The fighting vehicles at the Feb. 8 parade](#) (NK News, 02/10/2023)

[N.K. leader calls for stronger military power in photo session with parade participants](#) (Yonhap, 02/10/2023)

[North Korea rolls out more ICBMs than ever for military parade](#) (NK News, 02/10/2023)

[North Korea sends condolences to Syria, Turkey after quakes](#) (NK News, 02/10/2023)

[Parade flag hints at existence of yet another new North Korean ICBM](#) (NK News, 02/10/2023)

[Why North Korea flexed long-range missile might at latest parade](#) (NK News, 02/10/2023)

In South Korea:

[South Korea issues first-ever cyber sanctions against North Korea](#) (NK News, 02/10/2023)

[S. Korea sanctions N. Korea over cybertheft for the first time](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/10/2023)

[S. Korea's talk of nuclear armament warranted, but should focus on U.S. extended deterrence](#) (Yonhap, 02/10/2023)

International:

[S. Korea, U.S. intelligence agencies issue joint security advisory against N.K. cyber threat](#) (Yonhap, 02/10/2023)

[U.S. offer for dialogue remains on table, but will not reduce sanctions on N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 02/10/2023)

Top News:

- The international community must understand that the only way to end the nuclear program and the human rights abuses is through unification of the Korean peninsula. The ROK and U.S. must continue to maintain the highest state of military readiness to deter war and then adopt a human rights upfront approach, a comprehensive and sophisticated information and influence activities campaign, and focus all efforts on the pursuit of a free and unified Korea – ultimately leading to a United Republic of Korea (UROC). (Matthew Ha, David Maxwell, [1945](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea's meticulously choreographed mass celebrations can seem as though they've continuously intensified since Kim Jong Un's ascension to power. The now annual events can

seem like a neverending rising tone: forever escalating the threat posed by the isolated nation's armed forces. (Joost Oliemans, [NK News](#))

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un called for bolstering the country's military strength at an unprecedented pace, during a photo session with the participants of a military parade held earlier this week, Pyongyang's state media reported Friday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- No less than 17 intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) drove through Kim Il Sung Square in central Pyongyang during Wednesday's military parade, in a menacing assertion of North Korea's ability to carry out a nuclear strike against nearly any target on Earth. (Joost Oliemans, [NK News](#))
- North Korean state media this week covered the devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, reporting that Kim Jong Un and his foreign minister sent condolence letters to the countries. (Seung-Yeon Chung, [NK News](#))
- North Korea rolled out two types of intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) at its military parade this week – one known and one new – but Pyongyang may be preparing to unveil a third, according to NK Pro analysis of state media's parade coverage. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea carried out a large-scale military parade on Wednesday celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Korean People's Army (KPA), using the opportunity to unveil a seemingly new type of solid-fuel long-range missile as thousands of soldiers goose-stepped through Kim Il Sung Square. (Ethan Jewell, Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- The South Korean government announced unilateral sanctions on Friday against four North Korean individuals and seven entities that raise funds for the country's nuclear and missile programs, Seoul's first-ever independent sanctions targeting DPRK cyber activities. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- South Korea has imposed sanctions on North Korean individuals and groups for stealing cryptocurrency assets and coordinating cyberattacks, the first independent steps to curb cybercrimes that Seoul says are linked to bankrolling Pyongyang's nuclear and missile programs. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Discussions about South Korea developing its own nuclear capabilities may be warranted amid increasing nuclear threats from North Korea but the country is not at a point where it should actually consider such an option, a former U.S. National Security Council (NSC) official said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Intelligence agencies of South Korea and the United States on Friday issued a joint security advisory against illicit North Korean cyber activities aimed at stealing cryptocurrencies through ransomware attacks. ([Yonhap](#))
- The United States continues to remain open to dialogue with North Korea but will not reduce sanctions on the reclusive country just to bring Pyongyang back to the dialogue table, a state department spokesperson said Thursday. (Byun, Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ava Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

Saturday, February 11, 2023

Kim Jong Un shows off daughter, missiles at N. Korean parade; U.S. has many tools available to hold N. Korea accountable: State Dept.

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un shows off daughter, missiles at N. Korean parade](#) (AP News, 02/11/2023)

[North Korea 'teeters on the brink of famine' amid chronic food shortages](#) (The Telegraph, 02/10/2023)

[Why Kim Jong Un wants you to meet his daughter](#) (CNN, 02/11/2023)

In South Korea:

[Wife of North Korean Diplomat: From Pyongyang to Seoul Seeking Freedom for Kids](#) (VOA, 02/10/2023)

International:

[N. Korea, Russia defense cooperation 'not good' for Korean Peninsula: NSC official](#) (Yonhap, 02/11/2023)

[U.S. has many tools available to hold N. Korea accountable: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 02/11/2023)

[U.S. ready to talk with North, but will continue joint exercises with allies](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/10/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his young daughter took center stage at a huge military parade, fueling speculation that she is being primed as a future leader of the isolated country as her father showed off his latest, largest nuclear missiles. (Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))
- North Korea's ruling party will meet later this month to tackle the "urgent" task of reviving the country's agriculture sector as fears rise that chronic food shortages could trigger a humanitarian disaster. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- With his young daughter at this side at two splashy military events this week, Kim Jong Un told the world two things – the Kim family will rule North Korea for another generation and it will have the nuclear weapons to make sure no one can challenge that. (Brad Lendon, [CNN](#))

In South Korea:

- "I can see your son has a bright future ahead of him," a schoolteacher in London told Oh Hye Son. Oh, 55, is the wife of Thae Yong Ho, a member of the South Korean National Assembly.

He defected from North Korea with Oh and their sons in 2016 while serving as the deputy ambassador to the U.K. (Christy Lee, Kim Hyungjin, [VOA](#))

International:

- Defense cooperation between North Korea and Russia is not good for the Korean Peninsula, a White House National Security Council (NSC) official noted Friday, pointing to the possible transfer of Russian military capabilities to the recalcitrant North. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States has a number of tools to hold North Korea to account for its continued and evolving provocations, a state department spokesperson said Friday, after North Korea unveiled what many suspect to be new solid-fuel missiles. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States is ready to engage in talks with North Korea but will continue to coordinate defensive exercises with allies in the region if Pyongyang keeps up its provocations and refuses to engage in diplomacy, a U.S. State Department spokesman said Thursday in Washington. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506061133/https://mailchi.mp/5b31e3614930/hrnk-news-itemskim-jong-un-shows-off-daughter-missiles-at-n-korean-paradeus-has-many-tools-available-to-hold-n-korea-accountable-state-dept>

Sunday, February 12, 2023

NK Leader's Daughter Seen Riding Symbolic White Horse; S. Korea, U.S. Hold Counter-drone Drills

In North Korea:

[Kim's 'respected' daughter: Heir apparent or propaganda vehicle?](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/12/2023)

[N.K. leader's daughter seen riding symbolic white horse](#) (Yonhap News, 02/12/2023)

[N.K. media urges thorough quarantine efforts amid 'very unstable' virus situation](#) (Yonhap News, 02/12/2023)

[NK forces people named 'Ju-ae' to change their names: report](#) (The Korea Times, 02/12/2023)

[Power Organizations after 6th Plenum of the 8th Central Committee](#) (NK Leadership Watch, 02/10/2023)

In South Korea:

[Joint security of the Korean Peninsula is more audacious than nuclear armament](#) (Hankyoreh, 02/12/2023)

[S. Korea to craft plan to develop new guided missile capable of striking N.K. artillery](#) (Yonhap News, 02/12/2023)

[Seoul intensifies crackdown on North Korea spy rings](#) (Nikkei Asia, 02/12/2023)

[Streamline defense procurement](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/12/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Desolate truce village symbolizes latest rift between two Koreas](#) (*The Korea Times*, 02/12/2023)

International:

['Buy America' policy pressuring Samsung, SK in China](#) (*The Korea Times*, 02/12/2023)

[Iranian envoy hopes to mend ties with Korea](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 02/12/2023)

[Japanese forced labor trials to resume in May](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 02/12/2023)

[Korea issuing short-term visas again for travelers from China](#) (*Korea JoongAng Daily*, 02/12/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. hold counter-drone drills amid N. Korean UAV threats](#) (*Yonhap News*, 02/12/2023)

[Taiwan and South Korea to remain key chip hubs, says MKS chief](#) (*Financial Times*, 02/10/2023)

[Tech war: South Korea on alert for technology leaks to China as US restrictions intensify](#) (*South China Morning Post*, 02/12/2023)

[Three more people rescued by Korean emergency response team in Turkey](#) (*Korea JoongAng Daily*, 02/12/2023)

[Vice FM says it's 'a bit early' to predict when S. Korea, Japan will settle forced labor issue](#) (*Yonhap News*, 02/12/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un, placed his young daughter, Kim Ju-ae, front and center at high-profile events last week, rekindling the debate on whether North Korea carves out a path to position Ju-ae as Kim's heir apparent. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korean state TV on Sunday aired footage of leader Kim Jong-un's daughter, Ju-ae, riding a white horse in an apparent display of her legitimacy as a descendant of the ruling family's "Paekdu bloodline." ([Yonhap News](#))
- A North Korean state broadcaster called Sunday for thorough quarantine efforts, pointing to the "very unstable" situation marked by the spread of COVID-19, seasonal flu and other contagious illnesses. ([Yonhap News](#))
- North Korea is compelling people who have the same name as leader Kim Jong-un's daughter, Ju-ae, to change their name, as part of the regime's effort to idolate the young girl, who is assumed to be about 10 years old, and who is expected to be the country's next leader, according to a recent media report. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- This article provides a list of key personnel in North Korea's central institutions following the 6th Plenum of the 8th Central Committee. (Michael Madden, [NK Leadership Watch](#))

In South Korea:

- Even if South Korea risks all of this and "audaciously" goes for nuclear armament, it is highly possible that the country will end up becoming a rogue state that cannot gain international recognition and a failed state with a ruined economy. (Moon Jang-ryul, [Hankyoreh](#))
- South Korea plans to adopt a basic plan as early as next month to develop a new advanced guided missile capable of striking North Korean long-range artillery pieces hidden in caves, the state arms procurement agency said Sunday. ([Yonhap News](#))
- South Korea's National Intelligence Service has launched a large campaign to break up North Korea's espionage network. The spy agency raided the head office of the country's militant labor federation to crack down on underground subversion rings set up by the North. (Yosuke Onchi, [Nikkei Asia](#))

- A comprehensive special act to revitalize our sclerotic defense industry is more effective to solve the deep-rooted problem. Otherwise, our weapons technology will continue lag behind that of other countries. (Lee Kwang-hyung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, North Korean soldiers have avoided showing themselves in public to ward off the disease, at the cost of suspending in-person talks with the U.N. Command about upholding the armistice. (Jack Lau, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- Speaking to *The Korea Times*, executives and government officials said that as U.S. efforts to crackdown on China's technology industry have been determined by political factors, it's highly likely Washington will accelerate its moves to limit Beijing's access to critical semiconductor-manufacturing equipment. (Kim Yoo-chul, [The Korea Times](#))
- Iranian Ambassador Saeed Badamchi Shabestari has called on the South Korean government and people to work toward better bilateral ties, stressing stagnant political and economic ties between the two countries in recent years. (Sanjay Kumar, [The Korea Herald](#))
- High court judges in Seoul are set to resume trials on forced labor issues involving Japanese companies in May, regardless of whether Japan continues not to respond to the court's request to transmit judicial documents to defendants there. (Son Ji-hyoung, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Korea started issuing short-term visas for people traveling from China starting Saturday as the ratio of those testing positive for Covid-19 on arrival dropped into the 1-percent range. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea and the United States staged combined counter-drone drills at a U.S. air base in a southwestern city last week, U.S. military photos showed Sunday, as Seoul seeks to reinforce readiness following North Korea's drone incursions late last year. ([Yonhap News](#))
- South Korea and Taiwan will still be key semiconductor hubs in years to come, even as pressure to diversify supply chains leads to new competition from places such as the US and Germany, according to the chief executive of US chipmaking equipment supplier MKS Instruments. (Cheng Ting-Fang, [Financial Times](#))
- South Korea is on the alert for potential know-how leaks to China, as US efforts to deny Chinese access to chip technologies intensifies, according to Korean experts, in a subtle shift that could cast a shadow over semiconductor supply chain cooperation between the two Asian neighbors. (Seong Hyeon Choi, [South China Morning Post](#))
- Rescuers dispatched by the Korean government rescued three more people from the rubble in Antakya, southern Turkey, on Saturday, bringing the total number of saved lives to eight, said Seoul's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (Lee Sung-Eun, Jeong Jin-Woo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- A senior South Korean diplomat said Sunday it is "a bit early" to predict when Seoul and Tokyo can settle the thorny issue of Japan's wartime forced labor, amid speculation that they have moved closer to a deal following a flurry of diplomatic engagement. ([Yonhap News](#))

Prepared by Raymond Ha, HRNK Director of Operations & Research

Original newsletter archived and available here:

Monday, February 13, 2023

ROK activist received North Korean orders while running for office, N. Korea 'expands, reorganizes' military units

In North Korea:

[N. Korea 'expands, reorganizes' military units with operational combat missions](#) (Yonhap News, 2/13/2023)

[North Korea sends 100,000 youth to work at new mega project in capital](#) (NK News, 2/13/2023)

[O Kuk Ryol, North Korean general under 3 generations of Kim leaders, dies at 90](#) (NK News, 2/13/2023)

In South Korea:

[ROK activist received North Korean orders while running for office: Lawmaker](#) (NK News, 2/13/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Ministry reviewing local association's N. Korean visit bid over separated families](#) (Yonhap News, 2/13/2023)

[Representatives of separated families invited to visit North Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 2/13/2023)

International:

[On GPS: the danger from North Korea](#) (CNN, 2/12/2023)

[South Korea's dilemma over sending arms to Ukraine](#) (The Korea Herald, 2/13/2023)

[S. Korea redoubles push for forced labor deal as Japan remains unchanged](#) (The Korea Herald, 2/13/2023)

[When the Same North Korea Policy Fails Over and Over Again](#) (Foreign Policy, 2/11/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has "expanded and reorganized" many of its military units in accordance with new security situations, assigning operational combat missions to them, state media said Monday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap News](#))
- North Korean authorities from around the country have pulled a total of 100,000 young people from their work and studies and sent them to build a new residential mega project in Pyongyang, according to state media on Sunday, in what appears to be an unusually large mobilization campaign. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- O Kuk Ryol, an iconic figure of North Korean politics who served under three generations of Kim rulers and helped establish the command structure of the country's military, died last Thursday at the age of 90, according to state media. (Fyodor Tertitskiy, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korean authorities have indicted an activist for allegedly taking instructions from a North Korean agent and spying for Pyongyang while running for local office, according to a ruling party lawmaker. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea's unification ministry said Monday it is reviewing whether to approve an application by a local association to visit North Korea over the issue of families separated by the 1950-53 Korean War. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap News](#))
- Activists representing the families dispersed by the Korean War (1950-53) have been invited by North Korea to visit Pyongyang in the first such case in more than three years. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- Sue Mi Terry, former U.S. official and current director of the Wilson Center's Asia Program, tells Fareed why she is growing more concerned about North Korea's nuclear weapons program. (Fareed Zakaria, [CNN](#))
- For the South Korean leader who is already facing myriad diplomatic challenges and the imminent threat of North Korea at the same time, it is still a difficult prospect for the world's eighth-largest arms exporter to offer lethal aid to Ukraine, according to experts in Seoul. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The South Korean government is increasing its efforts to end the long-running historical dispute with Japan over restitution to Koreans forced to work for Japanese companies during World War II, but Japan shows little sign of offering what the victims have long sought: a direct apology and compensation. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The lesson from the history of U.S. policy on North Korea is that limited nuclear deals do not work and only delay the eventual expansion of nuclear programs. A better approach is using all available tools. (Anthony Ruggiero, [Foreign Policy](#))

Prepared by Haeun Moon, HRNK Director of Operations & Research

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506063853/https://mailchi.mp/cc109c934766/hrnk-news-items-rok-activist-received-north-korean-orders-while-running-for-officen-korea-expands-reorganizes-military-units>

Tuesday, February 14, 2023

N. Korea unveils stamp featuring leader's daughter Ju-ae for 1st time; Ministry reviewing North visit request by families group

In North Korea:

[Gen. O Kuk Ryol \(1930-2023\)](#) (North Korea Leadership Watch, 02/14/2023)

[Kim Jong-un's daughter has emerged on the world stage – but what does it mean?](#) (The Telegraph, 02/13/2023)

[N. Korea unveils stamp featuring leader's daughter Ju-ae for 1st time](#) (Yonhap, 02/14/2023)

[New stamps show Kim, his daughter and a missile](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/14/2023)

[North Korea to issue new stamps featuring Kim Jong Un's daughter](#) (NK News, 12/14/2023)

[Uh, Ju Ae... We have to change your name](#) (Radio Free Asia, 02/13/2023)

In South Korea:

[JCS chief calls for 'bold' punishment against potential enemy provocations](#) (Yonhap, 02/14/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Civic group says North Korea sent invite to discuss family reunions in Pyongyang](#) (NK News, 02/14/2023)

[Ministry reviewing North visit request by families group](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/14/2023)

International:

[China's defense chief sends congratulatory message to N. Korea over army anniversary](#) (Yonhap, 02/14/2023)

[S. Korea, NATO carve out path to step up military cooperation](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/14/2023)

[Three-way talks back checks on N. Korea, China](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/14/2023)

In North Korea:

- Gen. O Kuk Ryol (O Kuk-yo'l), a retired former senior national security official and close adviser and friend of late DPRK leader Kim Jong Il (Kim Cho'ng-il), died of heart failure on the morning of 9 February in Pyongyang. ([North Korea Leadership Watch](#))
- Amid the formidable firepower on display at North Korea's massive military parade last week, an elegant white horse was spotted marching alongside the regime's largest nuclear missiles and ranks of goose-stepping soldiers. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- North Korea on Tuesday unveiled the designs of a new stamp featuring the daughter of the North's leader Kim Jong-un, known as Ju-ae, for the first time. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Tuesday unveiled a new postal stamp series featuring the daughter of the North's leader Kim Jong-un for the first time. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea is set to release new stamps commemorating the country's most recent intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch, prominently featuring Kim Jong Un's daughter in the latest evidence of her rising profile since first appearing at the launch. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The parents of 12-year-old Ju Ae were summoned to the local government office and confronted with a shocking order: Change your daughter's name. (Hyemin Son, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's top military officer called on front-line troops Tuesday to carry out a "bold" punishment against potential enemy provocations, his office said, as Seoul is striving to sharpen its deterrence against evolving North Korean nuclear and missile threats. ([Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- A South Korean association for families separated by the Korean War has received an invitation from North Korea to visit Pyongyang to discuss a reunion project, the head of the organization told NK News on Tuesday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The Unification Ministry said it is reviewing an application by a local civic group to visit North Korea to discuss the issue of families separated by the 1950-53 Korean War. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- China's defense minister has sent a congratulatory message to his North Korean counterpart on the occasion of the North's 75th founding anniversary of its armed forces last week, Pyongyang's state media said Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and NATO held their first military staff-to-staff talks in Seoul to pave the way to strengthen military exchanges and cooperation, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said Tuesday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- First Vice Foreign Minister Cho Hyun-dong and his US and Japanese counterparts reaffirmed their commitment to denuclearizing North Korea while countering China to curb its "destabilizing activities" at a meeting in Washington on Monday. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506064816/https://mailchi.mp/9c1f4b0cd3b5/hrnk-news-itemsn-korea-unveils-stamp-featuring-leaders-daughter-ju-ae-for-1st-timeministry-reviewing-north-visit-request-by-families-group>

Wednesday, February 15, 2023

North Korean food shortage seems to be worsening, South Korea says; NK seen launching new ICBM military unit amid troop refurbishment

In North Korea:

[In bid to boost childbearing, North Korea offers sporadic extra food](#) (Radio Free Asia, 02/14/2023)

[North Korea launders \\$100M in stolen crypto after sanctioned mixer rebrands](#) (NK Pro, 02/15/2023)

[North Korea seen launching new ICBM military unit amid troop refurbishment](#) (Reuters, 02/15/2023)

[North shakes up leadership of army ground forces](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/15/2023)

[N. Korean leader calls for strong defense power in meeting with army activists](#) (Yonhap, 02/15/2023)

In South Korea:

[Kim Jong Un's daughter unlikely to be next leader of North Korea: Seoul minister](#) (NK News, 02/15/2023)

[North Korean food shortage seems to be worsening, South Korea says](#) (Reuters, 02/15/2023)

[S. Korean ministry says N. Korea's food shortages apparently worsening](#) (Yonhap, 02/15/2023)

[S. Korea: Unlikely that Kim's daughter groomed as successor](#) (AP News, 02/15/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Resolution introduced calling for Korean Americans' reunion with separated NK families](#) (The Korea Times, 02/15/2023)

International:

[U.S. needs to show firm commitment to defense of S. Korea: Rep. Young Kim](#) (Yonhap, 02/15/2023)

[U.S. reaffirms ironclad commitment to security of S. Korea in bilateral talks](#) (Yonhap, 02/15/2023)

In North Korea:

- As North Korea's birth rate declines amid chronic food shortages, authorities are offering families with three or more children extra food twice a year, on the birthdays of the country's former leaders. (Hyemin Son, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- A virtual currency mixer that the U.S. sanctioned last year for facilitating North Korean laundering appears to have relaunched under a new name, raising questions about the effectiveness of sanctions against such tools. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korea may have launched a military unit tasked with operating new intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) in line with its recent restructuring of the military, state media video footage suggested. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea appears to have reshuffled the leadership of the Korean People's Army's Ground Corps since April last year, according to analysis of the military parade held in Pyongyang last week. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has called for the strengthening of the country's defense during a meeting with local activists who support the nation's army, according to Pyongyang's state media Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's unification minister says he isn't convinced that recent appearances by Kim Jong Un's daughter mean she will be the next North Korean leader, proposing that they serve internal propaganda purpose about the preeminence of the Kim family bloodline. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- A North Korean food crisis appears to have deteriorated, South Korea said on Wednesday, as a newspaper reported that North Korea has cut rations to its soldiers for the first time in more than two decades. (Soo-hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea's food shortages appear to be worsening, South Korea's unification ministry said Wednesday, amid a news report that the North has recently cut rations to the military. ([Yonhap](#))

- South Korea on Wednesday said that it's still premature to determine whether the recently unveiled daughter of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is being groomed as her father's successor. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Rep. Young Kim, a Korean American congressman and the chair of the Indo-Pacific Subcommittee of the United States, has introduced a joint resolution that calls on the U.S. and North Korea to reunite Korean Americans with their separated families who were dispersed by the 1950-53 Korean War. (Lee Yeon-woo, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- The United States needs to better demonstrate to South Korea its commitment to helping defend its ally against any attack, a U.S. lawmaker said. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to the security and defense of South Korea in talks with her South Korean counterpart Tuesday, Seoul's foreign ministry said. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506064317/https://mailchi.mp/18dfe09912b7/hrnk-news-itemsnorth-korean-food-shortage-seems-to-be-worsening-south-korea-saysnk-seen-launching-new-icbm-military-unit-amid-troop-refurbishment>

Thursday, February 16, 2023

The Impossible State Live Podcast: National Strategy for Countering North Korea; 'The Hard Road Out' Review

Top News:

[The Impossible State Live Podcast: National Strategy for Countering North Korea](#) (CSIS, 02/15/23)
['The Hard Road Out' Review: A Prison Break Across Borders](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 02/15/23)

In North Korea:

[Experts: A Girl and Missiles Are North Korea's Way to Perpetuate Regime](#) (VOA, 02/15/2023)
[North Korea's Kim breaks ground for housing, farm projects](#) (AP News, 02/16/2023)
[N. Korea cracks down on grain trade at markets, food supply likely disrupted: Seoul ministry](#) (Yonhap, 02/16/2023)
[3 years into pandemic, fears mount that North Korea is teetering towards famine](#) (NK News, 02/15/2023)

In South Korea:

[N. Korea labeled 'enemy' again in S. Korea's defense white paper](#) (Yonhap, 02/16/23)

[N. Korea carried out sweeping party, military personnel reshuffle over past year: Seoul ministry](#) (Yonhap, 02/16/2023)

International:

[US takes N. Korea as serious as all other challenges: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 02/16/2023)

[Yoon likely to hold summit with Biden in April to build on alliance](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/16/2023)

Top News:

- Ambassador Robert Joseph and Greg Scarlatoiu discuss their recent report, National Strategy for Countering North Korea. In this report, 6 Strategic Propositions are presented for developing a new strategy for denuclearization of North Korea by promoting the rights and freedoms of the North Korean people in the context of unification with South Korea. ([CSIS](#))
- Thanks to the testimonies of North Koreans who have escaped their prison of a homeland in the past 25 years, the world is aware of the Kim-family regime's atrocities against its own people. A chilling United Nations report a few years ago observed that North Korea's crimes against humanity "do not have any parallel in the contemporary world." (Melanie Kirkpatrick, [The Wall Street Journal](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has made a symbolic gesture of telling the world his regime would continue into the next generation by presenting his daughter at a series of major military events featuring top generals and the latest military hardware, said experts. (Kim Hyungjin, Christy Lee, [VOA](#))
- North Korea says leader Kim Jong Un attended groundbreaking ceremonies for new housing and farming projects, which are part of his push for domestic achievements as the country's economic isolation deepens amid his defiant pursuit of nuclear arms. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- North Korea has been conducting crackdowns on the trade of grains in marketplaces as the result of a 2022 policy to tighten state control over grain distribution. This occurs in the midst of a serious food crisis in North Korea. ([Yonhap](#))
- Experts say food insecurity appears to be worst in decades, but DPRK's COVID isolation obscures situation on the ground. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's defense ministry has referred to the North Korean regime and military as an "enemy" in its new white paper, for the first time in six years, according to officials Thursday, apparently in consideration of the North's evolving nuclear and missile threats. (Song Sang-ho, Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea conducted a sweeping reshuffle of party, military and government officials over the past year in a bid to help its leader Kim Jong-un tighten his grip across key institutions, according to Seoul's unification ministry Thursday. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- The United States considers and is dealing with North Korea issues with the same level of urgency as all other challenges facing the country and its allies, a state department spokesperson said Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol is expected to meet with his US counterpart, Joe Biden, as early as April for the third time following their November talks in Cambodia as the two allies eye a stronger alliance that could ride out deglobalization prompted by the escalating US-China rivalry. (Choi Si-Young, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Cherise Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506065912/https://mailchi.mp/2d4a3cd1372d/hrnk-news-itemsthe-impossible-state-li-ve-podcast-national-strategy-for-counteracting-north-koreathe-hard-road-out-review>

Friday, February 17, 2023

Host of KBS Hanminjok Radio, Han Sang-kwon interviews Greg Scarlatoiu

Top News:

[Host of KBS Hanminjok Radio, Han Sang-kwon interviews Greg Scarlatoiu](#) (HRNK YouTube, 02/16/2023)

[“What Did You Do as We Were Dying?”: The Urgency of Addressing North Korean Human Rights](#) (All Shorenstein APARC News, 02/16/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un creates new bodyguard unit in latest effort to bolster security](#) (NK News, 02/16/2023)

[Kim Jong Un snaps a photo with pro-military ‘activists’](#) (NK News, 02/16/2023)

[N. Korea warns of ‘unprecedentedly’ strong counteractions against S. Korea-U.S. drills](#) (Yonhap, 02/17/2023)

[North Korea threatens ‘unprecedented’ response to upcoming US-ROK drills](#) (NK News, 02/17/2023)

[The First Ladies Of North Korea: Their Roles And Meaning](#) (19FortyFive, 02/17/2023)

In South Korea:

[Democratic Party decries prosecutors’ attempt to arrest Lee](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/17/2023)

[DP leader slams Yoon gov’t as ‘prosecution dictatorship’ over arrest warrant](#) (Yonhap, 02/17/2023)

[How Islamophobia in South Korea threatens the country’s image and economy](#) (NK News, 02/17/2023)

[New defense white paper reflects Yoon Suk-yeol’s hardline stance on North Korea](#) (NK News, 02/16/2023)

[S. Korea to introduce ‘anti-drone’ system to key facilities](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/17/2023)

[S. Korea to launch 1st military surveillance satellite in November](#) (Yonhap, 02/17/2023)

[South Korea’s K2 Black Panther: The Best Tank On Earth?](#) (19FortyFive, 02/17/2023)

[Why Yoon's embrace of populist economics is bad news for South Korea's economy](#) (NK News, 02/16/2023)

International:

[French helicopter makes rare appearance at North Korea's military parade](#) (NK News, 02/17/2023)

[Indonesia to boost partnership with S. Korea on 50th anniv. of diplomatic ties: envoy](#) (Yonhap, 02/17/2023)

[Japan aborts launch of new rocket carrying missile sensor](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/17/2023)

[KCCI donates \\$100,000 in aid to quake-hit Turkey](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/17/2023)

[New S. Korean relief team arrives in quake-hit Turkey](#) (Yonhap, 02/17/2023)

[Norway recovers \\$5.8M worth of crypto stolen by North Korean hackers](#) (NK News, 02/17/2023)

[Parliamentary committee adopts resolution marking 70th anniversary of S. Korea-U.S. alliance](#) (Yonhap, 02/17/2023)

[ROK defense minister to visit UAE and Poland for talks](#) (NK News, 02/16/2023)

[S. Korea-China weekly flights set to rise by end of month: PM](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/17/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. to hold 'Freedom Shield' exercise next month](#) (Yonhap, 02/17/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. to hold 'table-top' exercise next week against N. Korean nuke threats](#) (Yonhap, 02/17/2023)

[S. Korea, US to stage exercise simulating N. Korea's nuclear use](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/17/2023)

[South Korea's 2nd relief team arrives in Turkey](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/17/2023)

[Why the US has worked to stop allies like South Korea from going nuclear](#) (NK News, 02/17/2023)

Top News:

- On Jan. 8, HRNK Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu was featured on KBS Hanminjok Radio's program "Unification Train" regarding discussions of North Korean human rights. This interview was translated by HRNK Research Interns Yesun Kim and Haeun Moon. ([HRNK YouTube](#))
- The time has come to depoliticize North Korean human rights. South Korean progressives have argued that working to improve human rights in North Korea threatens to worsen inter-Korean relations and makes addressing security threats difficult, but the Moon administration failed to make progress in security or relations despite sidelining human rights. The Yoon administration should work on multilateral approaches to address the state of human rights in the North and reach a domestic bipartisan consensus on the issue. This essay originally appeared in Korean on January 27 in Sindonga (New East Asia), Korea's oldest monthly magazine (established 1931), as part of a monthly column, "Shin's Reflections on Korea." Translated by Raymond Ha. (Gi-Wook Shin, [All Shorenstein APARC News](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un recently formed a new personal bodyguard unit, the sixth prominent military organization charged with guarding him and his family from assassination and harassment amid signs of increasing security concerns in recent years. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean state media reported that Kim Jong Un took a photo with "patriotic" military families who were invited to the country's latest military parade, underscoring the event's message of building up national defenses. (Seung-Yeon Chung, [NK News](#))

- North Korea warned Friday that South Korea and the United States will face "unprecedentedly persistent and strong counteractions" should they press ahead with their planned combined military drills. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea will respond to upcoming U.S.-ROK joint drills with "unprecedentedly persistent and strong" counteractions, the country's foreign ministry warned Friday, hours after Seoul announced a start date for table-top exercises with Washington later this month. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The First Ladies of North Korea are again frequently turning up in global coverage of the reclusive state. I found myself intrigued by the media response to Kim Yo Jong, DPRK Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un's sister, and now his daughter Ju Ae. (Anthony W. Holmes, [19FortyFive](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's main opposition party has ratcheted up criticism of the prosecution and President Yoon Suk Yeol and rallied in support for its chairman, Rep. Lee Jae-myung, who has become the first incumbent leader of the main opposition party wanted for arrest. (Lee Jung-youn, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Opposition leader Lee Jae-myung on Friday lashed out at President Yoon Suk Yeol a day after the prosecution sought an arrest warrant for him, saying the administration should use its power to rein in price hikes hurting ordinary people rather than focusing on arresting him. (Kim Na-young, [Yonhap](#))
- Global interest in all things South Korea has surged in recent years, driven by soft power exports like music, film and television. Korean is now one of the most popular languages to learn in the world, and the country hit a new high in international visitors in the last full year before the pandemic. But those living in South Korea, especially minorities, often experience a country with far less glitz and glamor than in K-dramas. Sometimes the reality is far worse, as seen in a marked increase in Islamophobia in recent years. (Muaz Razaq, [NK News](#))
- South Korea released its 2022 Defense White Paper on Thursday, and it takes a sharp U-Turn from the previous Moon Jae-in administration's dovish approach to North Korea. (Sooyoung Oh, [NK News](#))
- The South Korean government on Friday announced its plan to introduce an "anti-drone system" to prevent terrorist attacks from targeting key national facilities with drones. (Lee Jung-youn, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea plans to launch its first military surveillance satellite in November under a project to deploy a total of five such satellites by the mid-2020s, the state arms procurement said Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- The re-emergence of tank warfare in Ukraine has refocused military planners on the importance of tank design in combined arms combat. While the American M1 Abrams, Russian T-84 and German Leopard 2 tanks have received extensive media attention in the main battle tank (MBT) conversation, South Korea's K2 Black Panther should not be left out. This staggering \$8.5 million dollar vehicle is considered the most expensive MBT in the world. (Maya Carlin, [19FortyFive](#))
- On Monday, the South Korean presidential office instructed the Financial Services Commission, the country's financial regulator, to devise measures to ease the burden of households suffering from higher interest rates. (John Lee, [NK News](#))

International:

- A French helicopter made a rare appearance in state media coverage of North Korea's Feb. 8 military parade, NK Pro analysis shows, confirming that the DPRK successfully imported at least one unit into the country. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- Indonesia's top envoy in South Korea on Friday stressed the importance of strengthening bilateral cooperation and reaffirmed Jakarta's continued commitment to a joint fighter development project, as the two sides mark the 50th anniversary this year of forging diplomatic ties. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Japan's space agency aborted the inaugural launch of its next-generation H3 rocket on Friday after the auxiliary booster engines failed to ignite, officials said. ([The Korea Herald](#))
- The Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry said Friday it had given \$100,000 in aid to Turkey, which is suffering from untold casualties and destruction after a 7.8 magnitude earthquake hit the country on Feb. 6. (Jo He-rim, [The Korea Herald](#))
- A new team of South Korean relief workers arrived in Turkey on Friday to help the country reeling from the aftermath of a devastating earthquake, Seoul's foreign ministry said. ([Yonhap](#))
- Norway has seized over \$5.8 million (60 million kroner) worth of cryptocurrency that North Korean hackers stole last year, a development an expert described as a good sign that more stolen assets will be recovered soon. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The National Assembly's foreign affairs committee on Friday passed a resolution calling for further strengthening the alliance between South Korea and the United States to mark the 70th anniversary of the alliance. ([Yonhap](#))
- Defense Minister Lee Jong-sup will travel to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Saturday to meet with his Emirati counterpart, Mohammed Ahmed Al Bowardi to focus on follow-up measures for defense cooperation as agreed by the two countries' leaders last month. Before departing, Lee will attend the International Defense Exhibition & Conference (IDEX) — a biennial arms and defense technology sales exhibition — to support South Korean defense companies looking to secure arms deals. ([Korea Pro](#))
- The number of international flights between South Korea and China, currently 62 per week, will be increased to 100 per week next month. The decision to drop other quarantine measures, including mandatory PCR tests for entrants travelling from China, will be announced next week. (Lee Jung-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea and the United States will hold a regular springtime combined military exercise next month under "realistic" scenarios reflecting North Korea's nuclear and other threats, Seoul's defense ministry said Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the United States will stage a combined military exercise at the Pentagon next week under the scenario of nuclear use by North Korea, Seoul's defense ministry said Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the United States will stage a tabletop exercise next week to discuss ways to develop a joint strategy and response to North Korea's potential use of nuclear weapons amid the North's continuing nuclear saber-rattling. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- A second South Korean relief team has arrived in southeastern Turkey on Friday to replace the first team which has assisted the aid and rescue efforts in region for over a week. (Lim Jae-seong, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol recently stated his country might pursue its own nuclear weapons if North Korean threats increase, and while he walked this comment back,

the implicit proliferation threat — made by a U.S. ally protected by Washington's nuclear umbrella — generated some interesting reactions. (Eric Brewer, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Tessa Aguilar, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506070741/https://mailchi.mp/fbf8d6d9b198/hrnk-news-itemsthe-impossible-state-live-podcast-national-strategy-for-counteracting-north-koreas-hard-road-out-review-11191002>

Saturday, February 18, 2023

Host of KBS Hanminjok Radio, Han Sang-kwon interviews Greg Scarlatoiu

Top News:

[Host of KBS Hanminjok Radio, Han Sang-kwon interviews Greg Scarlatoiu](#) (HRNK YouTube, 02/16/2023)

[Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2023](#) (OHCHR, 01/18/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un takes daughter to soccer match celebrating her grandfather](#) (NK News, 02/18/2023)

[N.K. leader watches football match with daughter in celebration of his father's birthday](#) (Yonhap, 02/18/2023)

[North Korean leader brings daughter to soccer match](#) (AP News, 02/18/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea fires 1 long-range ballistic missile into East Sea: S. Korean military](#) (Yonhap, 02/18/2023)

[North Korea fires a ballistic missile toward East Sea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/18/2023)

[North Korea fires long-range missile after warning over military drills](#) (Reuters, 02/18/2023)

[North Korea Launches ICBM](#) (New York Times, 02/18/2023)

[North Korea tests long-range ballistic missile, Seoul says](#) (CNN, 02/18/2023)

[NSC 'strongly condemns N. Korea's long-range missile launch](#) (Yonhap, 02/18/2023)

International:

[N Korea fires missile after threatening retaliation](#) (BBC, 02/18/2023)

[North Korea fires long-range missile after threatening action against U.S.](#) (The Washington Post, 02/18/2023)

[North Korea fires long-range missile into waters off Japanese coast: Tokyo](#) (NK News, 02/18/2023)

[North Korea fires missile as US, S. Korea prepare for drills](#) (AP News, 02/18/2023)

Top News:

- On Jan. 8, HRNK Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu was featured on KBS Hanminjok Radio's program "Unification Train" regarding discussions of North Korean human rights. This interview was translated by HRNK Research Interns Yesun Kim and Haeun Moon. ([HRNK YouTube](#))
- The present report, submitted to the Human Rights Council pursuant to its resolutions 49/22 and 46/17, describes the activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in promoting accountability for human rights violations in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, highlighting the progress made and the challenges encountered. It also examines information the Office of the High Commissioner has gathered on human rights violations committed in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the light of relevant international legal standards. It concludes with recommendations addressed to the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, other Member States and the Council. ([OHCHR](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un attended a soccer game on Friday with his daughter to celebrate the birthday of her grandfather Kim Jong Il, according to state media, marking the daughter's first appearance at an event not overtly related to promoting nuclear weapons. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has attended a football match with his daughter in celebration of his late father Kim Jong-il's birthday, state media reported Saturday. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un brought his young daughter to a soccer game celebrating the birthday of his late father, state media said Saturday, her latest in a series of public appearances that have triggered debate on whether she's being prepped for a future leadership role. (Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea fired a long-range ballistic missile into the East Sea on Saturday, according to South Korea's military. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has launched a ballistic missile toward the East Sea on Saturday, according to the Joint Chief of Staff. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea launched a long-range ballistic missile into the sea off Japan's west coast on Saturday after warning of a strong response to upcoming military drills by South Korea and the United States. (Hyunsu Yim, Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea launched what South Korea called an intercontinental ballistic missile off its east coast on Saturday, a day after vowing to take "unprecedentedly persistent and strong" counteractions against the joint military drills that the United States and South Korea plan for this spring. (Choe Sang-hun, [New York Times](#))
- North Korea launched a presumed long-range ballistic missile Saturday afternoon, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said, a day after Pyongyang warned of "unprecedented strong responses" if the US and South Korea go ahead with planned military exercises. (Yoonjung Seo, Brad Lendon, Junko Ogura, [CNN](#))

- The presidential National Security Council (NSC) "strongly" condemned North Korea's latest long-range missile launch Saturday, vowing stern measures against any attempt by the North to threaten South Korea. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korea has fired an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), Japan's government has said. (Tiffany Wertheimer, [BBC](#))
- North Korea on Saturday fired a long-range missile into the sea, a day after Pyongyang threatened military action against South Korea and the United States over the allies' joint military drills. (Kim Min-joo, [The Washington Post](#))
- North Korea launched one intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) into the East Sea (Sea of Japan) Saturday evening, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea on Saturday fired a long-range missile from its capital into the sea off Japan, according to its neighbors, a day after it threatened to take strong measures against South Korea and the U.S. over their joint military exercises. (Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506071416/https://mailchi.mp/4aa6a89129f2/hrnk-news-items-host-of-kbs-hanminjok-radio-han-sang-kwon-interviews-greg-scarlatoiu>

Sunday, February 19, 2023

N. Korea says it fired Hwasong-15 ICBM at lofted angle; 2023 Chronology of Missile and Military Events

In North Korea:

[2023 Chronology of Missile and Military Events](#) (North Korea Leadership Watch, 02/19/2023)

[Hwasong-15 launched from Sunan](#) (North Korea Leadership Watch, 02/19/2023)

[N Korea fires missile after threatening retaliation](#) (BBC, 02/19/2023)

[N. Korea says it fired Hwasong-15 ICBM at lofted angle](#) (Yonhap, 02/19/2023)

[N. Korea makes fresh threats, US bombers fly after ICBM test](#) (AP News, 02/19/2023)

[North conducts 'surprise launching drill' of ICBM, vows tit-for-tat responses to South](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/19/2023)

[North Korea confirms Saturday's ICBM test](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/19/2023)

[North Korea fires ballistic missile off east coast](#) (The Guardian, 02/19/2023)

[North Korea fires intercontinental ballistic missile into Japan's territory](#) (The Telegraph, 02/19/2023)

[North Korea fires long-range missile after threatening action against U.S.](#) (The Washington Post, 02/19/2023)

[North Korea fires missile as US, S. Korea prepare for drills](#) (AP News, 02/19/2023)

[North Korea Launches ICBM](#) (The New York Times, 02/18/2023)

[North Korea says it fired Hwasong-15 ICBM in warning to US, South Korea](#) (NK News, 02/19/2023)

[North Korea says it tested ICBM in surprise drill](#) (CNN, 02/19/2023)

[North Korean TV airs missile launch footage](#) (BBC, 02/19/2023)

In South Korea:

[Korea's foreign minister urges Japan to resolve forced labor issue](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/19/2023)

[Left-wing party official arrested in North Korean spy ring investigation](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/19/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Tensions simmer on peninsula after NK launch, allies' drills](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/19/2023)

International:

[Japan says North Korea fired ballistic missile that could cover 'entire' United States](#) (UPI, 02/18/2023)

[South Korea, U.S. stage combined air drill in response to North Korea missile launch](#) (Reuters, 02/19/2023)

[South Korea, US conduct joint air drills in response to North Korea's ICBM test](#) (The Korea Times, 02/19/2023)

[Top diplomats of S. Korea, U.S., Japan condemn N. Korean missile launch](#) (Yonhap, 02/19/2023)

[U.S. stages joint air exercises with Asian allies after North Korea's ICBM launch](#) (Reuters, 02/19/2023)

In North Korea:

- The following is a rolling chronology of ballistic missile events (drills and test firings), military engagement and external military exercises (US-ROK, US-JP and US-ROK-JP) that occur in and around the the Korean Peninsula during 2023. Events will be listed (by date) in reverse chronological order. It will be updated every day around midnight Washington DC time. ([North Korea Leadership Watch](#))
- On the afternoon (KST) of 18 February (Saturday), the DPRK's Missile General Bureau managed a drill of the Hwasong-15 theater ballistic missile from the Sunan area of Pyongyang. ([North Korea Leadership Watch](#))
- North Korea fired an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) on Saturday in a "surprise" drill to confirm the weapon's reliability, state media said. It flew over 900km (560 miles) for 67 minutes and landed in the Sea of Japan. (Tiffany Wertheimer, [BBC](#))
- North Korea said Sunday it has fired a Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) at a lofted angle in a "sudden launching" drill aimed at ensuring the country's powerful nuclear deterrent. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said Sunday its latest intercontinental ballistic missile test was meant to further bolster its "fatal" nuclear attack capacity and threatened additional powerful steps over upcoming military drills between the United States and South Korea. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP News](#))

- North Korea conducted a “surprise launching drill” of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and vowed heightened tit-for-tat responses to deterrence measures by South Korea and the United States, state media reported Sunday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea said Sunday it conducted a “surprise launching drill” of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) the day before. The state-controlled Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said a Hwasong-15 ICBM was fired in a “surprise ICBM launching drill” under the written orders of leader Kim Jong-in. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea has fired a ballistic missile toward the sea off its east coast, South Korea’s joint chiefs of staff said, after Pyongyang warned of a strong response to upcoming US-South Korea military drills. ([The Guardian](#))
- North Korea on Sunday said it had conducted its latest long-range missile test as a surprise drill, saying it demonstrated its capacity for “fatal nuclear counterattack”. (Louise Watt, [The Telegraph](#))
- North Korea on Saturday fired a long-range missile into the sea, a day after Pyongyang threatened military action against South Korea and the United States over the allies’ joint military drills. (Min-Joo Kim, [The Washington Post](#))
- North Korea on Saturday fired a long-range missile from its capital into the sea off Japan, according to its neighbors, a day after it threatened to take strong measures against South Korea and the U.S. over their joint military exercises. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- North Korea launched what South Korea called an intercontinental ballistic missile off its east coast on Saturday, a day after vowing to take “unprecedentedly persistent and strong” counteractions against the joint military drills that the United States and South Korea plan for this spring. (Choe Sang-Hun, [The New York Times](#))
- North Korea launched a Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) on Saturday as a warning to the U.S. and South Korea and to test the readiness of special units under the military’s new Missile General Bureau, according to state media. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea said Sunday it conducted a test of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) a day earlier, its third known test of the long-range weapon in less than a year. (Yoonjung Seo, Brad Lendon, Junko Ogura, [CNN](#))
- North Korean state TV has aired footage of the launch of a Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile on Saturday. It flew over 900km (560 miles) in 67 minutes before landing in the Sea of Japan. ([BBC](#))

In South Korea:

- Foreign Minister Park Jin in his meeting with the Japanese foreign minister in the German city of Munich on Saturday urged Japan to make a political decision to resolve the forced labor issue that has soured the bilateral ties for years. The foreign ministers of the three countries also met on the sidelines of the Munich conference on Saturday, shortly after the North’s firing of an intercontinental ballistic missile. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Two were arrested over the weekend on Jeju Island on charges of violating the national security law in a spiraling investigation into a North Korean spy ring. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea and the US staged combined air drills Sunday, a day after North Korea aggravated inter-Korean tensions by firing an intercontinental ballistic missile that South

Korea believes could reach anywhere in the continental United States. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the United States is "prepared to engage" with North Korea after the country fired a long-range ballistic missile on Saturday. (Adam Schrader, Patrick Hilsman, [UPI](#))
- South Korea and the United States held a combined air drill involving a U.S. strategic bomber on Sunday in response to North Korea's launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile on Saturday, South Korea's military said. ([Reuters](#))
- A video of North Korea's latest intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) test, captured by a camera in Japan, suggests it is on the verge of, if not already, mastering atmospheric reentry — a technology required to strike the U.S. mainland with a nuclear-tipped ICBM. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- The top diplomats of South Korea, Japan and the United States strongly condemned North Korea's long-range ballistic missile launch Saturday, vowing to take "appropriate action." (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States held joint air exercises bilaterally with South Korea and Japan involving strategic bombers on Sunday, a day after North Korea fired a Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in a "sudden launching drill". (Soo-Hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506071851/https://mailchi.mp/0967c0a15a93/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-says-it-fired-hwasong-15-icbm-at-lofted-angle-2023-chronology-of-missile-and-military-events>

Monday, February 20, 2023

NK fires 2 SRBMs toward East Sea; NK warns it will use Pacific as 'firing range'

In North Korea:

[N. Korea fires 2 short-range ballistic missiles toward East Sea: S. Korean military](#) (Yonhap, 02/20/2023)

[North Korean ferry capsized near Wonsan naval base, satellite imagery shows](#) (NK News, 02/20/2023)

[North Korea's latest ICBM launch signals new phase of long-range missile drills](#) (NK Pro, 02/20/2023)

[North Korea warns it will use Pacific as 'firing range'](#) (The Korea Times, 02/20/2023)

In South Korea:

[Presidential officials meet over N.K. missile launch](#) (Yonhap, 02/20/2023)

[Ruling party leader says calls for own nuclear armament boosted by N.K. provocations](#) (Yonhap, 02/20/2023)

[S. Korea slaps more sanctions on N. Korea in response to missile provocations](#) (Yonhap, 02/20/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[\[Newsmaker\] Koreas back to square one as detente fades](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/20/2023)

International:

[North Korea fires 2 missiles in tests condemned by neighbors](#) (AP News, 02/20/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs) toward the East Sea on Monday, Seoul's military said, a day after South Korea and the United States staged joint air drills, involving B-1B bombers, in response to the North's long-range missile launch. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said it detected the launch from the Sukchon area in South Pyongan Province between 7 a.m. and 7:11 a.m., and that the missiles flew some 390 kilometers and 340 km, respectively. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- A North Korean ferry capsized near the Wonsan naval base on the country's east coast in recent years and now appears beached and abandoned, according to NK News analysis of satellite imagery. NK News analysis of ground-level photos from Wonsan suggests the capsized vessel is likely a floating restaurant previously moored next to the Mangyongbong-92, a ferry that once brought passengers from Japan's Niigata port to Wonsan. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's first intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch of 2023 wasn't a test; it was an exercise. With this launch, North Korea's burgeoning liquid-propellant ICBM force is transitioning away from testing and evaluation — its focus since 2017 — toward an operational focus. Much like Pyongyang's shorter-range missile units, ICBM units under the Missile General Bureau will carry out exercises. (Ankit Panda, [NK Pro](#))
- KCNA said that the rocket launchers — each loaded with four shots — were aimed at military air bases in South Korea, claiming that they can carry tactical nuclear weapons. Kim Yo-jong, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's sister, again blamed South Korea and the U.S. for fueling tensions on the peninsula with their plans for combined military exercises. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

In South Korea:

- Presidential officials met Monday to discuss the security situation following North Korea's launch of two short-range ballistic missiles earlier in the day, the presidential office said. National Security Adviser Kim Sung-han presided over the meeting and was briefed on North Korea's missile launch and the South Korean military's readiness posture before discussing the South's response, it said. ([Yonhap](#))
- The chief of the ruling People Power Party (PPP) on Monday warned that calls for South Korea to consider acquiring its own nuclear weapons will get a boost if North Korea continues its military provocations. Kim will never let go of nuclear weapons even if millions

of North Koreans starve to death, Chung said, vowing that the government of President Yoon Suk Yeol and his party will protect the South Korean people through the strong alliance between Seoul and Washington. ([Yonhap](#))

- South Korea said Monday it has decided to impose additional independent sanctions on North Korea in response to its latest long-range ballistic missile launch and the firing of two short-range ballistic missiles. The government is imposing the sanctions on four individuals and five institutions involved in the secretive regime's nuclear and missile development programs or helping Pyongyang evade sanctions, according to the foreign ministry. ([Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- It seems almost impossible now for South Koreans to revisit the kind of detente they briefly enjoyed in 2018. The resumption of North Korea's missile firings this week is the latest demonstration of how the trust gap between the two bickering neighbors had grown too wide and deep to fill as they carry on with tit-for-tat shows of force. South Korea, backed by the US and Japan, slapped new sanctions on the North on Monday, calling for a return to talks. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles toward its eastern waters on Monday in a widely condemned weapons test — its second in three days — that prompted Tokyo to request an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council. Both South Korea and Japan condemned recent North Korean launches as threats to international peace and violations of U.N. Security Council resolutions that ban any ballistic activities by North Korea. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told reporters that Tokyo was requesting an emergency Security Council meeting to respond to recent North Korean launches. An initial Security Council briefing led by Assistant Secretary-General for political affairs Khaled Khiari was set for later Monday. The U.S. Indo-Pacific Command said the new launches highlight “the destabilizing impact” of North Korea's unlawful weapons programs. It said the U.S. commitments to the defense of South Korea and Japan “remain ironclad.” (Hyung-jin Kim, Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))
-

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506072303/https://mailchi.mp/e84dc53837f9/hrnk-news-items-nk-fires-2-srbms-toward-east-sea-nk-warns-it-will-use-pacific-as-firing-range>

Tuesday, February 21, 2023

UN Security Council fails to unite on North Korea; North Korean nuclear tests pose radiation risk to the region

Top News:

[Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General - on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea](#) (United Nations, 02/19/2023)

In North Korea:

[Are North Korea's Nuclear Weapons Tests as Safe as the Country Claims?](#) (The New York Times, 02/21/2023)

[Fears, questions about N. Korea's growing nuclear arsenal](#) (AP News, 02/21/2023)

[Large construction camp pops up near Pyongyang's foreign leader guesthouses](#) (NK Pro, 02/21/2023)

[North Korean nuclear tests pose radiation risk to the region](#) (UPI, 02/21/2023)

[Potential radiation exposure to North Koreans near test site overlooked](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/21/2023)

In South Korea:

[Defector lawmaker in hot water over remarks linking North Korea to Jeju massacre](#) (NK News, 02/21/2023)

[ROK must consider nukes, lawmakers say after North Korea's latest missile launch](#) (NK News, 02/21/2023)

[Suspected spies for North refuse to cooperate](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/21/2023)

International:

[11 countries condemn North Korea's ICBM launch amid Security Council inaction](#) (NK News, 02/21/2023)

[Russia, China block U.N. response to North Korean missile launches](#) (UPI, 02/21/2023)

[UN Security Council fails to unite on North Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/21/2023)

[U.S. calls for UNSC action against N. Korean missile tests, again to no avail](#) (Yonhap, 02/21/2023)

[U.S. lawmaker calls for increased missile defense against N. Korean provocation](#) (Yonhap, 02/21/2023)

[US urges UN to condemn North Korea; China, Russia blame US](#) (AP News, 02/21/2023)

Top News:

- The Secretary-General strongly condemns the launch of yet another ballistic missile of intercontinental range by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. (Stéphane Dujarric, [United Nations](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea has conducted six underground nuclear tests, and a seventh may be on the way. Rights groups fear their environmental and health consequences. (Choe Sang-Hun, [The New York Times](#))

- North Korea claims its nuclear forces are capable of destroying its rivals, and often follows its provocative weapons tests with launch details. But many foreign experts call the North's claims propaganda and suggest that the country is not yet capable of hitting the United States or its allies with a nuclear weapon. (Kim Tong-Hyung, Hyung Jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- North Korean construction crews have built a large worker camp in recent weeks in an exclusive area of Pyongyang where two large guesthouses for foreign leaders are located, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery. (Colin Zwirko, [NK Pro](#))
- Nuclear detonations at North Korea's Punggye-ri test site may have exposed hundreds of thousands of local citizens to high levels of radiation and endangered people in neighboring countries with contaminated agricultural products, a new report said Tuesday. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- Hundreds of thousands of North Korean residents near the Punggye-ri nuclear test site are living under the possible risk of nuclear radiation exposure, a Seoul-based nongovernmental organization said in a report Tuesday, and called it a serious human rights question that is often overshadowed by security concerns. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

In South Korea:

- Tae Yong-ho, the former North Korean diplomat who now represents Seoul's affluent Gangnam district in parliament, is at the center of controversy after claiming that DPRK founding leader Kim Il Sung was the instigator behind one of the most violent episodes in South Korean history. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- High-profile lawmakers argued Monday that South Korea should seriously consider acquiring nuclear weapons to defend against North Korean military threats, following Pyongyang's latest launch of a long-range missile. Chung Jin-suk, head of the conservative People Power Party's emergency committee, and fellow PPP lawmaker Tae Young-ho both implied that Washington's extended deterrence might not be reliable given Pyongyang's efforts to threaten the U.S. homeland with nuclear weapons. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Four South Korean activists arrested earlier this month on charges of inciting sedition on orders from North Korea are refusing to cooperate with investigators from the state prosecution service, according to prosecution officials on Tuesday. The four suspects are accused of establishing an underground organization called the Self-Reliant People's Liberation Front in 2016 to foment unrest against the South Korean government and the U.S. military presence in the South. (Kim Min-Joong, Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- The U.S. and 10 other countries have condemned North Korea's "reckless" launch of a long-range ballistic missile over the weekend, following a U.N. Security Council (UNSC) meeting that again failed to reach a consensus on Pyongyang's missile program. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- A U.S.-led call for the U.N. Security Council to take action over North Korea's recent spate of missile launches, which included an ICBM test over the weekend, was impeded by Russia and China. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- The UN Security Council meeting in New York on Monday following the most recent North Korean intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch came up empty-handed again with

the council remaining divided. "We urge all UN member states to join us in condemning the DPRK's irresponsible behavior," said Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- The United States on Monday called on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to hold North Korea to account for its recent missile provocations but to no avail due to opposition from two veto-wielding members of the council -- China and Russia. (Byun Duk-Kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The head of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services called for efforts to enhance U.S. missile defense against North Korea's evolving missile threat on Monday. Rep. Mike Rogers (R-AL) also highlighted the need for stepped up efforts to accelerate development of the next generation interceptor. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States and its allies urged the U.N. Security Council on Monday to condemn North Korea's unlawful ballistic missile launches, but China and Russia blamed the U.S. for escalating tensions with stepped-up military exercises targeting Pyongyang. (Edith Lederer, [AP News](#))

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506072701/https://mailchi.mp/4e3be17c5ec3/hrnk-news-itemsun-security-council-fails-to-unite-on-north-koreanorth-korean-nuclear-tests-pose-radiation-risk-to-the-region>

Wednesday, February 22, 2023

N. Korea may try to pressure US with ICBM, nuclear tests; US, ROK and Japan conduct missile defense exercise after N. Korea ICBM test

In North Korea:

[Analysis: How North Korea could use a Pacific 'firing range' to perfect its missiles](#) (Reuters, 2/22/2023)

[Fears, questions about N. Korea's growing nuclear arsenal](#) (AP News, 2/22/2023)

[North Korea food crisis looms behind displays of military prowess](#) (BBC, 2/22/2023)

[N Korea calls UN chief's remarks on missile test 'unfair'](#) (AP News, 2/22/2023)

[N. Korea slams Japan for holding annual event on Dokdo](#) (Yonhap, 2/22/2023)

[N. Korea slams U.N. chief's 'unfair, unbalanced' stance on its missile launches](#) (Yonhap, 2/22/2023)

[North strives for autarky even as food shortages worsen](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 2/22/2023)

[Researchers discover watering hole attack targeting pro-North Korea individuals](#) (NK News, 2/22/2023)

In South Korea:

[Gyeonggi gov't offices raided in North remittances probe](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 2/22/2023)

[North capable of 'normal-angle' ICBM launch: South DIA](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 2/22/2023)
[North Korea may try to pressure U.S. with ICBM, nuclear tests - S.Korean lawmakers](#) (Reuters, 2/22/2023)
[World Audio Live TV Log In Exclusive: North Korea a 'clear and present danger,' says South Korean Foreign Minister](#) (CNN, 2/22/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Google A&C opens online collection on the DMZ](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 2/22/2023)
[\[Wang Son-taek\] Manage crisis and more to ease tension with NK](#) (The Korea Herald, 2/22/2023)

International:

[\[History Through The Korea Herald\] Capture of US spy ship symbolizes US-N. Korea tensions](#) (The Korea Herald, 2/22/2023)
[Korea, U.S., Japan hold 1st trilateral missile defense drills of 2023](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 2/22/2023)
[Shinzo Abe's posthumous memoir sheds light on North Korea diplomacy and Trump](#) (NK News, 2/22/2023)
[South Korea, US, Japan stage missile defense exercise after N.Korea launches](#) (The Korea Herald, 2/22/2023)
[U.S. deserves an A for effort to denuclearize N. Korea but needs to make first concession: U.S. experts](#) (Yonhap, 2/22/2023)
[U.S. needs to take reciprocal steps to denuclearize N. Korea: former PM](#) (Yonhap, 2/22/2023)
[US, ROK and Japan conduct missile defense exercise after North Korean ICBM test](#) (NK News, 2/22/2023)
[US, South Korea, Japan Hold Joint Drills Amid North Korea Threats](#) (VOA, 2/22/2023)
[Why it may not matter if North Korea's missiles can survive atmospheric reentry](#) (NK News, 2/22/2023)

In North Korea:

- If North Korea follows through on its threat to turn the Pacific Ocean into a "firing range", it would allow the isolated and nuclear-armed state to make technical advances in addition to signalling its military resolve, analysts said. North Korea launched two short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs) on Monday, after firing a massive Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) on Saturday. Like most North Korean tests, those missiles all fell in the Sea of Japan, which is known as the East Sea in both Koreas. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea's latest missile launches are a demonstration of the country's avowed ability to use nuclear force against South Korea and the mainland U.S. How immediate is that threat? North Korea claims its nuclear forces are capable of destroying its rivals, and often follows its provocative weapons tests with launch details. But many foreign experts call the North's claims propaganda and suggest that the country is not yet capable of hitting the United States or its allies with a nuclear weapon. There's no question that North Korea has nuclear bombs, and that it has missiles that place the U.S. mainland, South Korea and Japan within striking distance. What's not yet clear is whether the country has mastered the tricky engineering required to join the bombs and the missiles. (Tong-hyun Kim, Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- North Korea is experiencing a critical food crisis, experts say. The country is no stranger to chronic food shortages, but border controls, poor weather and sanctions have worsened the situation in recent years. Top officials are expected to meet at the end of February to discuss

a "fundamental change" to agriculture policy, state media has said. This is a "very important and urgent task" amid "pressing" farming issues, news aggregator KCNA Watch reported. The news comes as Pyongyang continues its displays of military might. One state newspaper has likened using foreign aid to "poisoned candy". On Wednesday, Rodong Sinmun wrote that "imperialists" used aid as a "trap to plunder and subjugate" recipient countries. South Korea's unification ministry has reportedly also sounded the alarm on the food shortages and asked the World Food Programme (WFP) for help. (Kelly Ng, [BBC](#))

- North Korea on Wednesday accused U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres of "an extremely unfair and imbalanced attitude," as it lambasted him for condemning its recent missile test but ignoring alleged U.S. hostility against the North. The accusation came as U.S., South Korean and Japanese destroyers were holding trilateral anti-missile training near the Korean Peninsula, a move the North could regard as a provocation. After the North's intercontinental ballistic missile test on Saturday, Guterres strongly condemned the launch and reiterated his call for the North to immediately desist from making any further provocations. In a statement, Guterres also urged North Korea to resume talks on denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- North Korea's state media on Wednesday slammed Japan for holding an annual event that renewed its claim on South Korea's easternmost islets of Dokdo, calling the event "an undisguised agitation for aggression." Dokdo, which lies closer to South Korea in the body of water between the Korean Peninsula and Japan, has long been a thorn in relations between Seoul and Tokyo. Since 2006, Japan has held an annual event on Dokdo. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Wednesday denounced U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for taking what it says is an "unfair and unbalanced" stance over its recent missile launches. The North's foreign ministry issued a statement condemning Guterres for his latest criticism of the North's launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) over the weekend. "I express strong protest at the U.N. chief taking an 'unfair and unbalanced' attitude, as he keeps silent about worrisome military activities by Washington and Seoul, while condemning the North's legitimate exercise of the right of self-defense as a provocation or threat," Kim Son-gyong, a vice foreign minister of the country, said in a statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). ([Yonhap](#))
- Pyongyang's main state-controlled newspaper on Wednesday urged North Koreans to strive for "economic independence," suggesting the regime has little intention of abandoning its autarkic economic policies despite mounting signs of food insecurity. The Rodong Sinmun, a daily newspaper controlled by the North's ruling Workers' Party, warned that "aid from the imperialists is a trap that will open the door to looting and subjugation" in an editorial titled, "Economic independence is the material security of independent state construction." "Foreign aid is [the imperialists'] way of giving one and taking ten and hundred," it argued. The editorial also claimed foreign aid is "a bait used to curb and subjugate other countries' economic development and undermine their economic prestige and interests," warning that the aim of foreign aid is to precipitate the collapse of leader Kim Jong-un's regime. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- A hacking group known to target DPRK watchers compromised a "pro-North Korea" website late last year to distribute malware to visitors, security researchers say, though it's unclear whether the attackers have links to Pyongyang. According to a Trend Micro report published Friday, a group dubbed Earth Kitsune modified the website of an unspecified pro-North Korean organization to display an error message. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Prosecutors raided Gyeonggi Provincial Government offices Wednesday as part of their investigation into alleged cash remittances to North Korea by the Ssangbangwool (SBW) group. The latest raid is linked to a key figure in the case, Lee Hwa-young, a former Gyeonggi vice governor, who was arrested in September last year on charges of taking bribes from underwear maker SBW Group in return for business favors related to inter-Korean economic projects. The Suwon District Prosecutors' Office began a search and seizure of the provincial government offices in Suwon and Uijeongbu in Gyeonggi on Wednesday morning to secure related materials to Lee and his aides, according to legal sources. Wednesday's raids targeted 10 locations, including the offices of the governor and governor's secretary in the main headquarters of the provincial government, the office of the vice governor of economy, which was formerly the office of the vice president of peace, the planning and coordination office and the peace cooperation bureau, as well as Kintex and Lee's residence. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea possesses full capabilities to launch an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) at a "normal angle" and plans to conduct a seventh nuclear test aimed at miniaturizing warheads, South Korean military intelligence said Wednesday. While North Korea has yet to launch an ICBM at a normal angle, it has "already obtained all the capabilities to do so and is adjusting its timeline to put pressure on the United States," People Power Party (PPP) Rep. Yoo Sang-bum told reporters at the National Assembly after the briefing by the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) to the parliamentary Intelligence Committee. North Korea has thus far conducted ICBM tests at lofted trajectories, with its long-range missiles landing close by in the East Sea. But according to the assessment, Pyongyang now has the capabilities to launch them at a normal angle, which would enable them to fly much further, possibly putting U.S. mainland in reach. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea could test-fire intercontinental ballistic missiles on a lower, longer trajectory and conduct its seventh nuclear test this year to perfect its weapons capabilities, South Korean lawmakers said on Wednesday, citing intelligence officials. North Korea has so far conducted ICBM tests only on lofted trajectories, but has already secured capabilities to launch them at a normal angle, enabling them to fly much further, the lawmakers said after a briefing by Seoul's National Intelligence Service (NIS). (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea is a "clear and present danger," the foreign minister of South Korea has told CNN in an exclusive interview. Kim Jong Un's frequent missile tests and repeated warnings that he would consider using tactical nuclear weapons were a display of aggression and the only way to counter this was through extended US deterrence, Foreign Minister Park Jin said on Wednesday. "What North Korea is doing is completely wrong," Park said. "They have been escalating nuclear and missile threats, and threatening the peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia." (Paula Hancocks, Brad Lendon, Yoonjung Seo, David Hawley, Charles Miller, [CNN](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Online cultural hub Google Arts & Culture has added the demilitarized zone dividing South and North Korea to its collection of digitized art and civilizational artifacts from around the world. Google Korea and the Ministry of Patriots and Veteran Affairs introduced the "Korea's Demilitarized Zone," or "DMZ" collection at a co-hosted event at the War Memorial of Korea of Korea on Wednesday. The DMZ is the heavily fortified no-man's land separating North and South Korea, created at the end of the 1950-53 Korean War. Some 250 kilometers (155 miles)

long and 4 kilometers wide, the zone is also an ecological treasure trove home to hundreds of rare plants and animals. (Jae-lim Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- Military tensions on the Korean Peninsula have sharply risen to a dangerous level as North Korea launched the Hwasong-15 missile, one of the intercontinental ballistic missiles, on Feb. 18. North Korea's launch of long-range ballistic missiles was a severe provocation against international norms and order, as the UN Security Council's resolutions on North Korea prohibit. Kim Yo-jong, the younger sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and deputy department director of the Workers' Party of Korea, made statements for two consecutive days, threatening "the Pacific Ocean will be a ballistic missile firing range for the North." Meanwhile, as the South and the US are scheduled to conduct a massive military exercise in March, rising military tensions on the Korean Peninsula are an accomplished fact. (Son-taek Wang, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- Deep in the heart of the North Korean capital Pyongyang, moored along the Pothong River Canal, is a US Navy ship that is featured as an exhibition of the "Victorious War Museum." The ill-fated vessel is USS Pueblo, the only active ship on the commissioned roster of the American Navy now held captive by another country. On Jan. 23, 1968, the world's most powerful military was dealt an unexpected blow by the hands of a tiny communist state, when Pyongyang attacked the US Navy intelligence-gathering ship and captured it along with a crew of over 80. (Min-sik Yoon, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan held their first trilateral missile defense exercise of the year on Wednesday. Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said the exercise took place in international waters east of South Korea's Ulleung Island and involved three destroyers equipped with Aegis combat systems: ROKS Sejong the Great from South Korea, the USS Barry from the United States and the JS Atago from Japan. The three countries practiced procedures to detect and track computer-simulated missile targets, as well as share information. Only the USS Barry practiced intercepting missiles, a South Korean defense official told reporters on condition of anonymity. In its press release, the JCS said the three countries "strengthened security cooperation and further shored up their response systems" through their joint missile defense exercise. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The assassination of Shinzo Abe last July sent shockwaves throughout Japan, and observers are still trying to make sense of how the country's longest-serving prime minister met such a bloody end. But the world of Japanese political literature moves quickly, and a new posthumous work plainly titled "Shinzo Abe: A Memoir" hit shelves this month. Currently available only in Japanese, the bestseller is based on roughly 36 hours of interviews that Abe completed with three Yomiuri Shimbun journalists, resulting in 440 pages of revelations. (Oliver Jia, [NK News](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan staged a ballistic missile defense exercise on Wednesday in international waters to enhance military interoperability and readiness against escalating threats from North Korea, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said. The five-hour trilateral drills came days after North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles and one intercontinental ballistic missile, respectively, on Monday and Feb. 18. (Da-gyum Ji, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The United States is right in pursuing a complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula but needs to consider changing methods to achieve its objective, U.S. experts said Tuesday. They argued the U.S. could, or should, consider removing sanctions on the impoverished

North to induce dialogue. "Let me start with U.S. policy objective. I've given that an A minus," Robert Gallucci said in a webinar, titled "A Mid-Term Report Card for Biden's North Korea Policy." Gallucci, a former U.S. negotiator in denuclearization talks with North Korea, said there existed an ongoing debate in Washington over whether it would be wise for the U.S. to give up its objective of completely denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula. (Duk-kun Byun, [Yonhap](#))

- The United States needs to take steps to assure the security of North Korea simultaneously with Pyongyang taking steps to denuclearize, former South Korean Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon said Tuesday. Lee made the assertion based on a premise that survival is more critical to North Korea than the U.S. or others may believe. "It is not possible to succeed in denuclearization talks with North Korea without addressing its perception of security threat and desire for survival," Lee said at a North Korea policy forum hosted by the George Washington University Institute for Korean Studies. (Duk-kun Byun, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S., South Korea and Japan conducted a trilateral missile defense exercise near the Korean Peninsula on Wednesday, according to the ROK military, days after North Korea fired a long-range missile toward Japan. According to the South Korean and U.S. military, Aegis-equipped destroyers ROKS Sejong the Great, USS Barry and JS Atago participated in the drill off the Korean east coast. "This trilateral cooperation is reflective of our shared values and resolve against those who challenge regional stability" and "demonstrates the strength" of ties between the three countries, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command said in a press release. The exercise came after North Korea fired a Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and two "tactical nuclear" rockets into the East Sea (Sea of Japan) earlier in the week, framing them as a response to military threats from the U.S. and South Korea. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- U.S., South Korean, and Japanese warships participated in a ballistic missile defense drill in the waters east of the Korean Peninsula Wednesday, a relatively rare display of trilateral defense cooperation that has become more frequent as North Korea becomes more aggressive. The USS Barry, an Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer, took part in the joint drill, along with one destroyer each from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Republic of Korea Navy, the three countries announced in separate statements. None of the statements specifically mentioned North Korea, which launched an intercontinental ballistic missile Saturday and two short-range ballistic missiles Monday. (William Gallo, [VOA](#))
- North Korea's lofted test launch of a Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) over the weekend has revived debate about the viability of the country's reentry vehicle (RV) designs. For years, outside experts have looked for comfort in the possibility that, despite Pyongyang's substantial advances in missile booster technologies, it has yet to master the art of bringing down what it sends up. (Ankit Panda, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Juntae Rocker, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506073012/https://mailchi.mp/a06083fd14e9/hrnk-news-itemsn-korea-may-try-to-pressure-us-with-icbm-nuclear-testsus-rok-and-japan-conduct-missile-defense-exercise-after-n-korea-icbm-test>

Thursday, February 23, 2023

Trump says US drills 'provoked' North Korean missile launch; The Koreas' DMZ: Once a bloodshed scene, now a wildlife sanctuary

In North Korea:

[Back-to-back patriotic February holidays prove exhausting ordeal for North Koreans](#) (Radio Free Asia, 02/22/2023)

[More North Koreans sticking mysterious objects on face masks, state media shows](#) (NK News, 02/23/2023)

[N. Korea to hold key party meeting amid severe food shortages](#) (Yonhap, 02/23/2023)

[North capable of 'normal-angle' ICBM launch: South DIA](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/23/2023)

['Poisoned candy': North Korean state media shuns food aid despite hunger crisis](#) (Guardian, 02/22/2023)

In South Korea:

[North Korea a 'clear and present danger,' says South Korean Foreign Minister](#) (CNN, 02/23/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[The Koreas' DMZ: Once a bloodshed scene, now a wildlife sanctuary](#) (BBC, 02/23/2023)

International:

[After US accusations, why haven't North Korean weapons appeared in Ukraine?](#) (NK News, 02/23/2023)

[N. Korean nuclear, missile programs not helpful to China: state dept.](#) (Yonhap, 02/23/2023)

[North Korean media blames U.S., allies for Ukraine war ahead of invasion anniversary](#) (Reuters, 02/23/2023)

[Trump says US drills 'provoked' North Korean missile launch](#) (The Telegraph, 02/23/2023)

[US, ROK hold tabletop drills on responding to North Korean nuclear attacks](#) (NK News, 02/23/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Koreans have come to dread February because of back-to-back patriotic holidays that require them to attend a seemingly endless stream of propaganda lectures, political events and commemorative performances in the days leading up to them, sources in the country tell Radio Free Asia. (Myung Chul Lee, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- As most of the world eases COVID-19 controls, North Koreans appear to be wearing more masks and have even started sticking mysterious accessories on them in recent weeks, according to NK News analysis of state media. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea is expected to hold a key party meeting later this month to solely discuss agricultural issues amid keen attention to whether it will unveil any practical measures to address its serious food shortages. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea possesses full capabilities to launch an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) at a "normal angle" and plans to conduct a seventh nuclear test aimed at miniaturizing

warheads, South Korean military intelligence said Wednesday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- The major North Korean state newspaper Rodong Sinmun has said that relying on external aid to cope with food shortages would be the same as taking “poisoned candy”, amid a national crisis and a reported increase in deaths from starvation. ([Guardian](#))

In South Korea:

- North Korea is a “clear and present danger,” the foreign minister of South Korea has told CNN in an exclusive interview. (Paula Hancocks, Brad Lendon, Yoonjung Seo, David Hawley, Charles Miller, [CNN](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- What once was the site of bloody armed conflict between the two Koreas has become an unexpected wildlife sanctuary. (Kelly Ng, [BBC](#))

International:

- When Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine, North Korea was among the first countries to voice support. The DPRK went on to formally recognize the Russia-backed breakaway republics of Donetsk and Lugansk, made plans to send workers there and reportedly sold weapons for the Kremlin’s war effort. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's continued missile provocations and its nuclear development program are not helpful to any country, including China, a state department spokesperson said Wednesday, two days after China blocked U.S.-led efforts to condemn Pyongyang's latest ballistic missile tests. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean state media marked the first anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine by blaming the crisis on NATO and calling America's involvement a "trail to self-destruction." (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- US drills provoked Kim Jong-un to launch a barrage of missiles, defending the North Korean leader he described as feeling “threatened”. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- The U.S. and South Korea held a tabletop exercise at the Pentagon on Wednesday that was scheduled to practice responses to a North Korean nuclear attack, days after the DPRK test-fired long-range missile and “tactical nuclear” rockets. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Myriam Aribaud, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506073931/https://mailchi.mp/3b3307d01822/hrnk-news-items-trump-says-us-drills-provoked-north-korean-missile-launch-the-koreas-dmz-once-a-bloodshed-scene-now-a-wildlife-sanctuary>

Friday, February 24, 2023

N. Korea says it conducted 'strategic cruise missile' drills this week, N. Korean hackers stole a record \$1.7bn of crypto last year

In North Korea:

[Cruise Missile Drill Held in Kim Ch'aek City](#) (North Korea Leadership Watch, 2/23/23)

[In letter to quake-hit Syria, N. Korean leader wishes swift recovery work](#) (Yonhap, 2/24/2023)

[North Korean hackers stole a record \\$1.7bn of crypto last year](#) (The Economist, 2/23/2023)

[N. Korean nuclear, missile programs not helpful to China: state dept.](#) (Yonhap, 2/23/2023)

[North Korean parents will be punished if their children watch foreign media even once](#) (Radio Free Asia, 2/23/2023)

[N. Korea says it conducted 'strategic cruise missile' drills this week](#) (Yonhap, 2/24/2023)

[North Korea says it fired cruise missiles as rivals trained](#) (AP News 2/24/2023)

[Understanding Kim Jong Un's Economic Policymaking: Key Findings and Implications](#) (38 North, 2/23/2023)

[N. Korea warns continued 'U.S. hostility' will be considered 'declaration of war'](#) (Yonhap, 2/24/2023)

In South Korea:

[President, minister send mixed messages on starvation deaths in North Korea](#) (Hankyoreh, 2/22/2023)

[South Korea testing North Korean defectors for possible radiation exposure](#) (The Korea Herald, 2/24/2023)

[Seoul offers radiation tests to N Korea defectors as group flags nuclear risks](#) (BBC, 2/24/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Seoul mayor says nuclear armament option should be left open to deal with N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 2/23/2023)

International:

[U.S. aircraft carrier may be deployed to S. Korea for joint drills next month](#) (Yonhap, 2/24/2023)

[S. Korea asks US command to remove 'Sea of Japan' from trilateral exercise press release](#) (The Korea Herald, 2/23/2023)

[U.S., S. Korea agree to hold additional exercises on nuclear deterrence](#) (Yonhap, 2/23/2023)

[Trump defends Kim Jong Un and says dictator 'feels threatened' in stunning statement](#) (The Independent, 2/23/2023)

[US experts give Biden's North Korea policy a failing grade](#) (Hankyoreh, 2/24/2023)

[World leaders condemn North Korea's latest missile launch](#) (Radio Free Asia, 2/21/2023)

In North Korea:

- A cruise missile element under the Korean People's Army [KPA] eastern command zone conducted a cruise missile drill using Hwasal-2 (Arrow-2) cruise missiles. Other KPA artillery sub-units conducted support and training exercises. The missile drill took place in the early morning of 23 February (Thursday) in Kim Ch'aek City (So'ngjin), North Hamgyo'ng. The units involved, according to KCNA, "constitute one of the major forces of the DPRK nuclear deterrent." ([North Korea Leadership Watch](#))

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has sent a letter to his Syrian counterpart hoping the country makes a speedy recovery from damage wrought by a devastating earthquake that recently struck the region, Pyongyang's state media said Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- Despite being unable to feed its people, North Korea has found innovative ways to fund its missiles programme, including by forging foreign currency, committing insurance fraud and making and selling arms and narcotics. A more novel revenue stream is stolen cryptocurrency. Last year its hackers pinched a record \$1.7bn. ([The Economist](#))
- North Korea's continued missile provocations and its nuclear development program are not helpful to any country, including China, a state department spokesperson said Wednesday, two days after China blocked U.S.-led efforts to condemn Pyongyang's latest ballistic missile tests. (Duk-kun Byun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has threatened to punish parents if their children are caught watching foreign media, suggestive dancing or talking like a South Korean, even if it is their child's first offense. (Hyemin Son, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- North Korea has conducted "strategic cruise missile" launching drills, with the "war posture" of the country's nuclear combat forces clearly demonstrated, its state media said Friday, as South Korea and the United States held joint military exercises this week. (Yun-hwan Chae, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said Friday it test-fired long-range cruise missiles off its eastern coast a day earlier, adding to a provocative streak in weapons demonstrations as its rivals step up military training. The launches, were intended to verify the reliability of the missiles and the rapid-response capabilities of the unit that operates those weapons, North Korean state media said. (Tong-Hyung Kim, [AP News](#))
- All good things must come to an end, they say, and this is a chance, at the end of the project "Understanding Kim Jong Un's Economic Policymaking," to review what we tried to do, what we may have accomplished and the tremendous amount of work that remains to be done. (Robert Carlin, Rachel Minyoung Lee, [38 North](#))
- A North Korean foreign ministry official on Friday warned that Pyongyang will regard what it claims to be "hostile practices" from the United States as a "declaration of war" against the reclusive country. (Wonju Yi, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's Ministry of Unification and presidential office have muddled the water by offering contradictory assessments of the North Korean food supply. A few days after briefing the National Assembly that there aren't many reports of starvation in the North, the ministry retracted its initial assessment following an announcement by the presidential office that there have been multiple reports of people starving to death there. (Je-hun Lee, [Hankyoreh](#))
- The South Korean government said Friday it would resume radiation testing for defectors from near North Korea's nuclear test site in Punggye-ri to check for possible exposure. (Arin Kim, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea will offer radiation testing to 881 North Korean defectors after concerns were raised about their exposure to the North's nuclear tests. It comes after a research report

warned that residents around Punggye-ri, the main nuclear testing site, could be exposed to radioactive leaks in water. (Kelly Ng, Jean Mackenzie, [BBC](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Seoul Mayor Oh Se-hoon said Thursday that South Korea should leave open the option of nuclear armament in the face of a nuclear North Korea, noting that the war in Ukraine has provided the lesson that peace without power is fiction. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- South Korea and the United States are in consultation over the possible deployment of a U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to Korea for allied drills next month, an informed source said Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea has asked the US Indo-Pacific Command to revise the US military's reference to international waters between Japan and South Korea from the "Sea of Japan" to a neutral description, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff confirmed Thursday. (Da-gyum Ji, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea and the United States have agreed to hold additional tabletop exercises (TTXs) in the near future to enhance their joint deterrence against North Korean nuclear threats, the U.S. Department of Defense said Thursday. (Duk-kun Byun, [Yonhap](#))
- Former president Donald Trump defended North Korean leader Kim Jon-un as the communist nation fired a long-range missile. Despite criticizing North Korea in the early part of Mr. Trump's presidency, Mr. Trump and Kim Jong-un eventually met, first in Singapore in 2019 and then again later, when Mr. Trump became the first president to set foot inside the country. But the summit did not lead to North Korea disarming itself. Mr. Trump later said that the two exchanged letters and they "fell in love." (Eric Garcia, [The Independent](#))
- North Korea experts in the US are urging the Biden administration to come up with a more proactive and serious policy to deal with Pyongyang. In their view, Biden's North Korea policy over the past two years, which has focused mainly on pressure and sanctions, has been ineffective. ([Hankyoreh](#))
- The leaders of the G-7 have joined the condemnation of North Korea's weekend missile launch, calling the test a "reckless" threat to peace, as experts said Pyongyang is verging on the ability to launch missiles that can strike the continental United States without "re-entry" issues. ([Radio Free Asia](#))

Prepared by Kathy Yu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506074358/https://mailchi.mp/14022de17b2b/hrnk-news-itemsn-korea-says-it-conducted-strategic-cruise-missile-drills-this-weekn-korean-hackers-stole-a-record-17bn-of-crypto-last-year>

Saturday, February 25, 2023

US nuclear-powered submarine arrives in Busan; NK slams US-ROK visit to submarine base as ‘nuclear war demonstration’

In North Korea:

[Cybersecurity researchers link new payload to North Korea's Lazarus Group](#) (NK Pro, 02/24/2023)

[Fewer North Korean women dying due to complications of pregnancy: UN report](#) (NK News, 02/24/2023)

[How North Korean state firms bend the rules to rake in cash from market activity](#) (NK Pro, 02/24/2023)

[North Korea blames ‘evil’ US for Ukraine war, one year after Russia's invasion](#) (NK News, 02/24/2023)

[N. Korea food shortage worsens amid COVID, but no famine yet](#) (AP News, 02/25/2023)

[North Korea says it conducted ‘nuclear counterattack’ cruise missile test](#) (NK News, 02/24/2023)

[North Korea slams US-ROK visit to submarine base as ‘nuclear war demonstration’](#) (NK News, 02/24/2023)

[Prison for North Korean parents who let their children watch Hollywood films](#) (The Telegraph, 02/24/2023)

International:

[The End of China's Zero-COVID Policy and Takeaways for North Korea](#) (38 North, 02/24/2023)

[U.S. nuclear-powered submarine arrives in Busan](#) (Yonhap, 02/25/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea's most notorious hacking syndicate may be abusing a new security backdoor as it bolsters its “vast arsenal” of malware, according to security researchers, as the Lazarus Group targets victims in South Korea and other countries. The payload, dubbed WinorDLL64, enables the hackers to acquire extensive system information, manipulate and delete files and execute additional commands, Slovak security firm ESET said in a report released Thursday. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korea's maternal mortality rate dropped by 43% from 2000 to 2020, according to a new U.N. report released Thursday, a development that follows years of international efforts to assist pregnant women in the country. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 107 North Korean women died per 100,000 births in 2020, declining from 186 deaths per 100,000 births two decades earlier. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korea is not a market economy, but it does play host to a capitalist system all the same, with many different types of market-oriented state firms. Some of these firms and their operations are legal and preapproved, and their output is sold at near-market prices within bounds set by the state. The “law on opposing special unitization and sectionalism” (단위특수화, 본위주의반대법) passed in July 2021 appears in a new trove of North Korean legislation recently released by South Korea's National Intelligence Service, and it shines light on a wide range of activities that the state is trying to curtail. (Peter Ward, [NK Pro](#))

- North Korea issued a statement branding the U.S. as an “evil empire” responsible for the war in Ukraine and repeating its support for Russia on Thursday, the eve of the first anniversary of Moscow’s invasion. “The hegemonic policy pursued by the U.S. and the West ... compelled Russia to start preemptive military actions to fundamentally remove the external military threats to it,” international affairs critic Kim Yu Chol said in a commentary published by the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) on Thursday. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Unconfirmed reports say an unspecified number of North Koreans have been dying of hunger. But experts say there is no sign of mass deaths or famine. They say the upcoming ruling Workers’ Party meeting is likely intended to shore up support for North Korean leader Kim Jong Un as he pushes ahead with his nuclear weapons program in defiance of intense U.S.-led pressure and sanctions. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- North Korea launched four “Hwasal-2 strategic cruise missiles” on Thursday from the country’s east coast as part of “fatal nuclear counterattack” drills on “the hostile forces,” according to state media. South Korean and Japanese military authorities did not announce detection of the test prior to North Korea’s disclosure via state media, something that has occurred numerous times in the past, and it’s unclear whether they had detected it. Later Friday morning, South Korea’s defense ministry released a statement saying they disagreed with North Korea’s claims, without specifying which claims. The ministry also did not clarify whether or not it was able to detect the launch in real time. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea denounced a joint U.S.-ROK visit to a nuclear submarine training facility this week as a “nuclear war demonstration against the DPRK,” labeling the allies’ “hostile” military drills as comparable to a “declaration of war.” The foreign ministry statement released Friday came hours after the allies revealed details of bilateral tabletop exercises on responding to North Korean nuclear use scenarios and the submarine base visit to reaffirm Washington’s commitment to extended deterrence. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Parents who let their children watch Hollywood blockbusters will be sent to prison camps, North Korea has announced. Pyongyang is intensifying its efforts to eradicate foreign films and television programmes with parents told that they will be punished if their children are caught watching illicit overseas movies just once. Previously, parents could escape with a stern warning if their children were found in possession of media smuggled into the North from overseas. (Julian Ryall, [The Telegraph](#))

International:

- On December 7, 2022, the Chinese government provided 10 new guidelines for relaxing its zero-COVID policy. These sudden policy changes, which were meant for a transition back to normalcy, have resulted in a sharp increase in COVID-19 cases. As a nation directly bordering China to the east, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea) is well aware of the threat this upsurge poses to its national health security. While it remains to be seen whether North Korea will follow China’s lead in further relaxing its coronavirus restrictions, Pyongyang should be taking measures now—such as increasing vaccination rates, improving intensive care units (ICU) capabilities and personnel, and strengthening testing capacity—to avoid the pitfalls Beijing encountered in its attempt to transition to life after COVID-19. (Samuel S. Han, Woori Lee, Heeje Lee, [38 North](#))
- A U.S. nuclear-powered submarine has arrived in South Korea for a scheduled visit, the U.S. Pacific Fleet said Saturday, in an apparent show of force and a warning to North Korea

against provocations. The 6,000-ton Los Angeles-class fast attack submarine USS Springfield docked at the naval base in the southern port city of Busan for a "scheduled port visit," it said in a social media post, without revealing the timing of the arrival. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506074826/https://mailchi.mp/744d95e12a08/hrnk-news-itemsus-nuclear-powered-submarine-arrives-in-busannk-slams-us-rok-visit-to-submarine-base-as-nuclear-war-demonstration>

Sunday, February 26, 2023

N. Korean leader attends groundbreaking ceremony for new street in Pyongyang

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un and daughter inaugurate new street construction project in Pyongyang](#) (NK News, 02/26/2023)

[N. Korean leader attends groundbreaking ceremony for new street in Pyongyang](#) (Yonhap, 02/26/2023)

International:

[North not backing down ahead of South-U.S. joint military exercises](#) (The Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/26/2023)

In North Korea:

- Kim Jong Un and his “beloved” daughter attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of a new street in Pyongyang on Saturday, according to state media, the first time the leader’s increasingly prominent daughter has appeared at such an event. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Kim attended the ceremony in Pyongyang's Sopho area Saturday, which is part of an ambitious project to build 4,100 homes in the capital city's northern area, the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said. The project is different from another one for the construction of 10,000 new homes in Pyongyang's Hwasong district. Kim's daughter, Ju-ae, also attended the ceremony, the KCNA said. It did not mention her by name but called her Kim's "beloved daughter."([Yonhap](#))

International:

- Tensions with North Korea are rising as South Korea and the United States gear up for a 10-day joint military exercise scheduled to kick off on March 13. North Korea continued its verbal assault on the joint military exercise over the weekend, especially as the nuclear

power submarine USS Springfield arrived at the Busan Naval Base. On Sunday, Arirang Meari, one of the regime's mouthpieces, claimed that the joint military exercises are "dangerous" provocations made with the goal of preparing for an invasion. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [The Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506075220/https://mailchi.mp/9c0273b5c9a6/hrnk-news-itemsn-korean-leader-attention-groundbreaking-ceremony-for-new-street-in-pyongyang>

Monday, February 27, 2023

N. Korea opens key party meeting on agriculture amid food crisis, N. Korea overhauls laws on drug use, private wealth & rape

In North Korea:

[N. Korea opens key party meeting on agriculture amid food crisis](#) (Yonhap News, 02/27/2023)

[North Korea overhauls laws on drug use, private wealth and rape](#) (NK News, 02/27/2023)

[Unification minister says it's 'too early' to determine whether N.K. leader's daughter is successor](#) (Yonhap News, 02/27/2023)

International:

[\[Column\] Add wings to the 'global pivot state'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/26/2023)

[U.S. asks to buy ammo as Zelensky hopes for Korean aid](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/27/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has convened a key party meeting to discuss agricultural issues, with its leader Kim Jong-un in attendance, Pyongyang's state media said Monday, as the country is grappling with severe food shortages. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap News](#))
- South Korea's National Intelligence Service (NIS) recently released an updated version of North Korea's criminal law, and the text reveals important changes in the country during the last six years under Kim Jong Un. (Martin Weiser, [NK News](#))
- Seoul's point man on North Korea said Monday it is "too early" to determine whether North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's recently revealed daughter, Ju-ae, is the country's heir apparent despite her recent high-profile public appearances. ([Yonhap News](#))

International:

- To tackle a plethora of urgent issues, including missile launches by North Korea, Foreign Minister Park Jin visited the United States in early February. But his destination was not Washington. It was New York, where the United Nations is headquartered. Park went to the city to help South Korea become a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council again. (Nam Jeong-ho, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- The United States has asked to purchase more artillery ammunition from Korea, local sources said, as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky expressed hope that Korea will send military support against the ongoing Russian invasion of his country. (Lim Sun-Young, Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506075620/https://mailchi.mp/71e0ac9a2995/hrnk-news-itemsn-korean-leader-attends-groundbreaking-ceremony-for-new-street-in-pyongyang-11191066>

Tuesday, February 28, 2023

Moon officials indicted for forced repatriation of North Korean fishermen; Size of N. Korea's rice paddies down 0.8 pct in 2022

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un: North Korea needs 'radical change' to boost food production](#)

[Kim Jong Un says 'next few years' crucial to solving North Korea's food problems](#) (NK News, 02/28/2023)

[North Korea's Kim calls for unity to boost grain production](#) (AP News, 02/28/2023)

[N. Korean leader calls for 'radical change' in agricultural output within few years](#) (Yonhap, 02/28/2023)

[Size of N. Korea's rice paddies down 0.8 pct in 2022](#) (Yonhap, 02/28/2023)

In South Korea:

[Moon officials indicted for forced repatriation of North Korean fishermen](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/28/2023)

[Unification ministry launches advisory committee to help build unification policy vision](#) (Yonhap, 02/28/2023)

[S. Korea designates Aug. 13 on lunar calendar as Separated Families Day](#) (Yonhap, 02/28/2023)

International:

[Allies plan expanded exercise for 'extended deterrence](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 02/28/2023)

[Japan says it won't rule out sending aid to North Korea if it returns abductees](#) (NK News, 02/28/2023)

[N. Korea remains on U.S. shortlist of 'state sponsors of terrorism' in 2021: report](#) (Yonhap, 02/28/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. making 'practical' progress in strengthening U.S. extended deterrence: Amb. Cho](#) (Yonhap, 02/28/2023)

[U.S. has no hostile intent but N. Korea continues to provoke: state dept.](#) (Yonhap, 02/28/2023)

[US lists North Korea as state sponsor of terrorism for fifth straight year](#) (NK News, 02/28/2023)

[World Food Program seeks to triple funding for food assistance in North Korea](#) (NK News, 02/28/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un called for a "radical change in the agricultural production" of his isolated country amid food shortages that outside experts say are worsening, state media reported Tuesday. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- Leadership discusses need for 'fundamental change' in farming and state economic plans on second day of ongoing plenum. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean ruler Kim Jong Un called for stronger public solidarity behind his leadership to increase the country's grain production significantly, state media reported Tuesday, amid outside worries about the country's worsened food insecurity. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- The North's leader stressed the need to find ways for "stable and sustained development of agriculture" during the plenary meeting of the central committee of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) held the previous day, according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). ([Yonhap](#))
- The North's rice paddies totaled 539,569 hectares, slightly larger than the size of the U.S. state of Delaware, in 2022, compared with 544,006 hectares posted in 2021, according to Statistics Korea. (Kang Yoon-seung, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- Top secretaries of President Moon Jae-in, including his head of national intelligence, were indicted Tuesday on charges connected to the forced repatriation of two would-be North Korean defectors in 2019. Seoul Central District Court said it indicted former National Security Director and later Foreign Minister Chung Eui-yong, former National Intelligence Service (NIS) Director Suh Hoon, and Moon's Chief of Staff Noh Young-min, as well as former Unification Minister Kim Yeon-chul, on abusing their authority under the National Intelligence Service Act. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Consisting of 34 experts, the Unification Future Planning Committee will be tasked with helping the development of Seoul's unification policy and building related consensus at home and abroad, according to the ministry. The ministry has announced a plan to draw up a new policy blueprint for unification, tentatively named the "New Future Initiative on Unification," within the year to pave the groundwork for a peaceful unification based on freedom and democratic values. ([Yonhap](#))
- The establishment of Separated Families Day came as the National Assembly on Monday approved a revised bill aimed at promoting inter-Korean exchanges over separated families, according to the ministry in charge of affairs related to the two Koreas. The date was selected by reflecting separated families' wishes, as many of them voiced hope to reunite with their kin in the North on Aug. 13 on the lunar calendar, a day before the start of the annual Chuseok fall harvest holiday. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- Korea's ambassador to the U.S. said South Korea and the United States are currently working on a joint tabletop exercise (TTX) that goes beyond military maneuvers to embrace diplomacy, information and economics. The expanded exercise reflects the alliance's move

toward “extended deterrence” against threats from North Korea. (Kim Hyoung-Gu. Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- Japan will not rule out the possibility of dispatching aid to North Korea if it leads to progress on the abduction issue, a top government spokesperson said Monday, as Tokyo faces mounting pressure from families of Japanese nationals kidnapped by North Korean agents decades ago. “We have constantly considered all options and will continue to consider them” to resolve the abduction issue, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said in response to a reporter’s question about aid transfers to the DPRK. Matsuno also serves as Tokyo’s point man on abduction issues. (Kosuke Takahashi, [NK News](#))
- North Korea was one of three countries to be placed on the list, according to the 2021 Country Reports on Terrorism. The other two were Iran and Syria. “On November 20, 2017, the secretary of state designated the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) as a State Sponsor of Terrorism,” said the report released by the state department, referring to North Korea by its official name. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- Cho also said the allies will hold additional joint exercises to further strengthen the extended deterrence. Extended deterrence refers to U.S. commitment to the defense of South Korea, using the full range of its military capabilities, including nuclear weapons. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The remarks come after the North cited what it claimed to be U.S. hostility toward the country, while warning that U.S. provocations against the North will be considered a “declaration of war.” “It is the DPRK that time and again at an unprecedented rate has engaged in provocations, including multiple tests of ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile) systems, other ballistic missiles and other provocative activities that have posed a threat to peace and security in the Indo-Pacific and, in some ways, even well beyond,” State Department Press Secretary Ned Price told a daily press briefing. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- State Department cites abductions of Japanese and assassinations on foreign soil as evidence of DPRK link to terrorism. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- UN organization says it will need \$42M for DPRK programs in first half, a sign of preparations for eventual reopening. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240506080122/https://mailchi.mp/c67e102b174b/hrnk-news-itemsmoon-officials-indicted-for-forced-repatriation-of-north-korean-fishermensize-of-n-koreas-rice-paddies-down-08-pct-in-2022>

3. MARCH

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

Former ROK cabinet officials indicted over NK forced repatriation; UN special envoy voices concern about N. Korean detained in China

In North Korea:

[Images of plump, well-dressed daughter of Kim Jong Un arouse secret resentment](#) (Radio Free Asia, 02/28/2023)

[KJU Attends Groundbreaking of Sop'o Apartment Complex](#) (North Korea Leadership Watch, 02/28/2023)

In South Korea:

[Amendment bill not enough to protect NK defectors from repatriation: NGOs](#) (The Korea Herald, 02/28/2023)

[Former ROK cabinet officials indicted over forced repatriation of North Koreans](#) (NK News, 03/01/2023)

[Yoon, calling Japan a partner, offers new vision to reboot sour relations](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/01/2023)

International:

[Human rights in North Korea to stay on UN Security Council radar](#) (Reuters, 03/01/2023)

[UN special envoy voices concern about North Korean detained in China](#) (NK News, 03/01/2023)

[U.S. imposes sanctions on 3 entities, 2 individuals generating illicit revenue for N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 03/01/2023)

[U.S., S. Korea agree on need to strengthen extended deterrence: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 03/01/2023)

In North Korea:

- The officially titled “Beloved Child” of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un wore a fur-collared long coat with golden buttons, festooned with a golden brooch and high-quality leather gloves. Experts speculate that the recent introduction of Kim Ju Ae, believed to be 9 years old, is either an part of a propaganda effort to soften her father’s image by portraying him as a family man, or that she is being positioned to one day rule after her father. (Hyemin Son, Seung Wook Hong, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- Kim Jong Un (Kim Cho’ng-u’n) attended a groundbreaking ceremony for construction of an apartment complex in Sop’o neighborhood in Pyongyang on 25 February (Saturday). Also in attendance was his daughter, Kim Ju Ae (Kim Chu-a’e), DPRK Premier Kim Tok Hun (Kim Tok-hun), WPK Secretary for Organizational Affairs Jo Yong Won (Cho Yo’ng-wo’n), WPK Secretary for Propaganda and Agitation (Publicity and Information) Ri Il Hwan (Ri Il-hwan), WPK Secretary for Economic Affairs Jon Hyon Chol (Cho’n Hyon-ch’o’l), DPRK Vice Premier Pak Hun and WPK Workers’ and Social Organizations Department Director Ri Tu Song (Ri

Tu-so'ng). This was Kim Ju Ae's first observed, publicized event that was not directly linked to military affairs or the DPRK defense industry. ([North Korea Leadership Watch](#))

In South Korea:

- A South Korean Unification Ministry amendment bill on the protection of North Korean defectors does not adequately guarantee their protection from forcible repatriation, a group of human rights organizations has said. The group, comprised of eight nongovernmental organizations from South Korea, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom sent a joint letter to President Yoon Suk Yeol on Monday has pointed out that the proposed revision gives too much discretion to the unification minister, who is appointed by the president and therefore cannot be seen as politically independent. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Prosecutors indicted South Korea's former foreign and unification ministers along with officials from the Moon Jae-in administration on Tuesday, alleging that they mishandled a 2019 case that involved the forced repatriation of two North Korean fishermen. Former national security adviser and foreign minister Chung Eui-yong, unification minister Kim Yeon-chul, presidential chief of staff Noh Young-min and National Intelligence Service (NIS) chief Suh Hoon have been charged with "violating the National Intelligence Service Act because of abuse of power," the People Power Party (PPP) announced in a statement on Tuesday, confirming reports citing the prosecutor's office. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea needs Japan on its side as a partner to elevate its own global status, President Yoon Suk Yeol said Wednesday, as he looked to move beyond the constraints of their historical disputes dating to Tokyo's 1910-45 rule of the Korean Peninsula. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- The issue of human rights in North Korea will stay on the U.N. Security Council agenda at the request of the United States and Albania after they submitted a note on Tuesday with the support of 59 other nations and the European Union. Due to council procedure, the agenda item would stay on the list for another year. (Michelle Nichols, [Reuters](#))
- The U.N. special envoy for North Korean human rights sent a letter to Beijing last year seeking information about the well-being of a DPRK citizen detained in China, amid concerns about the arrest and forced repatriation of defectors in the country. In the letter sent on Dec. 28 and uploaded on the U.N. human rights office website last week, special rapporteur Elizabeth Salmon inquires about the health of a North Korean who she says was arrested "at an acquaintance's house" in June 2021. "I am concerned about the information that [her] health condition is deteriorating," Salmon writes. "I am concerned that she is facing the risk of forcible repatriation in violation of the principle of non-refoulment." The letter marks the first time that the U.N. has publicly released correspondence from the special rapporteur after Salmon's appointment last summer. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The United States imposed sanctions on three companies and two individuals illicitly generating revenue for North Korea's weapons development programs. The U.S. Department of Treasury said the three companies include Chilsong Trading Corporation, which is subordinate to the government of North Korea, and Korea Paekho Trading Corporation, subordinate to North Korea's Ministry of Defence. The treasury department also designated Hwang Kil-su and Pak Hwa-song, along with their business Congo Aconde SARL, which they

established in Congo to generate revenue from construction and statue-building projects with local governments. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

- The United States and South Korea agree on the need to further strengthen U.S. extended deterrence, a U.S. defense department spokesperson said Tuesday, also reaffirming U.S. commitment to deploying strategic assets to South Korea on a rotational basis. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Yoshino Yamauchi, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509042603/https://mailchi.mp/6b513caffelb/hrnk-news-items-former-rok-cabinet-officials-indicted-over-nk-forced-repatriation-un-special-envoy-voices-concern-about-n-korean-detained-in-china>

Thursday, March 2, 2023

Kim Jong Un calls for stronger party control to solve nation's food problems; U.S. applauds Yoon's overture to Japan after speech

In North Korea:

[North Korea Launches Four "Hwasal-2" LACMs to Show Strong Deterrence and Rapid Response](#) (38 North, 03/01/2023)

[N. Korean leader calls for attaining grain production goal amid reports of severe food shortages](#) (Yonhap, 03/02/2023)

[Political Bureau Meeting Held](#) (North Korea Leadership Watch, 03/02/2023)

[Central Committee Plenum Holds Break-out Sessions](#) (North Korea Leadership Watch, 03/02/2023)

[What's going on with North Korea's agriculture?](#) (North Korean Economy Watch, 03/02/2023)

[North Korea's Kim demands more farmland to boost food production](#) (Reuters, 03/02/2023)

[N. Korea wants more control over farming amid food shortage](#) (AP News, 03/02/2023)

[Kim Jong Un calls for stronger party control to solve nation's food problems](#) (NK News, 03/02/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korean minister urges N. Korea to respond to offer of talks on separated families](#) (Yonhap, 03/02/2023)

International:

[U.S. lawmakers reintroduce bill on ending Korean War, improving relations between U.S., N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 03/02/2023)

[U.S. applauds Yoon's overture to Japan after speech](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/02/2023)

[JCS chief stresses allies' readiness to hit enemy facilities](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/02/2023)

[U.S. hits North Korea with new sanctions targeting missile program](#) (UPI, 03/02/2023)

[‘Ghostrider’ gunship joins US-ROK drills on precision-bombing North Korea: JCS](#) (NK News, 03/02/2023)

[US unveils new sanctions targeting North Korean activities in Africa](#) (NK News, 03/02/2023)

In North Korea:

- On February 24, North Korean press reported on a “strategic cruise missile launching drill” the previous day involving “four ‘Hwasal-2’ strategic cruise missiles.” This is the first time North Korea has provided a name for the land-attack cruise missile (LACM) system. North Korea has now reported a total of 12 LACM launches: four of the presumed Hwasal-1 and eight of the Hwasal-2, which apparently has an updated propulsion system and longer range. (Vann H. Van Diepen, [38 North](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has called on all farms across the country to focus on stepping up their grain production and meeting their goals for this year “without fail,” wrapping up a four-day session of a key party meeting, Pyongyang’s state media said Thursday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- The Workers’ Party of Korea [WPK] 8th Central Committee Political Bureau held its 14th meeting in Pyongyang on 1 March (Wednesday). In attendance were Presidium, Members and alternate (candidate) members of the Political Bureau. Two members of the Presidium—Choe Ryong Hae (Ch’oe Ryong-hae) and Ri Pyong Chol (Ri Pyo’ng-ch’o’l) did not attend. ([North Korea Leadership Watch](#))
- The 7th plenum of the 8th Workers’ Party of Korea [WPK] Central Committee held sideline consultative policy meetings on 28 February (Tuesday). “Sectional study and consultative meetings to frame scientific, realistic and dynamic measures for further accelerating the implementation of the Party’s rural development strategy and economic policy” on the Central Committee meeting’s third day held “amid the growing confidence in the sure victory and courage of all the participants who received guidelines for the implementation of the program for rural revolution and the national economic development in the new era.” ([North Korea Leadership Watch](#))
- As the South Korean government has said, this week’s meeting in Pyongyang on the food situation is as close to an open admission either of serious food shortages already prevailing, or that the regime forecasts that things will get worse. But what do we really know? In this post, I look at two main indicators: reports and testimonies from inside North Korea reported by the defector-run news outlet *Daily NK*, and market prices, primarily of corn and rice. (Benjamin Katzeff Silberstein, [North Korean Economy Watch](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un ordered improvements to infrastructure and expansion of farmland to ramp up food production, state media said on Thursday, amid warnings of an impending food crisis. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed to strengthen state control over agriculture and take a spate of other steps to increase grain production, state media reported Thursday. But experts say it won’t effectively address a worsening food shortage. (Hyung-Jin Kim, Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un ordered farming and economic officials to solve food supply issues with “science,” better equipment and stronger party control of the sector, according to state media Thursday, as party officials concluded a four-day plenum the previous day. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's unification minister called Thursday on North Korea to respond positively to Seoul's dialogue offer on reunions of families separated by the 1950-53 Korean War. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- A group of U.S. lawmakers on Wednesday reintroduced a bill calling for U.S. efforts to declare a formal end to the Korean War and improve relations with North Korea. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States strongly supports President Yoon Suk Yeol's vision for a cooperative partnership between South Korea and Japan, the U.S. State Department said Wednesday, and "applauds" efforts by the two countries to improve relations. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Chairman Gen. Kim Seung-kyum encouraged the South Korean and U.S. militaries to maintain their readiness to "strike the enemy's critical facilities without fail" during an inspection of the allies' ongoing combined special operations exercise, the JCS said Thursday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The United States slapped new sanctions on three entities and two individuals for "illicitly generating revenue" that the North Korean regime uses to develop its weapons programs, the Treasury announced. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- South Korea's top military official visited the site of an ongoing U.S.-ROK special operations drill and asked that participating soldiers demonstrate the capability to conduct precision strikes against North Korea's "key facilities without fail," according to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) on Thursday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The U.S. has announced new sanctions against multiple North Korean individuals and companies for "illicitly" raising money for Pyongyang's weapons programs, including two DPRK citizens previously accused of laundering money through the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and an art studio operating in Africa. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Joseph Choi, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509042748/https://mailchi.mp/0fa61a033b5b/hrnk-news-items-kim-jong-un-calls-for-stronger-party-control-to-solve-nations-food-problems-us-applauds-yoons-overture-to-japan-after-speech>

Friday, March 3, 2023

US, ROK to hold large-scale drills this month against North Korean threats

In North Korea:

[N. Korea's youth mobilization project seems meant for tighter state control: ministry](#) ([Yonhap News](#), 03/03/2023)

[Starving North Korean parents increasingly abandoning children at orphanages](#) ([Radio Free Asia](#), 03/02/2023)

In South Korea:

[Seoul to screen North Korean defectors for radiation from past nuclear tests](#) (NK News, 03/03/2023)

[Secretary Austin vows continued efforts to counter North Korean provocation](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/03/2023)

[Unification ministry urges lawmakers' cooperation in implementing N.K. human rights law](#) (Yonhap News, 03/03/2023)

International:

[Freedom Shield, biggest U.S.-Korea exercise in years, to start on 13th](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/03/2023)

[New US cyber strategy warns North Korea hackers are becoming more aggressive](#) (NK News, 03/03/2023)

[Residents of Japan seek compensation from N Korea for abuses](#) (AP News, 03/03/2023)

[US, South Korea announce largest field exercises in 5 years](#) (AP News, 03/03/2023)

[US strategic bomber joins air drills with ROK in show of force to North Korea](#) (NK News, 03/03/2023)

[US, ROK to hold large-scale drills this month against North Korean threats](#) (NK News, 03/03/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea appears to be mobilizing the youth for a new housing project in a bid to tighten state control over the younger generation and elicit their loyalty to leader Kim Jong-un, Seoul's unification ministry said Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean orphanages are growing as starving parents drop off their children in the middle of the night in hopes that the kids, at least, will be able to eat, sources in the country told Radio Free Asia. (Hyemin Son, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea will conduct a full-scale study this year on the possibility of radiation leaks from North Korea's underground nuclear test site and test hundreds of defectors for signs of medical issues from radiation exposure, the unification ministry announced. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The United States will continue to counter threats posed by North Korea through close cooperation with its allies, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin said Thursday. ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's unification ministry called Friday on the National Assembly to step up efforts in improving North Korea's human rights situation and setting up a related foundation that has been delayed for years. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- South Korea and the United States will commence their biggest combined military exercise in five years later this month, bringing back large-scale live field training suspended during the Moon Jae-in administration. (Lee Sung-Eun, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korean hackers are more sophisticated and aggressive than ever before and pose significant threats to critical services and businesses worldwide, according to a new U.S.

cyber strategy released Thursday, calling for the “use all tools of national power” and multilateral cooperation to defend against cyber threats. (Arius Durr, [NK News](#))

- A group of residents of Japan who say they suffered decades of human rights abuses in North Korea after being lured there by false promises of a “Paradise on Earth” asked a Japanese appeals court on Friday to rule that the North should pay them compensation. (Mari Yamaguchi, [AP News](#))
- The South Korean and U.S. militaries announced Friday they will hold their biggest joint field exercises in five years later this month, as the U.S. flew a long-range B-1B bomber to the Korean Peninsula in a show of force against North Korea. (Hyung Jin-Kim, [AP News](#))
- U.S. and South Korean forces conducted a joint air exercise with an American B-1B strategic bomber on Friday, in a show of Washington’s commitment to extended deterrence against North Korea, according to Seoul’s Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The U.S. and South Korean militaries will hold a large-scale exercise for 11 days this month to practice responses to North Korean and other threats, the allies announced Friday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Jack Boone, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509043108/https://mailchi.mp/ff425f33a50f/hrnk-news-items-us-rok-to-hold-large-scale-drills-this-month-against-north-korean-threats>

Saturday, March 4, 2023

N. Korea renews vow to bolster nuclear arsenal; S. Korea to develop capabilities to destroy N. Korean missiles before liftoff

In North Korea:

[N. Korea renews vow to bolster nuclear arsenal](#) (Yonhap, 03/04/2023)

[Sinpho South Shipyard: No Signs of Sub Launch or Missile Test Preparations](#) (38 North, 03/03/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea to develop capabilities to destroy N. Korean missiles before liftoff](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/03/2023)

International:

[S. Korea, US to revive large-scale field training exercises after 5-year hiatus](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/03/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea on Saturday renewed its pledge to bolster its nuclear arsenal, claiming its own nuclear deterrence would ensure balance of power in the region. ([Yonhap](#))

- Recent commercial satellite imagery of North Korea's Sinpho South Shipyard indicates only a minor level of activity at the main construction hall and secure boat basin while construction continues on the L-shaped pier. (Peter Makowsky, Jack Lui, Olli Heinonen, [38 North](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's Defense Ministry on Friday announced its plan to develop a new anti-missile approach to destroy North Korean missiles before liftoff under the Yoon Suk Yeol government's new defense reform initiative. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- South Korea and the United States will revive theater-level field training exercises after a five-year hiatus to enhance the alliance's defense and readiness posture against escalating threats from North Korea. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509043306/https://mailchi.mp/91cb555ddf5b/hrnk-news-itemsn-korea-renews-vow-to-bolster-nuclear-arsenals-korea-to-develop-capabilities-to-destroy-n-korean-missiles-before-liftoff>

Sunday, March 5, 2023

U.S. guided-missile destroyer visits S. Korea

In South Korea:

[Nat'l security adviser says will discuss timing of Yoon's visit to the U.S.](#) (Yonhap, 03/05/2023)

International:

[U.S. guided-missile destroyer visits S. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 03/05/2023)

In South Korea:

- National Security Adviser Kim Sung-han said Sunday he plans to finalize the timing and level of President Yoon Suk Yeol's upcoming visit to Washington when he meets with officials in the U.S. capital this week. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- A U.S. guided-missile destroyer visited South Korea's southern island of Jeju last week, the U.S. Pacific Command said Sunday, in an apparent show of force and a warning to North Korea against missile provocations. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ava Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509043403/https://mailchi.mp/cfa8adc557f0/hrnk-new-itemsus-guided-missile-destr-over-visits-s-korea>

Monday, March 6, 2023

"To Disarm North Korea, Focus on Human Rights" by Melanie Kirkpatrick

Top News Items:

[To Disarm North Korea, Focus on Human Rights](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 03/06/2023)

[#DPRK: Famine possible again. Greg Scarlatoiu, director of The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea on this issue](#) (The John Batchelor Show, 03/06/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea says high-thrust rocket engine offers 'sure guarantee' for satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 03/06/2023)

[No signs of death and starvation at inter-Korean border, UNC officials say](#) in North Korea (NK News, 03/06/2023)

[North Korea says US and ROK planning nuclear attack against Kim Jong Un](#) (NK News, 03/06/2023)

[North Korea touts 'brisk' space program work ahead of military satellite launch](#) (NK News, 03/06/2023)

[Why Kim Jong Un's farming 'revolution' will do little to curb food insecurity](#) (NK News, 03/06/2023)

In South Korea:

[Civic groups condemn S. Korea's proposal to end forced labor dispute with Japan](#) (Yonhap, 03/06/2023)

[S. Korea announces donation-based compensation for Japan's forced labor, sparks victims' protests](#) (Yonhap, 03/06/2023)

[S. Korea to halt WTO dispute settlement process on Japan's export curbs: industry ministry](#) (Yonhap, 03/06/2023)

[S. Korean biz lobby says to consider 'every measure' for envisioned youth fund under forced labor solution](#) (Yonhap, 03/06/2023)

[Yoon says forced labor decision aimed at moving toward future-oriented relationship with Japan](#) (Yonhap, 03/06/2023)

International:

[S. Korea, U.S. hold joint air drills involving U.S. B-52H bomber](#) (Yonhap, 03/06/2023)

[U.S. will continue to strengthen cooperation with S. Korea, Japan: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 03/06/2023)

Top News Items:

- When discussing American policy on North Korea, Robert Joseph likes to cite the aphorism that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over while expecting a different result. This is the insight at the heart of a recent paper from the National Institute for Public Policy, which calls for a dramatic shift on North Korean policy. (Melanie Kirkpatrick, [The Wall Street Journal](#))
- Greg Scarlatou, HRNK Executive Director, analyzes the issues of North Korea's potential famine amidst worsening food shortages. ([The John Batchelor Show](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea's development of a high-thrust engine capable of carrying a rocket has provided a "sure guarantee" for the country to launch various satellites into orbit, according to state media Monday. ([Yonhap](#))
- There are no signs of death and starvation at the inter-Korean border, officials at the Joint Security Area (JSA) said Friday, despite South Korean media reports of famine in the area. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has accused the U.S. and South Korea of scheming to eliminate the Kim family government with nuclear weapons, after the allies recently carried out "precision bombing drills" on responding to DPRK threats. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's National Aerospace Development Administration (NADA) is conducting "brisk" work to launch "various kinds of satellites" in the future, state media reported on Monday, as the country prepares to put a military satellite into orbit as soon as this spring. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- When it comes to agriculture, North Korea has never been a global or regional leader, not even in the communist bloc, and the country has been in a chronic state of food insecurity since the collapse of the Soviet Union. (Peter Ward, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korean civic groups supporting the victims of Japan's wartime forced labor condemned the Seoul government's plan Monday to compensate them through a public foundation, saying they cannot accept a third-party compensation method. ([Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean government formally proposed Monday compensating more than a dozen victims of Japan's wartime forced labor through a Seoul-backed public foundation, instead of direct payment from responsible Japanese firms. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea has decided to halt a process of its complaint with the World Trade Organization (WTO) on Japan's export controls of key industry materials to Seoul as they prepare to launch official talks on the lifting of the restrictive measures, Seoul's industry ministry said Monday. ([Yonhap](#))
- A major business lobby in South Korea said Monday it will consider all measures to flesh out a plan South Korea and Japan have agreed to push for to form a joint fund to support the youth under Seoul's proposal on compensating Korean victims of Japan's wartime forced labor. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

- President Yoon Suk Yeol said Monday that South Korea's decision to compensate wartime forced labor victims without Japanese firms' involvement was a determination aimed at moving toward a future-oriented relationship with Japan, his spokesperson said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- South Korea and the United States staged combined air drills Monday, involving at least one U.S. nuclear-capable B-52H strategic bomber, Seoul's defense ministry said, in the latest show of America's military might against North Korea's evolving military threats. ([Yonhap](#))
- The United States will continue to strengthen its trilateral cooperation with South Korea and Japan, a state department spokesperson said Monday, shortly after Seoul and Tokyo announced steps aimed at improving their bilateral ties. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Tessa Aguilar, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509043630/https://mailchi.mp/fd87fbec0e/hrnk-new-itemsus-guided-missile-destr-oyer-visits-s-korea-11191106>

Tuesday, March 7, 2023

Gov't dismisses speculation about inter-Korean liaison office's abolishment

Top News:

[Gov't dismisses speculation about inter-Korean liaison office's abolishment](#) (The Korea Times, 3/7/2023)

In North Korea:

[Bring your own gas masks to biochemical weapons drills, North Korea tells citizens](#) (Radio Free Asia, 3/6/2023)

[Kim Yo Jong Issues Communique](#) (NK Leadership Watch, 3/7/2023)

[North Korea boasts about satellite launch capabilities](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/6/2023)

[N.K. leader's first child is son: Seoul's spy agency](#) (Yonhap, 3/7/2023)

[North Korea threatens action after US flies nuclear-capable B-52 bomber over Korean Peninsula](#) (Fox News, 3/7/2023)

[N. Korea warns of 'overwhelming' actions against U.S.-S. Korea military drills](#) (Yonhap, 3/7/2023)

[NADA Manager Talks Space Treaty and Teases April Satellite Launch](#) (NK Leadership Watch, 3/7/2023)

[Shooting down our ICBMs would be an act of war: North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/7/2023)

[South Korea: Kim's daughter enjoys horseback riding, skiing](#) (AP News, 3/7/2023)

In South Korea:

[Apple request for detailed Korean mapping data rejected](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/6/2023)

[Shuttle diplomacy possible with Japan following Yoon's gambit](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/7/2023)

[S. Korea's growth sharply slows in 2022 amid recession woes: BOK's preliminary data](#) (Yonhap, 3/7/2023)

Inter Korean Relationship:

[North Korean human rights foundation to finally launch](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/6/2023)

[S. Korea rejects N. Korea's claim of artillery firing near inter-Korean border](#) (Yonhap, 3/7/2023)

International:

[Are We Prepared for a North Korean Nuclear Attack?](#) (National Interest, 3/6/2023)

[International students grapple with shifting views on North Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/7/2023)

[NIS chief confirms North Korean leader has three kids](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/7/2023)

['Troubling' signs of activity at N. Korea's Punggye-ri nuclear testing site: IAEA chief](#) (Yonhap, 3/7/2023)

[Top U.S. general may visit Seoul later this month: source](#) (Yonhap, 3/7/2023)

Top News:

- The Ministry of Unification on Thursday refuted rumors that it is considering abolishing the inter-Korean liaison office as part of the ministry's restructuring plan, saying that the liaison office is not under its authority because it was installed under an agreement between South Korea and North Korea. On Feb. 28 (local time), South Korean Ambassador to the U.S. Cho Tae-yong attended a seminar hosted by the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea in Washington D.C. and said, "The Korean government will increase its efforts to improve human rights in North Korea and this will be the priority of all ministries." Cho continued that improvements in human rights conditions in the North will accelerate the goal of denuclearization and deter Pyongyang's provocations. "If only a portion of the basic rights and freedoms that we enjoy is available for North Koreans, the North Korean regime will not be able to employ policies concentrating on nuclear and missile programs," Cho said. (Hyun-woo Nam, [The Korea Times](#))

In North Korea

- North Korea last week conducted nationwide civil defense drills, forcing residents to march long distances to drill sites, and requiring that they prepare personal emergency kits, including gas masks, to protect themselves against potential U.S.-launched biochemical weapons attacks. (Ji Eun Kim, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- Kim Yo Jong issued a statement on 6 March (Monday). KYJ said: "One of south Korean puppet media on March 6 carried an unspecific report that the commander of the US forces in the Indo-Pacific said something on February 24 to the effect that if we fired ICBMs into the Pacific, they would immediately shoot them down..." ([NK Leadership Watch](#))
- North-Korea-Korean-Central-News-Agency/20230306155905853.html?detailWord= North Korea's state media said Monday that the regime's development of a high-thrust engine provides a "sure guarantee" that the regime will be able to launch satellites into orbit,

highlighting the possibility that Pyongyang will make good on previous threats to launch a reconnaissance satellite by April. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- The first child of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un is a son, while the gender of his third child has not been confirmed, South Korea's spy agency National Intelligence Service (NIS) was quoted as saying Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has threatened to take "quick, overwhelming action" after the United States flew a nuclear-capable B-52 bomber over the Korean Peninsula in an exercise with South Korean warplanes. (Lawrence Richard, [Fox News](#))
- Kim Yo-jong, the sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, warned Tuesday the North is ready to take "overwhelming" actions against military activities by the United States and South Korea, as its rivals are staging joint military drills involving American strategic assets. (Sooyeon Kim, [Yonhap](#))
- Pak Kyong Su, deputy director at the DPRK National Aerospace Development Administration [NADA] discussed the DPRK's 2009 accession to the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies and Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space with KCNA. ([NK Leadership Watch](#))
- North-Korea-Kim-Yojong/20230307153954377.html?detailWord=
The sister of North Korea's leader said that any move by the United States to intercept the regime's missiles would be considered "a declaration of war," Pyongyang's state media reported Tuesday. The statement by Kim Yo-jong referred to a South Korean media report that said the United States plans to shoot down Pyongyang's intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) if they are launched into the Pacific Ocean. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The recently unveiled daughter of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is being home-schooled and spends her leisure time horseback riding, skiing and swimming, South Korea's spy agency told lawmakers Tuesday. The NIS said the daughter's unveiling largely appeared intended to underscore the imperativeness of another hereditary power succession, Yoo told reporters. Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP News](#))

In South Korea:

- Apple cannot export detailed mapping data from Korea, the government has said. The National Geographic Information Institute under the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport said Monday it has rejected Apple's request to export a precise 1:5,000 scale map data — the most detailed among all data currently available in Korea. "We believed exporting the data could affect national security," an official at the institute, which is in charge of managing the nation's geographic data, told the Korea JoongAng Daily on Monday. (In-Kyoung Kim, Ji-Eun Seo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol could visit Tokyo to meet with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida later this month in a possible revival of shuttle diplomacy between the two countries, according to South Korean officials and press reports. On Monday, South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a plan to compensate victims of forced labor during Japan's colonial rule with a Korea-backed public foundation, without requiring the participation of the Japanese companies ordered to pay up by the Korea Supreme Court in 2018. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's economic growth sharply slowed in 2022 as exports weakened amid growing recession woes stemming from aggressive monetary tightening at home and abroad, central

bank data showed Tuesday. South Korea's gross domestic product -- a major gauge of growth -- expanded 2.6 percent in 2022, compared with a 4.1 percent advance tallied in the previous year, according to the preliminary data from the Bank of Korea (BOK). ([Yonhap](#))

- President Yoon Suk Yeol could visit Japan this month for talks with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida following Seoul's decision to compensate wartime forced labor victims without Japanese firms' involvement, the presidential office said Tuesday. The visit is under strong consideration, the office said, making it the first time in four years detailed discussions are taking place over a Korean president's visit to Japan. ([Yonhap](#))

Inter Korean Relationship:

- The Unification Ministry announced Monday that it will launch a committee to advise the minister on the establishment of a long-delayed foundation aimed at promoting human rights in North Korea. The group, called the "North Korean Human Rights Promotion Committee" in the ministry's announcement on Monday, is intended to serve as an advisory body to the Unification Minister regarding the foundation, whose creation is mandated by the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2016. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The South Korean military on Tuesday denied as "groundless" North Korea's claims that it fired more than 30 artillery shells at a shooting range near the inter-Korean border. A spokesperson for the General Staff of the North's Korean People's Army (KPA) claimed the firing took place at the range in Paju, northwest of Seoul, earlier in the day, calling it a "very grave military provocation." ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- The long-term solution to the Korean crisis is internal regime change and reunification under a government that resembles present-day South Korea. Yet, no one knows how long this process could take given the ruthless effectiveness of the DPRK's totalitarian regime. In the interim, having a robust spectrum of defense capabilities, suitable for a range of scenarios, is critical given the rapidly evolving threat environment. (Richard Weitz, [National Interest](#))
- "At first, I was only reading books written by defectors and the media outlets in Romania only portrays North Korea in a negative way, so when there was a huge debate about whether North Korea would fire or not in 2017, I was worried," said Ana Ungureanu, a 25-year-old Romanian student at the Academy of Korean Studies. At the time, Ungureanu was in Romania and was scared as North Korea conducted a series of missile and nuclear tests that demonstrated its capability to launch ballistic missiles beyond its borders. (Do-Hwi Choi, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's intelligence agency confirmed that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has three children. The NIS chief told lawmakers that Kim Ju-ae's public appearances seem to have been aimed at reminding North Koreans about the legitimacy of a fourth-generation succession. (Jee-Hye Han, Ho-Jeong Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The chief of the U.N. nuclear watchdog said Tuesday "deeply troubling" signs of activity are continuously being detected at North Korea's Punggye-ri nuclear testing site. "The Nuclear Test Site at Punggye-ri remains prepared to support a nuclear test, and we continue to see indications of activity near Adit 3 of the Test Site," he said in a statement to the board of governors. "The reopening of the nuclear test site is deeply troubling." ([Yonhap](#))

- South Korean and U.S. military authorities are in consultations on a possible visit to Seoul by U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Mark A. Milley later this month, an informed source said Tuesday. If agreed, he is likely to visit the country after the allies conclude their combined Freedom Shield exercise set to take place from next Monday through March 23, according to the source. The general previously visited Seoul in December 2021. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Kathy Yu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509044023/https://mailchi.mp/d5454da588af/hrnk-news-itemsgovt-dismisses-speculation-about-inter-korean-liaison-offices-abolishment>

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

N. Korea continues troubling nuclear activity; Seoul forms committee to oversee launch of N. Korean human rights foundation

In North Korea:

[Disarmament Institute Researcher Publishes Article](#) (NK Leadership Watch, 3/7/2023)

[FM Comms Office Issues Statement](#) (NK Leadership Watch, 3/7/2023)

[Kim Jong-un's daughter living luxurious life as North Korea faces food crisis](#) (The Telegraph, 3/8/2023)

[North Korea continues 'troubling' nuclear activity at key facilities: IAEA](#) (NK News, 3/7/2023)

[North Korea may hold major exercises between March, April: lawmakers](#) (The Korea Herald, 3/7/2023)

[North Korea says women should have many children, support parents-in-law](#) (The Korea Herald, 3/8/2023)

[North Korea upgrades facilities on China border in sign of prep to expand trade](#) (NK News, 3/8/2023)

[Pyongsan Uranium Mines: Mining Continues as Older Mines Are Renewed](#) (38 North, 3/7/2023)

[Starvation in North Korea not severe enough to pose threat to Kim Jong Un: NIS](#) (NK News, 3/8/2023)

[VFM Issues Communique on US-ROK Exercises and UN](#) (NK Leadership Watch, 3/7/2023)

In South Korea:

[Opposition lawmakers support US bill to end Korean War](#) (The Korea Herald, 3/7/2023)

[Seoul forms committee to oversee launch of North Korean human rights foundation](#) (NK News, 3/8/2023)

[Special protection for North Koreans](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/8/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Beware the cheap coder](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/8/2023)

[KPA GS Accuses ROK of Firing Artillery Shells](#) (NK Leadership Watch, 3/8/2023)
[N.Korea escalates war of words as S. Korea, US gear up for annual exercises](#) (The Korea Herald, 3/7/2023)
[North Korea slams 'provocative' US-ROK drills that Seoul denies took place](#) (NK News, 3/7/2023)
[Redefining North Korea as our 'main enemy'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/7/2023)
[The short-lived inter-Korean detente during early '70s](#) (The Korea Herald, 3/8/2023)

International:

[Minister requests Britain's role in persuading N. Korea to give up nukes, missiles](#) (Yonhap, 3/8/2023)
[Yoon-Biden April summit to mark 70th anniversary in alliance](#) (The Korea Herald, 3/8/2023)
[Yoon to hold summit with Biden to discuss alliance and North Korean threats](#) (NK News, 3/8/2023)
[Disarmament Institute Researcher Publishes Article](#) (NK Leadership Watch, 3/7/2023)
[FM Comms Office Issues Statement](#) (NK Leadership Watch, 3/7/2023)
[Kim Jong-un's daughter living luxurious life as North Korea faces food crisis](#) (The Telegraph, 3/8/2023)
[North Korea continues 'troubling' nuclear activity at key facilities: IAEA](#) (NK News, 3/7/2023)
[North Korea may hold major exercises between March, April: lawmakers](#) (The Korea Herald, 3/7/2023)
[North Korea says women should have many children, support parents-in-law](#) (The Korea Herald, 3/8/2023)
[North Korea upgrades facilities on China border in sign of prep to expand trade](#) (NK News, 3/8/2023)
[Pyongsan Uranium Mines: Mining Continues as Older Mines Are Renewed](#) (38 North, 3/7/2023)
[Starvation in North Korea not severe enough to pose threat to Kim Jong Un: NIS](#) (NK News, 3/8/2023)
[VFM Issues Communique on US-ROK Exercises and UN](#) (NK Leadership Watch, 3/7/2023)

In South Korea:

[Opposition lawmakers support US bill to end Korean War](#) (The Korea Herald, 3/7/2023)
[Seoul forms committee to oversee launch of North Korean human rights foundation](#) (NK News, 3/8/2023)
[Special protection for North Koreans](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/8/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Beware the cheap coder](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/8/2023)
[KPA GS Accuses ROK of Firing Artillery Shells](#) (NK Leadership Watch, 3/8/2023)
[N.Korea escalates war of words as S. Korea, US gear up for annual exercises](#) (The Korea Herald, 3/7/2023)
[North Korea slams 'provocative' US-ROK drills that Seoul denies took place](#) (NK News, 3/7/2023)
[Redefining North Korea as our 'main enemy'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/7/2023)
[The short-lived inter-Korean detente during early '70s](#) (The Korea Herald, 3/8/2023)

International:

[Minister requests Britain's role in persuading N. Korea to give up nukes, missiles](#) (Yonhap, 3/8/2023)
[Yoon-Biden April summit to mark 70th anniversary in alliance](#) (The Korea Herald, 3/8/2023)
[Yoon to hold summit with Biden to discuss alliance and North Korean threats](#) (NK News, 3/8/2023)

In North Korea

- KCNA disseminated an article by Ku Yong Chol, of the DPRK Foreign Ministry's Institute for Disarmament and Peace on Saturday. ([NK Leadership Watch](#))
- The Foreign Ministry's comms department's Foreign News Section issued a statement about joint US-ROK military exercises on 6 March. ([NK Leadership Watch](#))
- Kim Jong-un's young daughter Ju-ae is being home-schooled and spends her free time horseback riding, skiing and swimming, apparently living a life of luxury even as the country faces a worsening food crisis. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- North Korea remains prepared to test a nuclear weapon and continues activity and construction at its primary nuclear enrichment facility, the chief of the IAEA stated on Monday, calling the developments "deeply troubling." (Arius Derr, [NK News](#))
- The lawmakers on the National Assembly's intelligence committee said Tuesday that North Korea may hold large-scale military exercises between March and April, in response to planned joint drills between South Korea and the US. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korean women should fulfill their roles as wives, daughters-in-law and mothers to support their husbands and children in pushing forward the country's prosperity and development, its state-controlled media said in an editorial marking International Women's Day on Wednesday. ([The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea is upgrading more facilities likely related to trade along its border with China, NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery shows, steps that suggest Pyongyang is preparing to expand cross-border exchange after three years of pandemic restrictions. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- Commercial satellite imagery of North Korea's Pyongsan Uranium Mining area indicates that mining operations at the main uranium mine continue and that the Uranium Ore Concentration Plant is still active. (Peter Makowsky, [38 North](#))
- North Korea's food crisis is not severe enough to threaten the stability of the Kim Jong Un regime, even though many in the country may be facing starvation, South Korea's spy agency reportedly said Tuesday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- DPRK Vice Foreign Minister for International Organizations, Kim Son Gyong, issued a statement on 4 March explicating recent military exercises on the Korean Peninsula and the responses of the United Nations Secretary General. ([NK Leadership Watch](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korean opposition lawmakers on Tuesday signed a statement welcoming the re-introduction of the US House of Representatives bill calling for efforts to achieve a formal end to the Korean War. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea's unification ministry has formed a new committee tasked with overseeing the launch of a government-led North Korean human rights foundation, nearly seven years after the passage of a law requiring its establishment. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- Until now, North Korea has openly threatened the distributors of anti-North Korean leaflets through North Korean broadcasts. The North Korean defectors spreading propaganda leaflets require special protection. (Jeok Ick-Jin, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter Korean Relationship:

- North Korean IT workers acting as cyber soldiers are penetrating into the everyday lives of their southern compatriots dealing with business, healthcare, social media, sports and gaming. (Jang Seok-kwang, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The Korean People's Army General Staff accused ROK forces of firing 30+ artillery rounds during a 7 March training exercise in Paju, Gyeonggi Province. The ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff denied using firing artillery and said the KPA General Staff's claims were "groundless and far-fetched". ([NK Leadership Watch](#))
- Spate of statements without action shows NK's struggle to respond to military exercises amid economic woes, say experts (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The North Korean military accused the "enemy" of conducting artillery drills near the inter-Korean border in a "provocative" way on Tuesday, though Seoul denied the drills took place. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- The Yoon Suk Yeol administration recently released its first "Defense White Paper," which states what are threats to the Republic of Korea and how we should prepare for them. (Hur Jae-young, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The first joint statement of the Koreans in 1972 bears symbolic significance, but failed to improve inter-Korean relations (Yoon Min-sik, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- South Korea's unification minister on Wednesday asked for Britain's role in persuading North Korea to abandon its nuclear and missile programs, and return to talks, citing London's diplomatic ties with Pyongyang, his office said. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- A highly anticipated summit scheduled between the leaders of South Korea and the US in April is expected to mark a pivotal turning point in their 70-year-old alliance, which faces various challenges from the Indo-Pacific region, including nuclear threats from North Korea. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol will visit the U.S. for a summit with Joe Biden next month to discuss alliance prospects and how to better deter North Korean threats. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509044149/https://mailchi.mp/659e4934a748/hrnk-news-itemsn-korea-continues-tro-ubling-nuclear-activity-seoul-forms-committee-to-oversee-launch-of-n-korean-human-rights-foundation>

Thursday, March 9, 2023

Minister says law banning spread of anti-N. Korea leaflets should be abolished; Special protection for North Koreans

In North Korea:

[N. Korea likely to conduct nuclear test amid continued missile testing: U.S. report](#) (Yonhap, 03/09/2023)

[N. Korea unveils stamp designs featuring last month's military parade](#) (Yonhap, 03/09/2023)

[North Korea cancels Pyongyang marathon for 4th straight year, tour agency says](#) (NK News, 03/09/2023)

[Pyongyang slams Foreign Minister Park for comments](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/09/2023)

In South Korea:

[Minister says law banning spread of anti-N. Korea leaflets should be abolished](#) (Yonhap, 03/09/2023)

[S.Korea's Yoon to visit Japan for summit, first such trip in 12 years](#) (Reuters, 03/09/2023)

In South Korea:

[Minister says law banning spread of anti-N. Korea leaflets should be abolished](#) (Yonhap, 03/09/2023)

[S.Korea's Yoon to visit Japan for summit, first such trip in 12 years](#) (Reuters, 03/09/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[\[Meanwhile\] Special protection for North Koreans](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/09/2023)

International:

[S. Korea, U.S. pledge to step up efforts to cut off illicit funds to N. Korean weapons program](#) (Yonhap, 03/09/2023)

[Kim Jong Un has 'no intention' of abandoning his nukes: US intelligence report](#) (NK News, 03/09/2023)

[UN envoy calls for North Korea to protect women from gender-based violence](#) (NK News, 03/09/2023)

[US official poses with statue likely built by sanctioned North Korean studio](#) (NK News, 03/09/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea is expected to conduct a nuclear test as it continues to develop its missile capabilities in an attempt to drive a wedge between the United States and South Korea, a U.S. intelligence report said Wednesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Thursday unveiled the designs of new stamps to commemorate its military parade held last month, including one featuring a white horse apparently belonging to leader Kim Jong-un's daughter Ju-ae. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has canceled the international marathon originally scheduled to take place in Pyongyang this spring, DPRK tour agency Koryo Tours announced Thursday, citing the country's ongoing border controls due to COVID-19. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- North Korea blasted South Korea's Foreign Minister Park Jin for remarks in a recent interview with CNN where he said the regime must be pressured to return to talks on its illicit weapons programs. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's unification minister on Thursday criticized the law banning the sending of anti-Pyongyang leaflets into North Korea as an "absolutely bad act," citing its clause on the punishment of violators, according to a news report. ([Yonhap](#))

- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and his wife will visit Japan from March 16-17 at Tokyo's invitation, his office said on Thursday, the first such visit in 12 years after Seoul announced a plan to end a protracted dispute over wartime forced labour. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))

Inter Korean Relationship:

- Sixty-five-year-old Lee Min-bok is the head of the team sending balloons filled with propaganda leaflets to North Korea to help North Korean residents. These days, his nights are restless. Around 1:20 a.m. on Nov. 12, his five-ton truck parked in his yard in the northern border of Gyeonggi caught on fire. He presumes it was arson. (Jeon Ick-Jin, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- South Korea and the United States have agreed to intensify their joint efforts to cut off illicit funds being funneled to North Korea's nuclear and missile development programs, the South Korean foreign ministry said Wednesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea missile testing is part of a plan to establish "strategic dominance" over U.S. and South Korean forces, a new U.S. intelligence report states, concluding leader Kim Jong Un has "no intention" of giving up his nuclear weapon program. (Arius Derr, [NK News](#))
- North Korea should assign female guards to supervise women in detention and ensure safe access to abortion services, including for victims of rape, the U.N. special envoy for DPRK human rights states in a new report. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- A senior U.S. nuclear official posted a photo Thursday posing in front of a large new statue allegedly built by a sanctioned North Korean company in West Africa (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Cherise Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509045943/https://mailchi.mp/16e7be563b25/hrnk-news-itemsminister-says-law-banning-spread-of-anti-n-korea-leaflets-should-be-abolishedspecial-protection-for-north-koreans>

Friday, March 10, 2023

Threats and possibilities of worse. Greg Scarlatoiu, director of The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, on this

Top News:

[#Moldova: #Romania: Threats and possibilities of worse. Greg Scarlatoiu, director of The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, on this](#) (The John Batchelor Show, 03/09/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un and daughter watch missile test aimed at South Korean airfields](#) (NK News, 03/10/2023)

[New North Korean phishing campaign targets security researchers: Report](#) (NK Pro, 03/10/2023)

[North Korea fires short-range missile into West Sea: JCS](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/09/2023)

[North Korea fires short-range missile toward Yellow Sea: ROK military](#) (NK News, 03/09/2023)

[North Korea's food shortages hitting regional cities the hardest, Seoul says](#) (NK News, 03/10/2023)

[North Korea says it defused US Korean War bombs at Pyongyang apartment site](#) (Reuters, 03/10/2023)

[North Korean women told to be 'flowers of loyalty' by having more children](#) (The Telegraph, 03/09/2023)

[North simulates artillery strike on South's airfield, warns of 'overwhelming response'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/10/2023)

[N. Korea still one of worst countries for human rights, freedom: report](#) (Yonhap, 03/10/2023)

[N. Korean leader inspects 'actual war' readiness of artillery unit targeting enemy's airfield: KCNA](#) (Yonhap, 03/10/2023)

[N. Korean leader inspects tactical guided weapons test apparently targeting S. Korean military airport: state media](#) (Yonhap, 03/10/2023)

['When you join the military, gender is not a thing. We are all only soldiers.'](#) (Radio Free Asia, 03/09/2023)

In South Korea:

[Ex-spy chief pushed to return two North Korean defectors as peace offering: prosecutors](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/10/2023)

[Yoon underscores US firepower to contain N. Korea](#) (The Korea Herald, 3/10/2023)

International:

[Allies considering trilateral security body: Reports](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/10/2023)

[Cost of provocation will increase until N. Korea changes behavior: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 03/10/2023)

[U.S. intensifying 'every leg of nuclear triad' to ensure deterrence: Gen. Cotton](#) (Yonhap, 03/10/2023)

Top News:

- Greg Scarlatoiu, HRNK Executive Director, discusses the threats faced by Moldova and Romania, as well as many other nations in the region, due to Russia's aggression in Ukraine. ([The John Batchelor Show](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his daughter watched a volley of at least six tactical nuclear missiles on Thursday evening designed to destroy enemy airfields, according to state media. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- A North Korean hacker group has been running an extensive spear-phishing campaign targeting Western media and technology companies and security researchers for almost a year, according to U.S. cybersecurity firm Mandiant. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korea fired a single short-range ballistic missile from Nampo into the West Sea, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff on Thursday. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- North Korea fired a short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) toward the Yellow Sea from around the west coast city of Nampo on Thursday evening, according to the ROK military. (Ifang Bremer, Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- “Significant” numbers of vulnerable North Koreans in small and medium-sized cities are starving and suffering from malnutrition due to food shortages, though the crisis does not yet approach the severity of the mass famine in the 1990s, according to Seoul’s unification ministry. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Workers at an apartment construction site in the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, have discovered more than 110 bombs, shells, mines, grenades and other explosives that it says are U.S.-made weapons from the Korean War, state media said on Friday. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- North Korean women have been urged to have more children in order to prove that they are “flowers of loyalty” devoted to the country’s leader, Kim Jong-Un. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un supervised a live-fire artillery drill Thursday simulating a strike on a South Korean airfield, reported state media Friday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea was once again labeled one of the worst countries in terms of freedom, a recent report by a U.S.-funded freedom watchdog showed Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un inspected a "fire assault drill" of an artillery unit as he urged the military to bolster simulated drills for an "actual war," Pyongyang's state media said Friday, with South Korea and the United States set to kick off their springtime joint military exercise next week. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea announced Friday its leader Kim Jong-un oversaw a "fire assault drill" of an artillery unit a day earlier as he stressed the need to "overwhelmingly respond" to any war preparations by its "enemy." (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Kim Dan-geum joined the North Korean army right out of high school because she wanted a better life. (Soram Cheon, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In South Korea:

- Former National Intelligence Service director Suh Hoon pushed to repatriate two North Korean men who attempted to defect to the South in a bid to restore ties with Pyongyang, according to Seoul prosecutors. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol doubled down on bolstering extended deterrence, a US pledge to use all resources including nuclear weapons to deter and respond to attacks on its allies, amid deepening Seoul-Washington ties to counter North Korea’s nuclear threats (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- South Korea, the United States and Japan may consider establishing an extended deterrence consultative body, or even an "Indo-Pacific NATO" scheme, to counter nuclear threats in the region, said a growing number of reports as the three countries discuss and prepare summits set to take place over the next few weeks. (Park Hyun-ju, Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea will continue to face increased consequences unless it changes its behavior, a state department spokesperson said Thursday, hours after Pyongyang potentially fired multiple ballistic missiles in its latest provocation. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

- The United States is enhancing every component of its nuclear capabilities to deter any potential aggression from North Korea, Gen. Anthony Cotton, commander of U.S. Strategic Command, said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509050238/https://mailchi.mp/b36f3c884263/hrnk-news-items-threats-and-possibilities-of-worse-greg-scarlatou-diretor-of-the-committee-for-human-rights-in-north-korea-on-this>

Saturday, March 11, 2023

Kim supervises N. Korean troops simulating attack on South; North Korean leader Kim calls for intensified drills in case of 'real war'

In North Korea:

[‘Where else in the world is there this kind of slavery?’](#) (RFA, 03/10/2023)

[North Korean leader Kim calls for intensified drills in case of 'real war'](#) (Reuters, 03/11/2023)

[Kim supervises N. Korean troops simulating attack on South](#) (AP News, 03/10/2023)

International:

[Intangible Transfer of Technology \(ITT\): Open-source Information Analysis for the Implementation of Sanctions on North Korea](#) (38 North, 03/10/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has introduced mandatory military service for women increased the service time for all soldiers by three years in an effort to confront a farm labor shortage, sources there told Radio Free Asia. (Jieun Kim, [RFA](#))
- North Korea's Kim Jong Un ordered the military to intensify drills to deter and respond to a "real war" if necessary, state media said on Friday, after the leader oversaw a fire assault drill that it said proved the country's capabilities. (Soo-Hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un supervised a live-fire artillery drill simulating an attack on a South Korean airfield and called for his troops to be ready to respond to the enemies' "frantic war preparation moves" — apparently referring to the recent series of military drills between the United States and South Korea. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))

International:

- According to the latest reports by the United Nations (UN) Panel of Experts (POE) on North Korea, academic collaboration with North Korean individuals or entities could entail

potential proliferation risks through the intangible transfer of technology (ITT). (Hyuk Kim, [38 North](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509050634/https://mailchi.mp/f204afe319bb/hrnk-news-itemskim-supervises-n-korean-troops-simulating-attack-on-southnorth-korean-leader-kim-calls-for-intensified-drills-in-case-of-real-war>

Sunday, March 12, 2023

Human rights experts mentioned the importance of arousing int'l attention with celebrating 10th Anniversary of COI establishment

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un leads military meeting on 'powerfully' responding to US-ROK drills](#) (NK News, 03/12/2023)

[N. Korea approves war deterrent steps against S. Korea-U.S. drills at key party meeting: KCNA](#) (Yonhap, 03/12/2023)

[N.Korea warns to offensively use 'war deterrent' ahead of S. Korea-US military exercise](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/12/2023)

[North Korea decides on war deterrence measures, KCNA says](#) (Reuters, 03/11/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un guided a meeting of top military officials on that decided on measures for "powerfully" responding to U.S. and South Korean "war provocations," according to state media on Sunday, as the two allies prepare to hold large-scale springtime drills this week. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has decided to take "important, practical" measures for the "offensive use" of war deterrents, state media said Sunday, with the United States and South Korea set to launch their joint military exercise this week. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has determined significant, practical steps to offensively use its "war deterrent" at a key military meeting in the run-up to the longest-running military exercise between South Korea and the United States. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea decided to take important, practical war deterrence measures at a meeting of the ruling party's military commission presided over by leader Kim Jong Un, state news agency KCNA said on Sunday. ([Reuters](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509070206/https://mailchi.mp/4952637f616e/hrnk-news-itemskim-jong-un-leads-military-meeting-on-powerfully-responding-to-us-rok-drills-north-korea-decides-on-war-deterrence-measures>

Monday, March 13, 2023

Human rights experts mentioned the importance of arousing int'l attention with celebrating 10th Anniversary of COI establishment

Top News:

[*Human rights experts mentioned the importance of arousing the international attention with celebrating 10th Anniversary of the COI establishment](#) (VOA, 03/01/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom .

In North Korea:

[How North Korea's submarine-launched cruise missiles ratchet up risk of conflict](#) (NK Pro, 03/13/2023)

[N. Korea fired 2 'strategic cruise missiles' from submarine Sunday: KCNA](#) (Yonhap, 03/13/2023)

[N. Korea warns of 'toughest counteraction' against UNSC meeting on country's rights abuse](#) (Yonhap, 03/13/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea approves plans to buy F-35A fighters, SM-6 interceptors](#) (Yonhap, 03/13/2023)

International:

[Key S. Korea-U.S. military exercise begins; N. Korea likely to respond with more provocations](#) (Yonhap, 03/13/2023)

Top News:

- Human rights experts said the COI should pivot global interest in North Korea's human rights issues with celebrating their 10th anniversary. The UN special rapporteur and South Korea ambassador for North Korean human rights emphasized the efforts to hold North Korea responsible for human rights violations should be continued. (Eun-Jung Cho, [VOA](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea has the potential to retrofit torpedo tubes on its Romeo-class submarines with these new cruise missiles, which could have a force-multiplying effect compared to the still-limited SSB option presented by its single Gorae-class submarine and the still-in-development Sinpo-C-class submarine. For these reasons, we should expect to see more sea-launched cruise missile launches from North Korea in the future. (Ankit Panda, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korea fired two "strategic cruise missiles" from a submarine in waters off its east coast over the weekend, the country's state media said Monday. The North's first known firing of cruise missiles from a submarine is widely viewed as an apparent show of force against a major South Korea-U.S. combined military exercise. The missiles were fired from the 8.24 Yongung in waters off Kyongpho Bay in the East Sea in an underwater launching drill held at

dawn Sunday, according to the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). (Kim Soo-yeon, Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea on Monday slammed a move by the United States to hold an informal U.N. Security Council (UNSC) meeting on Pyongyang's human rights abuse this week, calling it a scheme to "bring down" its regime. In a statement issued by the North's foreign ministry, Pyongyang said it "bitterly denounces the U.S. vicious 'human rights' racket" as the "most intensive expression of its hostile policy" toward Pyongyang. The statement came after Reuters reported last week that the U.S. will hold an informal meeting of UNSC members on the North's human rights abuses this Friday (local time). ([Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea endorsed major defense projects Monday to purchase an additional batch of F-35A stealth fighters and shipborne Standard Missile-6 (SM-6) interceptors, the state arms procurement agency said, in a move to reinforce deterrence against North Korea's evolving military threats. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- South Korea and the United States kicked off a regular combined military exercise Monday amid heightened tensions caused by North Korea's missile tests and hardening rhetoric against the allies. The computer simulation-based Freedom Shield (FS) exercise began its 11-day run under "realistic" scenarios reflective of the North's evolving nuclear and missile threats, Seoul officials said. It is to proceed with the concurrent field training exercise, called the Warrior Shield. ([Yonhap](#))

[Translation] Human rights experts mentioned the importance of arousing the international attention with celebrating 10th Anniversary of the COI establishment. (Eun-Jung Cho, [VOA](#))

Human rights experts said the COI should pivot global interest in North Korea's human rights issues with celebrating their 10th anniversary. The UN special rapporteur and South Korea ambassador for North Korean human rights emphasized the efforts to hold North Korea responsible for human rights violations should be continued. Eun-Jung Cho reported.

Michael Kirby, former executive director of COI, stressed that the world should be alerted to the issue of human rights in North Korea.

Kirby said at a forum which held to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the COI, organized by the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea(HRKN), a Washington based non-governmental organization, that the world is currently focused on Ukraine and the other issues.

[Recording: Former executive director of the COI, Michael Kirby] "In breaking through the barrier of indifference that tends to come with international affairs, we have to try to find a new way to re-engage with the communities that are concerned, and the international community generally, concerning the security and human rights."

Kirby added that “In breaking through the barrier of indifference that tends to come with international affairs, we have to try to find a new way to re-engage with the communities that are concerned, and the international community generally, concerning the security and human rights.”

The COI, established in 2013 under a UNHRC resolution, said in a final report released in 2014 that various human rights violations by the North Korean amounted to crimes against humanity. In particular, it recommended to hold the perpetrators.

Roberta Cohen, the former State Department Human Rights Bureau, stressed the role of the United States and South Korea, calling for pressure on UN committees to maintain interest in North Korea's human rights issues.

[Recording: former State Department Human Rights Bureau, Roberta Cohen,] “A strong coalition of states is essential. now that both South Korea and the US are once again giving priority to human rights in North Korea and have designated special envoys they should give priority to getting the votes for convening and official Public Security Council meeting on North Korean human rights.”

“A strong coalition of the states is essential” Cohen said. Both South Korea and the US are once again giving priority to human rights in North Korea and have designated special envoys they should give priority to getting the votes for convening and official Public Security Council meeting on North Korean human rights.”

The UN Security Council has been discussing the human rights situation in North Korea since 2014, led by the U.S.

However, in 2018, only eight countries agreed to convene the meeting, and North Korea's human rights discussions were not held, and in 2019, it had been canceled because the U.S. did not approve to hold the meeting. But, in 2020, 2021, and 2022, it had been dealt in the unofficial way.

Cohen added that it is required to secure nine votes to hold the meeting and set up a strategy to get support from South American and African Countries.

He also explained that the discussion on North Korean human rights at the Security Council will highlight the threat posed by the North Korean regime to international peace and security, while laying the groundwork for identifying the responsibility of the perpetrators.

UN Special rapporteur on Human Rights, Elizabeth Salmon said in a recorded message that the COI report recommends that those responsible for crimes against humanity be referred to the International Criminal Court(ICC) or the International Court of Justice.

She also said she would actively follow up on the COI report.

[Recording: Elizabeth Salmon] “I am planning to further review the implementation of the recommendations made by the COI later this year. And next year I will address grave human rights violations, including within the detention system in a wide range of accountability efforts. At the same time I will continue to highlight the dire situation that people may be facing in the DPRK and the urgent need for the international community to reengage with the DPRK on human rights issues.”

“I am planning to further review the implementation of the recommendations made by the COI later this year.” Salmon said. “And next year I will address grave human rights violations, including within the detention system in a wide range of accountability efforts.”

At the same time I will continue to highlight the dire situation that people may be facing in the DPRK and the urgent need for the international society to reengage with the DPRK on human rights issues, Salmon added.

Lee Shin-hwa, South Korea’s ambassador for North Korean human rights, stressed the importance of collecting evidence, saying the international community is continuing efforts to hold the perpetrators responsible.

[Recording: Lee Shin hwa] “I sincerely hope that North Korea human rights problems will be evaluated by accumulating hard evidence and through rigorous analysis and evaluation and the international society will work tirelessly to find good approaches and solutions by cooperating and struggling with each other.”

Ambassador Lee said, “I sincerely hope that North Korea human rights problems will be evaluated by accumulating hard evidence and through rigorous analysis,” adding, “international community will work tirelessly to find good approaches and solutions by cooperating and struggling with each other.”

Ambassador Lee also strongly criticized the North Korean authorities’ human rights abuses at the meeting.

“We criticize the Kim Jong-un regime for prioritizing nuclear weapons development and ignoring the welfare and basic human rights of its people,” he said. “The North Korea human rights issue covers not only internal problems but also the plight of North Korean defectors and overseas workers, kidnapping and detaining after wartime, and prisoners of war.”

“In order to overcome the fatigue of North Korea’s human rights issues, international solidarity and cooperation must be enhanced,” she stressed.

South Korean Ambassador to the U.S. Tae-yong Cho, who attended the event, also said in a speech that the South Korean government will redouble its efforts to improve human rights in North Korea and that all ministries will deal with it as a priority.

Ambassador Cho said in a separate interview with VOA that the COI report played a major role to the improvement of the international society’s efforts for human rights in North Korea.

[Recording: Ambassador Tae-yong Cho] “The COI has released a very comprehensive report that compiles all solutions and raises international issues on North Korea’s human rights issue.” He added, “I think it can be seen as a great achievement of COI and also showed the limitations of the international community’s efforts. The world has called for improvement in North Korea’s human rights, but the North Korean authorities ignored it and put its people in the throes of hunger, and I think the situation is still the worst in the world.”

Ambassador Cho said he expects the international society to create public opinion based on the experience of COI that can make stronger efforts to improve human rights in North Korea in the future.

He then explained that the South Korea's Yoon government has begun serious efforts to restart the North Korean Human Rights Act.

[Recording: Ambassador Cho Tae-yong] "The first step of the efforts was the appointment of the North Korean human rights ambassador, which had been vacant for four years. I think this is also a starting point. In the future, we should work together with the international society to put pressure on North Korea to improve human rights in North Korea, and we should directly try to improve human rights and the people's livelihoods by resuming inter-Korean communication. Both of these are very difficult without doubt, but I don't think the South Korean government or the South Korean people should never ignore the pain that North Korea is facing."

Greg Scalatou, executive director of the North Korean Human Rights Commission, who hosted the event, cited VOA as the most urgent issue to implement among COI recommendations.

[Recording: Executive director of HRNK Greg Scarlatou] "I think that in terms of accountability, action has been lacking despite the fact that every year, ever since resolutions of the Human Rights Council every spring and resolutions of the General Assembly every fall in New York do include a paragraph or have included a paragraph on crimes against humanity and a paragraph on accountability."

Greg Scarlatou also pointed out even after the COI report has been released, that "I think that in terms of accountability, action has been lacking despite the fact that every year, ever since resolutions of the Human Rights Council every spring and resolutions of the General Assembly every fall in New York do include a paragraph or have included a paragraph on crimes against humanity and a paragraph on accountability."

Eun-Jung Cho of VOA News reported.

Translated by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509070845/https://mailchi.mp/fbec507e6ff4/hrnk-news-items-human-rights-experts-mentioned-the-importance-of-arousing-intl-attention-with-celebrating-10th-anniversary-of-coi-establishment>

Tuesday, March 14, 2023

North Korean agent faces firing squad after he was caught Googling Kim Jong-un

Top News:

[North Korean agent faces firing squad after he was caught Googling Kim Jong-un](#) (The Mirror, 03/13/2023)

[Spy who dared to Google Kim Jong-un faces death by firing squad in North Korea](#) (Metro, 03/13/2023)

In North Korea:

[CMC Holds Meeting](#) (North Korea Leadership Watch, 03/14/2023)

[FM Issues Statement on human rights critique ahead of joint exercises](#) (North Korea Leadership Watch, 03/14/2023)

[KJU Inspects "Fire Assault Drill" of KPA Artillery unit](#) (North Korea Leadership Watch, 03/14/2023)

[N.Korea fires two ballistic missiles as Freedom Shield exercise enters second day](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/14/2023)

[North Korea fires two ballistic missiles amid U.S.-South Korea drills](#) (UPI, 03/14/2023)

[North fires 2 short-range missiles as Freedom Shield continues](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/14/2023)

[North launches 'strategic cruise missiles' from submarine, South-U.S. drills begin](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/14/2023)

[North Korea fires short-range missiles after large-scale US-ROK drills kick off](#) (NK News, 03/14/2023)

[North Korea fires two ballistic missiles in second launch this week](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/14/2023)

[North Korea launches 2 missiles to sea as allies hold drills](#) (AP News, 03/14/2023)

[N. Korean FM congratulates Chinese counterpart following new Beijing Cabinet confirmation](#) (Yonhap, 03/14/2023)

[SLCM Launched near Sinp'o](#) (North Korea Leadership Watch, 03/14/2023)

[Total area of N. Korea's rice paddies down in 2022](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/14/2023)

In South Korea:

[Seoul to acquire more stealth jets, interceptors to counter North Korean threats](#) (NK News, 03/14/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Tensions rise on Korean Peninsula during largest Korea-US drill in years](#) (The Korea Times, 03/14/2023)

International:

[DoD cites threats in Indo-Pacific in requesting record defense budget](#) (Yonhap, 03/14/2023)

[U.S. forced to intensify joint military drills in response to N. Korean provocations: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 03/14/2023)

Top News:

- A North Korean intelligence agent is facing the firing squad after he was caught using his internet privileges to Google Kim Jong-un. Greg Scarlatoiu, director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, said the regime's information firewall was falling apart. He said: "Even the most trusted agents of the Kim regime are now attempting to access information from the outside world. "The Kim family regime has stayed in power through overwhelming coercion, punishment, surveillance and information control. "The regime continues to see the very limited information entering the country from the outside world as a grave threat to its grip on power."Despite the regime's efforts, the North Korean information firewall is slowly, but surely and steadily, crumbling. "Due to information surreptitiously smuggled into the country, the oppression North Koreans face will eventually come to a swift end." (Rachel Hagan, [The Mirror](#))
- The unidentified agent faces death by firing squad for daring to read about the dictator from within Bureau 10, the secretive agency monitoring internal and external communications in the repressive state. Greg Scarlatoiu, director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, said the purge speaks to how the regime is increasingly struggling to maintain its iron grip on the flow of information into the country. (Will Neal, [Metro](#))

In North Korea:

- The Workers' Party of Korea [WPK] Central Military Commission [CMC] met in an enlarged session (or held on an expansion basis) at the WPK Central Committee Office Building on 12 March (Sunday). Technically, this was the 5th enlarged meeting of the 8th CMC. The CMC gathered as "the whole country has turned out in the efforts to the implement the resolutions of the 8th Congress of the WPK and plenary meetings of its Central Committee in single-hearted unity." ([North Korea Leadership Watch](#))
- The DPRK Foreign Ministry issued a statement on 13 March (Monday) ahead of the kick-off of US-ROK joint exercises, Freedom Shield and Warrior Shield. The Foreign Ministry said: The Foreign Ministry of the DPRK states as follows over the fact that the US heinous hostile acts against our state have reached a grave phase which can not be overlooked: Timed to coincide with the large-scale US-south Korea war exercises to be launched on March 13, the US, together with its followers, is scheming to coercively call an informal UN Security Council meeting to discuss the non-existent "human rights issue" of the DPRK. ([North Korea Leadership Watch](#))
- KJU was briefed about the training and political education of the artillery unit, its order of battle and its equipment. He "highly appreciate that all the service personnel are intensifying their combat and political training in a stand-by posture with high class consciousness, transparent will to deal with the enemy and resolute viewpoint on struggle and steadily perfecting their operational capability to successfully carry their important military tasks." ([North Korea Leadership Watch](#))
- North Korea fired two ballistic missiles toward waters off its east coast on Tuesday, marking its third missile launch in just six days as South Korea and the United States entered the second day of the largest combined military exercise in years. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles (SRBM) from its western coast into the East Sea, South Korean military officials said Tuesday. The two SRBMs were launched from Changyon, South Hwanghae Province, at 7:41 a.m. and 7:51 a.m., and landed in waters east of the Korean Peninsula, according to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The missiles flew

approximately 620 kilometers (385 miles), a range that would cover all of South Korea from the launch site. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- North Korea launched two short-range ballistic missiles into the sea on Tuesday morning, Seoul defense officials said, one day after the United States and South Korea kicked off their largest joint military exercise in five years. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- North Korea fired two cruise missiles from a submarine in waters off its east coast Sunday, according to its state media Monday, on the eve of the South and the United States' largest joint military exercises in years. The "strategic cruise missiles" were fired from the submarine 8.24 Yongung in waters off Kyongpho Bay in the East Sea in an underwater launching drill held at dawn Sunday, according to the North's state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korean military says it detected two ballistic missiles launched eastward from west coast on Tuesday morning. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea launched two short-range ballistic missiles that landed in the East Sea on Tuesday, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff. The missiles were fired between 7:41 a.m. and 7:51 a.m. around Jangyon area in South Hwanghae Province. This is the second missile launch by the North this week, in apparent protest of the Freedom Shield 11-day joint exercise between South Korea and the United States that began Monday. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea test-fired two short-range ballistic missiles in another show of force Tuesday, a day after the United States and South Korea began military drills that Pyongyang views as an invasion rehearsal. (Hyung-jin Kim, Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))
- North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son-hui has sent a congratulatory message to her Chinese counterpart following the confirmation of Beijing's new Cabinet, according to state media Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- The DPRK fired off submarine-launched cruise missiles during the morning of 12 March (Sunday) from Kyo'ngp'o Bay near Sinp'o, South Hamgyo'ng. DPRK state media reported that the cruise missile drill used the tester submarine 8.24 Yo'ngung. ([North Korea Leadership Watch](#))
- The total area of North Korea's rice paddies decreased by 0.8 percent in 2022 from a year earlier, data showed, reflecting the reclusive regime's challenging food shortages. The North's rice paddies totaled 539,569 hectares in 2022, an area slightly larger than the US state of Delaware, compared to 544,006 hectares recorded in 2021, according to Statistics Korea. (Nam Kyung-don, [The Korea Herald](#))

In South Korea:

- \$5.6 billion plan aims to bolster defenses against DPRK missiles and boost domestic drone development. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea fired two ballistic missiles toward the East Sea, Tuesday, ratcheting up tensions on the Korean Peninsula as South Korea and the United States entered the second day of their biggest combined military exercise in years. Pyongyang's latest show of force — which came just two days after it tested submarine-launched cruise missiles — is an apparent protest against the 11-day Freedom Shield exercise which it views as a "rehearsal for

invasion." (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) cited threats and challenges posed by China and North Korea in requesting an increase in defense expenditures to a new record amount on Monday. The defense department is requesting US\$842 billion in spending for the fiscal year 2024, a 3.2 percent increase from the defense budget enacted in FY 2023 and a whopping 13.4 percent spike from the amount enacted in FY 2022, according to Deputy Secretary of Defense Kathleen Hicks. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States is left with no other choice but to enhance its joint defense capabilities with South Korea as North Korea continues to make provocations that threaten its ally, as well as U.S. troops stationed there, a state department spokesperson said Monday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509071034/https://mailchi.mp/106a835fc47b/hrnk-news-itemsnorth-korean-agent-faces-firing-squad-after-he-was-caught-googling-kim-jong-un>

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

North Korean Escapee Said, "Kim Ju-ae appears as 'Human Shield", Prosecutors indict suspected spies for North Korea

Top News:

[\[Translation\] Human Rights as seen by a North Korean Escapee Reporter\]](#) North Korean Escapee Said, "Kim Ju-ae appears as 'Human Shield'". (Radio Free Asia, 03/01/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom .

In North Korea:

[N. Korea confirms firing of 2 ground-to-ground ballistic missiles Tuesday](#) (Yonhap, 03/15/2023)[North Korea confirms missile launches, says it will 'annihilate the enemy'](#) (UPI, 03/15/2023)

[North Korea really hates U.S.-South Korea military drills. Here's why.](#) (The Washington Post, 03/15/2023)[North Korea says it fired two 'tactical ballistic missiles' in operational drill](#) (NK News, 03/15/2023)

[North Korea unlikely to follow China and reopen borders to tourism, experts say](#) (NK News, 03/15/2023)

In South Korea:

[Prosecutors indict suspected spies for North Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/15/2023)

[S. Korean Air Force conducts nonstop aerial drills amid NK missile launches](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/15/2023) [S. Korea joins US-led multinational anti-submarine exercise](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/15/2023)

[Yoon worried by North Korean spying scandal: ruling party sources](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/15/2023)

International:

[China says it's 'gravely concerned' about US-ROK drills on Korean Peninsula](#) (NK News, 03/15/2023)

[Nuclear weapons use by North Korea will mean 'end of regime': Pentagon spokesperson](#) (Yonhap, 03/15/2023) [N. Korean provocation cannot stop U.S.-S. Korea joint military drills: NSC coordinator](#) (Yonhap, 03/15/2023)

[Yoon: Seoul-Tokyo ties key to address N Korea, supply chains](#) (AP News, 03/15/2023)

Top News:

- This is Jeong Young, the host of Human Rights as Seen by a North Korean Reporter. Recently, there is a person who is attracting attention in the issues related to the Korean Peninsula. She is the daughter of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, known as 'Kim Ju-ae'. The North Korean media are using and promoting grand titles such as "beloved child" and "honorable child" to describe this child. In some cases, there are rumors that she is the next "successor" surrounding her; the public opinion that disputes it is also formidable. Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu: It is possible that the Kim family is sending a message that they are preparing for the succession of the fourth generation of power. On the other hand, that may not be the case. Because in the past, Kim Jong-nam was thought to be the successor, but that was proved to be incorrect. "There are still many variables to be considered in the choice of the successor because the daughter, known as Kim Ju-ae, is young," Executive Director Scarlatoiu said. In addition, he said that "there are no signs of an anomaly at this moment that should prompt Kim Jong-un, now only 40, to decide on a successor." He added, "Kim Jong-un was only 24 years old when he was nominated as the successor to Kim Jong-il. It's more important to turn our attention to Kim Ju-ae and figure out what North Korea's intentions are with this ploy," he added. Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu said that although North Korea is a male-dominated society, the possibility that a woman from the so-called "Baekdu lineage" could become the successor should be left open and watched carefully. In other words, Kim Jong-un's younger sister Kim Yo-jeong, the Vice Minister of the Labor Party, and Kim Ju-ae could also become successors. However, he emphasized that "an enormous purge and struggle will be prevalent once again in the process of the fourth generation succession of hereditary power." Executive Director Scarlatoiu: Wasn't Kim Jong-un's Great Purge extremely evil? A purge of that extent was necessary because he had no power base, and needed to create one very quickly. He said, "Countries that have a 4-generation hereditary succession are definitely countries that violate human rights." Executive Director Scarlatoiu: Haven't the people been unable to participate in the political process for over 70 years at this point? If this continues and goes up to the 4th generation of succession, political participation will become even more impossible. So, if it goes to the 4th generation, we have no choice but to predict that the human rights and human survival security situation of North Koreans will deteriorate further. (Jeong Young, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea has launched two ground-to-ground ballistic missiles in a demonstration drill designed to train sub-military units, vowing to "annihilate the enemy," according to state media Wednesday. A missile unit of the North's military launched the missiles "in a medium-range system" Tuesday in Jangyon, South Hwanghae Province. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea confirmed the launch of two medium-range ballistic missiles, warning that its military would "surely annihilate the enemy if they fight it," state media reported Wednesday. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- North Korea is ratcheting up its missile launches over what it calls a "declaration of war" by the United States and South Korea as the allies carry out major military exercises. (Min Joo Kim, [The Washington Post](#))
- North Korea's military launched two "ground-to-ground tactical ballistic missiles" on Tuesday, pledging to further intensify launch activities to destroy the country's "enemy," according to state media. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- China's decision to fully reopen its borders and begin issuing tourist visas for the first time in years is unlikely to convince North Korea to follow suit, travel companies specializing in DPRK tourism told NK News on Wednesday. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Prosecutors indicted four South Korean activists suspected of founding a pro-Pyongyang spy ring based in Changwon, South Gyeongsang, on charges of violating the National Security Law. The four suspects, who resided in Changwon, are accused of establishing an underground organization called the Self-Reliant People's Liberation Front in 2016 to foment unrest against the South Korean government and the U.S. military presence in the South. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The South Korean Air Force's major combat units conducted 36 hours of nonstop aerial drills to hone its combat capabilities in real war conditions during the 11-day Freedom Shield exercise of South Korea and the United States, the Air Force said Wednesday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea's Navy is participating in a US-led multinational anti-submarine warfare exercise in waters off Guam, officials said Wednesday. ([The Korea Herald](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol expressed deep concerns over the latest North Korean spying scandal during a dinner with the newly elected leaders of the ruling People Power Party on Monday, according to sources familiar with the matter Wednesday. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- China is "gravely concerned" about ongoing joint U.S.-South Korea military exercises on the Korean Peninsula, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said Tuesday, as North Korea launches missiles and makes statements in opposition to the drills. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- Any use of nuclear weapons by North Korea will be the end of the reclusive regime in Pyongyang, a U.S. Department of Defense spokesperson said Tuesday, amid concerns of a nuclear test by the reclusive country. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's continued provocations will not stop the United States from conducting joint military exercises with South Korea, a spokesperson for the U.S. National Security Council (NSC) said Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

- South Korea's president wants to quickly overcome decades of lingering hostility left over from Japan's colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula and forge a united front on North Korea's nuclear threats and other regional security and economic challenges facing the neighbors. (Hyung-Jin Kim, Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))

[Translation] Human Rights as seen by a North Korean Escapee Reporter] North Korean Escapee Said, "Kim Ju-ae appears as 'Human Shield'".

This is Jeong Young, the host of <Human Rights as Seen by a North Korean Reporter>. Recently, there is a person who is attracting attention in the issues related to the Korean Peninsula. She is the daughter of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, known as 'Kim Ju-ae'. The North Korean media are using and promoting grand titles such as "beloved child" and "honorable child" to describe this child. In some cases, there are rumors that she is the next "successor" surrounding her; the public opinion that disputes it is also formidable.

North Korea experts have no doubts about North Korea's fourth-generation hereditary succession, but they are cautious, saying that they will "need to see" whether she, who is just a teenager, will become the official successor. The reason is that there are still many variables at play because she is too young, and it is not desirable for a woman to be the successor in North Korea, a very male-centered and patriarchal society. However, as long as Kim Jong-un has already determined the fourth generation of hereditary succession, there is also a diagnosis that the human rights situation of North Koreans will worsen. In fact, some North Korean defectors even analyze that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un is accompanied by his daughter to avoid US drone attacks.

<Human Rights as seen by a North Korean Escapee Reporter> Today, we will discuss the impact that North Korea's "four generations of hereditary succession" will have.

On November 18 last year, the daughter of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, known as Kim Ju-ae, first appeared in official media.

Holding her father's hand, she came to the launch site of the 'Hwasong-17', an intercontinental ballistic missile that is said to be able to strike the US mainland.

At the time, the public was generally surprised that Kim Jong-un took his young daughter to a dangerous weapons test site, rather than to an amusement park or some other family trip. After that, Kim Jong-un's daughter appeared at a commemorative photo ceremony to celebrate the successful launch of the Hwasong-17, and also appeared at a banquet commemorating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Army. A seasoned North Korean general bowed at a 90-degree angle to the daughter, and she also took a picture surrounded by highly-decorated generals. In this regard, the Washington Post analyzed this as a clear sign that Kim Ju-ae has been identified as the successor. Among some experts, it has become the subject of a 'successor' controversy. Greg Scarlatou, executive director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, said it seems certain that North Korea will go on with the 4th-generation hereditary succession, but it is too early to conclude that Kim Ju-ae has been decidedly picked.

Executive Director Greg Scarlatou: It is possible that the Kim family is sending a message that they are preparing for the succession of the fourth generation of power. On the other hand, that may not be the case. Because in the past, Kim Jong-nam was thought to be the successor, but that was proved to be incorrect.

"There are still many variables to be considered in the choice of the successor because the daughter, known as Kim Ju-ae, is young," Executive Director Scarlatoiu said. In addition, he said that "there are no signs of an anomaly at this moment that should prompt Kim Jong-un, now only 40, to decide on a successor." He added, "Kim Jong-un was only 24 years old when he was nominated as the successor to Kim Jong-il. It's more important to turn our attention to Kim Ju-ae and figure out what North Korea's intentions are with this ploy," he added.

Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu said that although North Korea is a male-dominated society, the possibility that a woman from the so-called "Baekdu lineage" could become the successor should be left open and watched carefully. In other words, Kim Jong-un's younger sister Kim Yo-jeong, the Vice Minister of the Labor Party, and Kim Ju-ae could also become successors. However, he emphasized that "an enormous purge and struggle will be prevalent once again in the process of the fourth generation succession of hereditary power."

Executive Director Scarlatoiu: Wasn't Kim Jong-un's Great Purge extremely evil? A purge of that extent was necessary because he had no power base, and needed to create one very quickly. He said, "Countries that have a 4-generation hereditary succession are definitely countries that violate human rights."

Executive Director Scarlatoiu: Haven't the people been unable to participate in the political process for over 70 years at this point? If this continues and goes up to the 4th generation of succession, political participation will become even more impossible. So, if it goes to the 4th generation, we have no choice but to predict that the human rights and human survival security situation of North Koreans will deteriorate further.

On the 27th, South Korean Unification Minister Kwon Young-se expressed his position that it was a little too early to regard Kim Ju-ae as the successor. This was interpreted to reveal the South Korean government's view of Kim Ju-ae, who often appears in North Korean media.

Meanwhile, North Korean defectors say that they cannot imagine a woman becoming the successor in North Korea, a male-dominated society. These are the words of Mr. Han, a North Korean defector living in the Midwest of the United States.

Mr. Han: It is nonsense to solidify the succession to a daughter who is a little over 10 years old. This hereditary succession cannot happen right now, and women cannot be leaders in North Korea. If that happens, Kim Jong-un's younger sister, Kim Yeo-jung, will have to be purged. That means that it's over if you become a power rival.

Mr. Han expressed his personal opinion that the appearance of Kim Jong-un's daughter could be related to the latest American unmanned aerial vehicle 'MQ9' recently deployed in Japan.

Mr. Han: From my point of view, it has more to do with the 'MQ9' deployed in Japan rather than hereditary succession. That's why (Kim Jong-un) brought his daughter out, in fear that he would be killed. He is using her as a human shield.

On November 21 last year, Japanese media reported that nine US MQ9 drones were deployed to the Kanoya Air Base in Kagoshima Prefecture, Japan. In the meantime, Japanese media, including the Asahi Shimbun, have reported that the latest attack drones of the US military are temporarily deployed in Japan to respond to China's threat to Taiwan and the conflict on the Korean Peninsula. Mr. Han pointed out that the deployment of this drone coincided with when Kim Jong-un was accompanied by his daughter, and it could be seen as an attempt to be safe from US attack.

Mr. Han: Kim Jong-un's thinking is that if he has his child next to him, even the United States cannot kill him. You see this in American movies, right? 'I have to kill him, but I couldn't shoot him for fear of hurting the innocent civilians next to him.' That's why from how I see it, Kim Jong-un seems to have brought his daughter as a shield. Making a 10-year-old the heir is nonsense.

The US military drone MQ9 is the latest improved version of the MQ1 drone named Predator, that raged in the Iraq War. This drone can fly 8,500 km once lifted and can stay afloat for 32 hours. Because it moves at an altitude of 15 kilometers, it is difficult to spot from the ground, and it is also nicknamed the "assassin in the sky" and "silent assassin" because of its silence and very high accuracy rate. In January 2020, Qassem Suleiman, a commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards who had been hostile to the United States, was assassinated with this drone. At that time, the body of Gasem Suleiman was so damaged that it could not be recognized, and identification was said to be confirmed through the ring on his finger.

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un is also frantically conducting a test launch of the Hwasong-15 and 17-type intercontinental ballistic missiles with the goal of striking the US mainland. The American people feel a security threat in the face of this, and at one point, public opinion about the assassination of Kim Jong-un was heightened. In 2014, 'The Interview,' a movie about the assassination of Kim Jong-un was produced. A North Korean defector living in the United States claimed that Chairman Kim Jong-un, who is aware of the cases of US drone attacks on terrorists and their supporters worldwide, is trembling with fear to the extent that he would use his daughter as a shield.

Mr. Han: Didn't the United States kill the commander of the Iranian army a few years ago? That MQ9 is now near North Korea. The United States can't fire the drone if there is a child with him, which is why he is bringing out his child. Would a child be more precious than his own destiny?

Japanese media are analyzing the MQ9, a US military drone deployed at Kanoya Air Station in Kagoshima Prefecture, as a response to the North Korean nuclear threat. Public opinion in Japan is seething with anti-North Korea sentiment as every time North Korea launches an intercontinental ballistic missile, it is fired toward the Japanese archipelago. In international politics, cutting out the source of provocation as a precaution is also interpreted as a concept of self-defense. In the 'Japanese Defense White Paper' published in 2022, China is seen as Japan's biggest threat, followed by North Korea and Russia. North Koreans perceive the disclosure of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's daughter as a confirmation of the "fourth generation hereditary succession." Mr. Han pointed out, "Recently, there is news that people are starving to death due to food shortages, but showing the image of Kim Jong-un's daughter could have the opposite effect."

Mr. Han: I don't think North Koreans will look at it. North Koreans are starving to death, but see that his daughter has gained weight. In the eyes of the North Korean people, seeing that Kim Jong-un has gained weight, is not a good image to look at in the first place.

<Human Rights as Seen by a North Korean Escapee Reporter> Today, we talked about the background of the appearance of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's daughter and the impact of the "fourth generation of hereditary succession" on human rights. Listeners, this is the end of today's session. Thank you.

Reporter Jeong Young, editor Lee Jin-seo, web team Kim Sang-il

Translated by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509071934/https://mailchi.mp/43fbb8770384/hrnk-news-items-north-korean-escapee-said-kim-ju-ae-appears-as-human-shield-prosecutors-indict-suspected-spies-for-north-korea>

Thursday, March 16, 2023

One Decade Since the UN COI... In addressing the North Korean regime's violation of human rights, 'accountability' is important

Top News:

[\[Translation\] One Decade Since the UN COI... In addressing the North Korean regime's violation of human rights, 'accountability' is important.](#) (VOA, 03/01/2023)

*This video has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom .

In North Korea:

[N. Korea fires one ICBM ahead of S. Korea-Japan summit: military](#) (Yonhap, 03/16/2023)

[North Korea fires ballistic missile ahead of South Korea-Japan summit](#) (The Telegraph, 03/16/2023)

[N.Korea fires ICBM ahead of S. Korea-Japan summit](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/16/2023)

[North Korea fires long-range ballistic missile](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/16/2023)

[North Korea fires long range missile ahead of Japan-South Korea talks](#) (BBC, 03/16/2023)

[North Korea fires long-range missile ahead of South Korean President's trip to Japan](#) (CNN, 03/16/2023)

[North Korea fires long-range ballistic missile into East Sea: ROK military](#) (NK News, 03/16/2023)

[North Korea fires long-range rocket on eve of Japan-South Korea summit](#) (The Washington Post, 03/16/2023)

[North Korea launches ICBM ahead of South Korea-Japan summit](#) (Reuters, 03/16/2023)

[North Korea launches ICBM before South Korea-Japan summit](#) (AP, 03/16/2023)

[North Korea launches ICBM before South Korea-Japan summit](#) (UPI, 03/16/2023)

[North Korea's Energy Sector: State Solar Electricity Research and Manufacturing](#) (38 North, 03/15/2023)

In South Korea:

[Four South Koreans indicted for allegedly spying for North Korea near Busan](#) (NK News, 03/16/2023)

[National Security Council convenes over N.Korea's ICBM launch](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/16/2023)

[President Yoon Suk Yeol warns North after missile launched](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/16/2023)

[Seoul unveils steps to improve resettlement support for N. Korean defectors](#) (Yonhap, 03/16/2023)

[Why South Koreans should have access to Pyongyang's propaganda media](#) (The Korea Times, 03/16/2023)

International:

[North Korea says U.S. South Korea drills are dangerous provocation](#) (Reuters, 03/16/2023)
[Nuke use by North would mean end of regime: U.S.](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/16/2023)
[U.S. condemns N. Korea's ballistic missile launch, calls on Pyongyang to engage in dialogue: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 03/16/2023)
[US, Germany take down darknet crypto mixer tied to North Korean money laundering](#) (NK Pro, 03/16/2023)

Top News:

- [Translated Video] In celebration of the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea (COI), human rights experts have suggested that the world should draw attention to the human rights issue in North Korea. The UN Special Rapporteur for North Korean Human Rights and South Korea's Ambassador-at-Large for North Korean Human Rights stressed that efforts to hold accountability for human rights violations in North Korea must continue. Reporter Jo Eun-jeong reports. In celebration of the 10th anniversary of the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea (COI), former and current officials from the United States, South Korea, and the United Nations, who were in charge of North Korean human rights issues, attended a forum hosted by the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea. (Cho Eun-jung, [VOA](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea fired a long-range ballistic missile toward the East Sea on Thursday, Seoul's military said, hours before summit talks between the leaders of South Korea and Japan on pending bilateral issues and regional security. (Song Sang-ho, Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea test-launched an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) on Thursday, in a show of military force just hours before a landmark meeting between the leaders of South Korea and Japan in Tokyo. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- North Korea fired a long-range ballistic missile on Thursday morning, hours before a summit in Tokyo between the leaders of South Korea and Japan aimed at mending years of strained ties over historic disputes and enhancing security cooperation. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea fired a long-range ballistic missile from Pyongyang on Thursday morning, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff. (Lim Jeong-Won, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea fired an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) just hours before the leaders of South Korea and Japan were due to meet for landmark talks. (Laura Gozzi, Kelly Ng, [BBC](#))
- North Korea launched a long-range ballistic missile early Thursday, according to officials in Japan and South Korea, the same day leaders from the two US allies are due to meet in Tokyo for the first such summit in 12 years. (Gawon Bae, [CNN](#))
- North Korea has fired an unidentified long-range ballistic missile toward the East Sea (Sea of Japan), its fourth launch event in about a week, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) announced Thursday morning. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea fired a long-range rocket, probably an intercontinental ballistic missile, on Thursday morning, hours before the South Korean and Japanese leaders were due to hold a significant summit and as the American and South Korean militaries continue major military exercises. (Min Joo Kim, [The Washington Post](#))

- North Korea fired a suspected intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) into the sea between the Korean peninsula and Japan on Thursday, hours before South Korea's president flew to Tokyo for a summit that discussed ways to counter the nuclear-armed North. (Josh Smith, Soo-Hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea test-launched an intercontinental ballistic missile Thursday just hours before the leaders of South Korea and Japan were to meet at a Tokyo summit expected to be overshadowed by North Korean nuclear threats. (Hyung-Jin Kim, Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP](#))
- North Korea launched an intercontinental ballistic missile into the sea Thursday morning, Seoul's military said, hours before the leaders of South Korea and Japan were set to hold a summit on regional security issues in Tokyo. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- Hydropower still makes up the bulk of the country's renewable energy generation, but solar has become increasingly important over the past decade. This rising priority is reflected in the state's establishment of the legal basis for pursuing it, as well as the establishment of scientific research institutions and commercial capabilities. As a result, the use of solar energy is transitioning from spot solutions for individual homes and buildings to surplus electricity generation to feed into the national grid. (Martyn Williams, [38 North](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korean authorities have indicted four ROK nationals on charges of taking payments and orders from Pyongyang, in connection with an investigation into an alleged North Korean spy ring in the southern city of Changwon. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The presidential office has convened a National Security Council meeting after North Korea launched an intercontinental ballistic missile Thursday morning in the run-up to the summit between South Korean and Japanese leaders. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol warned Thursday that North Korea “will certainly pay” for its “reckless provocations” at a morning National Security Council (NSC) meeting that took place just after a long-range ballistic missile launch from the North was detected. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea decided to increase the level of support for North Korean defectors' resettlement to better protect their new-found livelihoods here, the unification ministry said Thursday. ([Yonhap](#))
- Back when South Korea was poorer than the North economically, the regime's propaganda was a major threat to its very survival, prompting its leaders to enact the National Security Act to counter those messages. [...] Experts say the ban is obsolete and only benefits the regime, which shuns — and fears — any type of transparency. They call for change, saying that worries about the potential influence of North Korea's propaganda here are overblown. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- North Korea's ambassador warned on Thursday that recent military drills by the United States and South Korea were a dangerous provocation that could lead to a crisis, adding that the countries appeared to be preparing for a war of aggression. ([Reuters](#))
- The Pentagon reiterated that the use of nuclear weapons by North Korea would spell the end of the totalitarian regime. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- The United States condemns North Korea's latest ballistic missile launch, a State Department spokesperson said Wednesday, calling it a threat to international peace and security. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.S.-led international investigation has led to the takedown of a cryptocurrency mixer allegedly used to launder over \$3 billion worth of virtual currency since 2017, including proceeds from major North Korean heists, the Justice Department announced Wednesday. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK Pro](#))

[Translation] One Decade Since the UN COI... In addressing the North Korean regime's violation of human rights, 'accountability' is important

In celebration of the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea (COI), human rights experts have suggested that the world should draw attention to the human rights issue in North Korea.

The UN Special Rapporteur for North Korean Human Rights and South Korea's Ambassador-at-Large for North Korean Human Rights stressed that efforts to hold accountability for human rights violations in North Korea must continue. Reporter Jo Eun-jeong reports.

In celebration of the 10th anniversary of the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea (COI), former and current officials from the United States, South Korea, and the United Nations, who were in charge of North Korean human rights issues, attended a forum hosted by the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea.

Michael Kirby, former chairman of the COI on Human Rights in North Korea, emphasized that the international community is currently focusing on the situation in Ukraine, and that the issue of North Korean human rights needs to be rekindled worldwide.

Michael Kirby, Former COI Chairman (UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea):

“To break through the barriers of indifference that often accompany international affairs, we need to find new ways to re-engage with the international community as well as communities concerned with security and human rights issues.”

Roberta Cohen, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, also stressed the role of the United States and South Korea, saying that UN agencies must be pressured to maintain interest in the North Korean human rights issue.

Roberta Cohen, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights:

“A strong coalition of nations is essential. Both South Korea and the United States are again prioritizing human rights in North Korea and have appointed special envoys for North Korean human rights. The United States and South Korea should prioritize gathering support for a formal and open meeting on the North Korean human rights issue in the UN Security Council.”

Elizabeth Salmón, the United Nations Special Rapporteur for North Korea Human Rights, pointed out in a video message that the COI report recommended that those responsible for crimes against humanity be referred to the International Criminal Court or Special International Court, but accountability remains a challenge.

Elizabeth Salmón, UN Special Rapporteur for North Korea Human Rights:

“We plan to further review the implementation of the recommendations made by the COI this year. At the same time, we will continue to highlight the dire situation facing the North Korean people and the urgent need for the international community to engage in North Korean human rights issues.”

Lee Shin-hwa, Ambassador-at-Large for North Korean Human Rights at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea, emphasized the importance of the international community's efforts and evidence collection to hold perpetrators accountable.

Lee Shin-hwa, Ambassador-at-Large for North Korean Human Rights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea:

“I sincerely hope that the North Korean human rights issue will be evaluated through a thorough analysis and accumulation of solid evidence, and that the international community will work tirelessly to find a good approach and solution while cooperating with each other.”

South Korean Ambassador to the United States Cho Tae-yong, who attended the event, emphasized the South Korean government's efforts to improve human rights in North Korea.

Cho Tae-yong, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the United States:

“The international community should work together to put pressure on North Korea to improve human rights in North Korea, and then resume inter-Korean communication, which is currently not open, to directly lead the North Korean authorities to improve human rights and improve the lives of North Koreans.”

Human rights experts urged further efforts to infiltrate the North Korean people while maintaining pressure on the regime in order to make tangible progress on the human rights situation in North Korea.

Robert Joseph, Former Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security:

“We believe that if North Koreans are provided with information about the outside world, they will learn about the system's corruption and learn about their deplorable human rights situation. North Koreans can change the regime.”

In addition, human rights experts requested that the United States and South Korea play a leading role in the United Nations in strong solidarity urging many countries to participate, saying that international interest in the North Korean human rights issue should be rekindled around the world.

This is VOA News Cho Eun-jung.

Translated by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Myriam Aribaud, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509072410/https://mailchi.mp/766f8cfaa9c7/hrnk-news-items-one-decade-since-the-un-coi-in-addressing-the-north-korean-regimes-violation-of-human-rights-accountability-is-important>

Friday, March 17, 2023

NK leader says nuclear buildup is to ‘strike fear into enemies’; North Korea says tested missile was Hwasong-17 ICBM

In North Korea:

[Domestic-facing North Korean media condemns US-ROK drills in rare commentary](#) (NK News, 03/17/2023)

[KJU Attends Long Range Missile Drill](#) (North Korea Leadership Watch, 03/17/2023)

[NK leader says nuclear buildup is to ‘strike fear into enemies’](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/17/2023)

[N. Korea test-fired Hwasong-17 ICBM in warning to enemies holding allied drills: state media](#) (Yonhap, 03/17/2023)

[North Korea says it launched Hwasong-17 ICBM to counter ‘invasive’ US-ROK drills](#) (NK News, 03/17/2023)

[North Korea says tested missile was Hwasong-17 ICBM](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/17/2023)

[North Korea’s Science and Technology Journals](#) (38 North, 03/17/2023)

International:

[South Korea and Japan normalize information-sharing pact to deter North Korea](#) (NK News, 03/17/2023)
[The African president's daughter adopted by a North Korean dictator](#) (The Telegraph, 03/17/2023)

[U.S.-S. Korea military exercises deter N. Korean aggression: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 3/17/2023)

In North Korea:

- Rodong Sinmun slams Yoon Suk-yeol and details US military assets in what experts call effort to ratchet up tensions. (Chad O'Carroll, Seung-Yeon Chung, [NK News](#))
- Kim Jong Un (Kim Cho'ng-u'n; KJU) and his daughter, Kim Ju Ae (Kim Chu-a'e), attended a drill involving the Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile on 16 March (Thursday) at Sunan International Airport in Pyongyang. The drill was held during the "grave situation in which the most unstable security environment is being created in the Korean peninsula due to the frantic, provocative and aggressive large-scale war drills conducted by the US and south Korean puppet traitors against the DPRK." The drill was held after its *pro forma* authorization by the Workers' Party of Korea [WPK] Central Military Commission [CMC] during its last expanded meeting on 12 March (Sunday). ([North Korea Leadership Watch](#))
- Kim's threat was delivered while he was guiding the "launching drill" of the Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile Thursday. He was accompanied by his teenage daughter, Kim Ju-ae, North Korean state media reported on Friday. "Dear Respected Comrade Kim Jong-un said he continues to make the US and South Korea, which frequently conduct large-scale military exercises on the Korean Peninsula flagrantly showing enmity toward the DPRK, aware of the recklessness of such acts," state media said in a Korean language dispatch, referring to North Korea as the acronym of its official name, the Democratic People's Public of Korea. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea has test-fired a Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in a show of the "toughest response posture" of its strategic forces against "aggressive" massive combined drills by the United States and South Korea, Pyongyang's state media reported Friday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- State media reports Kim Jong Un and daughter watched launch of DPRK's largest missile meant to 'send warning' to enemies. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's state media said Friday that it test-fired a Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) the day before to demonstrate its "toughest response posture" against the ongoing combined military exercise between South Korea and the United States. In an English-language news report published by Pyongyang's official mouthpiece, the Korean Central News Agency (KNCA), the regime said the test was personally supervised by North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. (Lee Sung-un, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Studying North Korea's academic journals can provide valuable insights into the country's thoughts about its own trajectory—what ideas are being explored, tested and supported. They may also shed light on debate among scientists and academics regarding the pros and cons of various policies and science and technology (S&T) initiatives. Unfortunately, many of these journals are published only in Korean and can be difficult to obtain outside of the country. ([38 North](#))

International:

- Experts say move will improve missile tracking and defense, after Yoon and Kishida stress security cooperation at summit, (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- As a child, Monica Macias was sent to be 'raised' (or 'brainwashed') by Kim Il-sung, as she recounts in her memoir Black Girl from Pyongyang. (Helen Brown, [The Telegraph](#))
- Joint military exercises between the United States and its allies are working effectively to deter aggression despite continued provocations from North Korea, a U.S. Department of Defense spokesperson said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509073002/https://mailchi.mp/23a0465a9f4a/hrnk-news-itemsnk-leader-says-nuclear-buildup-is-to-strike-fear-into-enemiesnorth-korea-says-tested-missile-was-hwasong-17-icbm>

Saturday, March 18, 2023

North Korea says 800,000 youth join military to ‘wipe out’ the US and ROK, US accuses China of trying to hide North Korea atrocities

In North Korea:

[North Korea says 800,000 youth join military to 'wipe out' the US and ROK](#) (NK News, 03/18/2023)

[North Korean Defectors Put Spotlight on Rights Abuses](#) (VOA, 03/17/2023)

[North Korean planes active at Pyongyang airport hours after runway missile test](#) (NK News, 03/17/2023)

International:

[U.S. accuses China of trying to hide North Korea atrocities](#) (Reuters, 03/18/2023)

[West spotlights North Korean human rights abuses; China opposes](#) (AP News, 03/18/2023)

In North Korea:

- A day after launching a long-range nuclear missile as a warning to the U.S. and South Korea, “around 800,000” young North Koreans signed up for military service and vowed to “completely wipe out” enemies and unify the Koreas, according to state media on Saturday. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his family were “able to build nuclear weaponry with no resistance from the North Korean public, while thousands of the people starved to death, because they have never learned about the concept of human rights, so they didn’t understand their human rights were violated,” Lee said. “Even if some do understand, they are held hostage by guilt by association and systematic oppression.” (Margaret Besheer, [VOA](#))

- North Korean passenger planes and Kim Jong Un's private jet appeared to be on the move at Pyongyang International Airport on Thursday, just hours after the country launched a long-range missile from the airport's runway, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

International:

- The United States accused China on Friday of attempting to hide North Korea's atrocities from the world by blocking the webcast of an informal meeting of United Nations Security Council members on accusations of human rights abuses by Pyongyang. (Michelle Nichols, [Reuters](#))
- The United States, its Western allies and experts shone a spotlight on the dire human rights situation and increasing repression in North Korea at a U.N. meeting Friday that China and Russia denounced as a politicized move likely to further escalate tensions on the Korean peninsula. (Edith M. Lederer, [AP News](#))

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509073605/https://mailchi.mp/5ebaafec9343/hrnk-news-itemsnorth-korea-says-800-000-youth-join-military-to-wipe-out-the-us-and-rokus-accuses-china-of-trying-to-hide-north-korea-atrocities>

Sunday, March 19, 2023

N. Korea slams U.S., U.N. for addressing human rights violations, missile provocation; NK tests missile as allies stage joint drills

In North Korea:

[North fires missile into East Sea ahead of UN meeting](#) (*The Korea JoongAng Daily*, 03/19/2023)

[North Korea fires ballistic missile as US bombers join drills](#) (*The Korea Times*, 03/19/2023)

[North Korea fires another ballistic missile](#) (*The Korea JoongAng Daily*, 03/19/2023)

[North Korea fires short-range missile eastward from main spaceport area: JCS](#) (NK News, 03/19/2023)

[North Korea launches missile into sea amid US-SKorea drill](#) (AP News, 03/19/2023)

[North Korea tests missile as allies stage joint drills](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 03/19/2023)

[N. Korea slams U.S., U.N. for addressing human rights violations, missile provocation](#) (Yonhap, 03/19/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea fired a ballistic missile that landed in the East Sea, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff on Sunday, ahead of a scheduled United Nations Security Council meeting in New York on Monday to discuss the North's recent missile launches. The suspected short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) was launched at 11:05 a.m. from Tongchang-ri,

North Pyongan Province, and traveled roughly 800 kilometers (497 miles) before splashing down in waters east of the Korean Peninsula. (Michael Lee, [The Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said that it detected the missile launched from Dongchang-ri, North Korea's key long-range rocket shooting site in its northwestern coast, at 11:05 a.m. It flew about 800 kilometers across land before falling into the waters off its east coast. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- The launch is the fourth to be carried out by the North since March 12. South Korea and the United States kicked off joint military exercises on March 13. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [The Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Launch comes three days after ICBM test that DPRK called 'warning' against ongoing US-ROK drills. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea launched a short-range ballistic missile toward the sea on Sunday, its neighbors said, ramping up testing activities in response to ongoing U.S.-South Korean military drills that it views as an invasion rehearsal. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- North Korea launched yet another ballistic missile toward the sea between South Korea and Japan on Sunday, while South Korea and the United States staged their annual joint military exercises aimed at dismantling the isolated country's nuclear arsenal. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- On Friday, the U.S. co-hosted an informal meeting highlighting the human rights violations in the reclusive nation at the UNSC. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also condemned the North's recent test-launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile as a violation of UNSC resolutions on the same day. In response to the meeting, the North's mission to the U.N. said in a statement that Pyongyang "will counter the illegal 'human rights' campaign by the U.S. and its followers with the most powerful means," according to the North's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509074347/https://mailchi.mp/600fla58bf30/hrnk-news-itemsn-korea-slams-us-un-for-addressing-human-rights-violations-missile-provocation-nk-tests-missile-as-allies-stage-joint-drills>

Monday, March 20, 2023

North Korea holds nuclear counterattack simulation drills

In North Korea:

[North claims 1.4 million have enlisted, re-enlisted in armed forces](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/20/2023)

[North conducts nuke counterattack drills over weekend](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/20/2023)

[North Korea: Latest missile simulated nuclear counterattack](#) (AP News, 03/20/2023)

[N. Korea holds nuclear counterattack simulation drills; Kim urges perfect readiness: KCNA](#) (Yonhap News, 03/20/2023)

[Kim Jong Un and daughter watch missile test simulating nuclear attack on US, ROK](#) (NK News, 03/20/2023)

[The clumsy propaganda of North Korean radio plays](#) (NK News, 03/20/2023)

[Why normalizing US-North Korea relations is a prerequisite for denuclearization](#) (NK News, 03/20/2023)

International:

[Unification minister to visit Japan this week to discuss N. Korea](#) (Yonhap News, 03/20/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean state media claimed Monday that 1.4 million people, including high school students, had enlisted or re-enlisted in the country's armed forces to help the regime "destroy" its enemies. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea's state media reported Monday that the regime conducted drills simulating nuclear counterattacks against its enemies during the weekend. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea said Monday it simulated a nuclear attack on South Korea with a ballistic missile launch over the weekend that was its fifth missile demonstration this month to protest the largest joint military exercises in years between the U.S. and South Korea. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- North Korea said Monday it conducted drills simulating a tactical nuclear counterattack against its enemies over the weekend, as the United States and South Korea are staging their joint annual military exercise. (Kim Soo-Yeon, [Yonhap News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un took his daughter to another missile test on Sunday aimed at "simulating a nuclear attack on a major target of the enemy," according to state media. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- South Korea has firmly established itself as the wealthier and more powerful of the two Koreas, in particular since the end of the Cold War brought economic ruin and widespread famine to North Korea. But this has not stopped Pyongyang propagandists from looking for ways to influence their neighbors. (Tatiana Gabroussenko, [NK News](#))
- One of the most severe misunderstandings of U.S. engagement with North Korea is what, exactly, the two sides are negotiating. And as tensions once again rise on the peninsula, this misunderstanding now stands in the way of de-escalation and re-engagement efforts. (Marialaura De Angelis, [NK News](#))

International:

- South Korea's top point man on North Korea will visit Japan this week to discuss Seoul-Tokyo cooperation on Pyongyang and other pending issues. ([Yonhap News](#))

Prepared by Jack Boone, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:
<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509075011/https://mailchi.mp/d1e17ecdcca0/hrnk-news-itemsnorth-korea-holds-nuclear-counterattack-simulation-drills>

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

How North Korea's weapons overshadow human rights abuses

Top News:

[How North Korea's weapons overshadow human rights abuses](#) (Deutsche Welle, 03/20/2023)

In North Korea:

[Major N. Korean websites offline as of Tuesday morning](#) (Yonhap News, 03/21/2023)

[North Korea's new silo-based missile raises risk of prompt preemptive strikes](#) (NK News, 03/21/2023)

In South Korea:

[New ROK sanctions target North Korea's satellite and missile programs](#) (NK News, 03/21/2023)

International:

[Impunity for human rights violations, corruption remains widespread in N. Korea in 2022: U.S. report](#) (Yonhap News, 03/21/2023)

[US says China and Russia blocking UN action on North Korea](#) (AP News, 03/20/2023)

Top News:

- The defectors complained that the systematic human rights abuses in North Korea are not receiving adequate attention in the West. These issues took center stage at the EU panel in Strasbourg, organized by The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), a Washington-based think-tank working to raise awareness about right issues in North Korea. "The challenge before, during and after the [formation of] the UN Commission of Inquiry is that human rights are always outperformed by other issues: military, nuclear, missiles, security," said Greg Scarlatoiu, executive director of HRNK. He emphasized, however, that human rights should be a priority for the international community. (Shamil Shams, [Deutsche Welle](#))

In North Korea:

- Websites of some major North Korean organs, including the country's state media outlets and the foreign ministry, were knocked offline for an unknown reason Tuesday morning. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap News](#))
- North Korea conducted an operational ballistic missile launch from a fixed, land-based silo for the first time on Sunday, a step toward deploying tactical nuclear weapons that can carry out preemptive strikes faster than ever. (Ankit Panda, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea has imposed new sanctions targeting North Korea's satellite development as part of a wider push to curb its "parade of provocations," Seoul's foreign ministry announced Tuesday, ahead of North Korea's expected launch of a reconnaissance satellite later this year. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

International:

- North Korea continued to show no respect for basic human rights and freedoms of its people in 2022 while impunity for corruption continued to remain widespread, an annual U.S. report said Monday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap News](#))
- The United States accused China and Russia on Monday of shielding North Korea from any action by the U.N. Security Council for its unprecedented spate of intercontinental ballistic missile launches, which violate multiple U.N. resolutions and jeopardize international aviation and maritime safety. (Edith M. Lederer, [AP News](#))

Prepared by Venesia Delancy, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509075847/https://mailchi.mp/3c57deec6701/hrnk-news-itemsnorth-korea-holds-nuclear-counterattack-simulation-drills-11191214>

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

North Korean Escapee Women Testified at a European Parliament Event that "The Whole of North Korea is a Prison"

Top News:

[North Korean Escapee Women Testified at a European Parliament Event that "The Whole of North Korea is a Prison"](#) (Radio Free Asia, 03/14/23)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom

In North Korea:

[North Korea fires multiple cruise missiles](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/22/2023)

[N. Korea warns against U.S. push for complete denuclearization](#) (Yonhap, 03/22/2023)

[N. Korea convenes meeting to discuss natural disaster prevention measures](#) (Yonhap, 03/22/2023)

In South Korea:

[Minister to seek cooperation with Japan over S. Korean abductees in N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 03/22/2023)

International:

[Korea, U.S. to hold joint training of unprecedented scale in June](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/22/2023)

[Xi, Putin Urge US to Respond to N. Korea's Concerns](#) (KBS World, 03/22/2023)

Top News:

- On the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the UN COI, North Korean defectors participated in the event hosted by the European Parliament to testify about the status of North Korean political prisons. Kim So-young reported. **Michael Hoogeveen:** When we

discuss about the North Korea, we used to focus in terms of geopolitical issue, and denuclearization. However, we should not forget about 25 millions residents living in North Korea. Greg Scarlatoiu, the executive director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea(HRNK), a speaker of the event, pointed out that 10 years have passed since the COI report on human rights in North Korea released, but there was any follow-up process to improve the problem. Executive director Greg Scarlatoiu said that both the US and South Korean governments have neglected the North Korean human rights issue and insisted that these issue should be prioritized in policy toward the North Korea. **Greg Scarlatoiu:** Our challenge is to make human rights issue that to be treated equally with the other critical problems. Human rights are not an obstacle to solving North Korea's nuclear and missile problems. Two North Korean escapees, including Jeong Kwang-il, representative of the North Korean human rights association 'No Chain', who was imprisoned in a political prison camp before settling in South Korea, also attended, and testified at the event. North Korean defector 'A', who did not give her name for personal protection, lamented that the entire North Korean society is like a prison, recalling her past of harsh labor and verbal and physical abuse in a poor environment where even drinking water was not properly provided, let alone basic meals. (Kim So-young, [Radio Free Asia](#))

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom .

In North Korea:

- North Korea launched multiple cruise missiles from Hamhung, South Hamgyong Province toward the East Sea on Wednesday, said the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). Seoul is leaving open the possibility that the missiles were updated KN-27 long-range strategic cruise missiles described as North Korea's answer to the Tomahawk. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea on Thursday issued a strong warning against the United States' demand for the North's complete denuclearization, saying the regime will take it as "declaring a war." ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has convened a meeting of its national crisis response committee to discuss ways to strengthen the country's capability to tackle natural disasters and other challenges, state media reported Wednesday. The meeting took place virtually Tuesday to discuss progress in natural disaster prevention projects, such as recovery efforts from last year's floods and measures to "swiftly" deal with various disasters, according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). ([Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's unification minister Kwon Young-se said Wednesday he will seek cooperation with Japan to help resolve the issue of Korean nationals abducted by North Korea decades ago, as he embarked on a visit to Tokyo. "It will be helpful to resolve the humanitarian issue through cooperation with Japan," Kwon told reporters just before heading there for a four-day trip that was arranged at the invitation of the Japanese government. He is expected to discuss Seoul-Tokyo cooperation on North Korea and other pending issues. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- Korea and the United States plan to execute a joint training of unprecedented scale in June to mark the 70th anniversary of the Korea-U.S. alliance. The joint firepower annihilation drill, called the Integrated Firepower Exercise, is an exercise in which the combined forces of Korea and the United States mobilize the latest, cutting-edge weapons on land, sea and air to demonstrate their ability to retaliate and destroy enemies in a military contingency or provocation, according to the Ministry of National Defense. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- China and Russia have urged the United States to respond to what they called the legitimate and reasonable concerns of North Korea with practical action and favorable conditions for dialogue. Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin made the call in a joint statement after their summit talks in Moscow on Tuesday, expressing concern over the situation on the Korean Peninsula. (KBS World)

[Translation] North Korean Escapee Women Testified at a European Parliament Event that “The Whole of North Korea is a Prison” (Kim So-young, [Radio Free Asia](#))

Anchor: On the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the UNCOI, North Korean defectors participated in the event hosted by the European Parliament to testify about the status of North Korean Korea and the United States plan to execute a joint training of unprecedented scale in June to mark the 70th anniversary of the Korea-U.S. alliance.

The joint firepower annihilation drill, called the Integrated Firepower Exercise, is an exercise in which the combined forces of Korea and the United States mobilize the latest, cutting-edge weapons on land, sea and air to demonstrate their ability to retaliate and destroy enemies in a military contingency or provocation, according to the Ministry of National Defense prisons. Kim So-young reported.

On the 14th, the event has been hosted by European Parliament to discuss the issue of the North Korean human rights, especially about political prison issue, in Strasburg, France.

Michael Hoogeveen of the European Parliament, who hosted the meeting, said the international community only has focused on political and military issues, such as North Korea’s nuclear and missile threats, and stressed that it is time to pay attention to the serious human rights abuses that North Koreans are suffering.

Michael Hoogeveen: When we discuss about the North Korea, we used to focus in terms of geopolitical issue, and denuclearization. However, we should not forget about 25millions residents living in North Korea. Greg Scarlatoiu, the executive director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea(HRKN), a speaker of the event, pointed out that 10 years have passed since the COI report on human rights in North Korea released, but there was any follow-up process to improve the problem.

Executive director Greg Scarlatoiu said that both the US and South Korean governments have neglected the North Korean human rights issue and insisted that these issue should be prioritized in policy toward the North Korea.

Greg Scarlatoiu: Our challenge is to make human rights issue that to be treated equally with the other critical problems. Human rights are not an obstacle to solving North Korea's nuclear and missile problems.

Two North Korean escapees, including Jeong Kwang-il, representative of the North Korean human rights association 'No Chain', who was imprisoned in a political prison camp before settling in South Korea, also attended, and testified at the event. North Korean defector 'A', who did not give her name for personal protection, lamented that the entire North Korean society is like a prison, recalling her past of harsh labor and verbal and physical abuse in a poor environment where even drinking water was not properly provided, let alone basic meals.

North Korean defector Ms. A: In North Korea, even if there is no crime, they are locked up. North Korea is a prison as it is. Our movement to survive was violated and it has made me guilty. So, a lot of people are dying. I hope you have more interest in, and know more about the human rights situation in North Korea.

'B', a North Korean defector who testified together, also said she wanted the international community to be aware of North Korea's serious human rights abuses, conveying memories of hundreds of prisoners dying and burning bodies at the time of imprisonment.

Representative Jung Gwang Il pointed out that, "There was a lot of expectation when COI has been established 10 years ago, but nothing has been changed", and added "Political prisoner's camp, and human rights violations are still there."

He added that he made efforts to find out the North Korean authorities' responsibility by visiting the International Criminal Court (ICC) during Kim Jong-Il's reign, and asking whether to file a complaint against the North Korean leader, but still has not seen any change.

Reported by Kim So-young, *Radio Free Asia*

Translated by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Yoshino Yamauchi, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509080334/https://mailchi.mp/2fab74c16585/hrnk-news-items-north-korean-escapee-women-testified-at-a-european-parliament-event-that-the-whole-of-north-korea-is-a-prison>

Thursday, March 23, 2023

HRNK Quoted 34 Times in the U.S. Department of State's DPRK 2022 Human Rights Report

Top News:

[HRNK Quoted 34 Times in the U.S. Department of State's DPRK 2022 Human Rights Report](#) (HRNK, 03/23/2023)

In North Korea:

[Daughter of North Korean dictator seen wearing \\$1,900 Dior jacket](#) (The Korea Times, 03/23/2023)

[N. Korea fired 4 cruise missiles Wednesday: defense minister](#) (Yonhap, 03/23/2023)

[NK dictator's daughter seen wearing \\$1,900 Christian Dior jacket](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/23/2023)

[North Korea's 'first daughter' spotted wearing Dior jacket — or dupe](#) (The Washington Post, 03/23/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea co-sponsors UNHRC draft resolution on N.K. human rights after 5 yrs](#) (Yonhap, 03/23/2023)

[South co-sponsors UN resolution on North's human rights](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/23/2023)

International:

[Unification minister meets top Japanese officials in Tokyo](#) (Yonhap, 03/23/2023)

[U.S. sees no imminent sign of nuclear weapons use by N. Korea: Kirby](#) (Yonhap, 03/23/2023)

[Defector lawmaker Ji to attend legislative track of Summit for Democracy 2023](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/23/2023)

[Japan lifts export curbs on high-tech materials to South Korea](#) (Reuters, 03/23/2023)

[US amphibious assault ship joins drills in South Korea](#) (Reuters, 03/23/2023)

Top News:

- On Monday, March 20, the U.S. Department of State released its annual *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* for 2022, including the country report for North Korea. The country report for North Korea, which can be accessed [at this link](#), quotes HRNK 34 times. The report references ten HRNK publications, two statements by HRNK's Executive Director, and one video interview. These materials encompass a wide range of issues: North Korea's vast network of detention facilities; vulnerable groups, including women and children; the situation of North Korean workers dispatched overseas; and the Kim regime's "counter-offensive" against the influx of outside information. (Greg Scarlatoiu, [HRNK](#))

In North Korea:

- Kim Ju-ae, daughter of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, was recently seen wearing a luxurious jacket in a photo released by the regime earlier this month. The image illustrates how detached the dictator and his family are from a public rumored to be suffering from widespread poverty and starvation. (Ko Dong-hwan, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea's Defense Minister Lee Jong-sup said Thursday that North Korea fired four cruise missiles the previous day, though a detailed analysis is still under way to confirm their specifics. ([Yonhap](#))
- Kim Ju-ae, the daughter of North Korea leader Kim Jong-un, was recently seen wearing what appears to be a product of a luxury brand Christian Dior, marking a stark contrast to the living conditions of ordinary people in one of the poorest countries in the world. (Yoon Min-sik, [The Korea Herald](#))

- What to wear to an intercontinental ballistic missile launch? It's not a question most teenagers have to consider. And even if they did, their answer would almost certainly not be "this season's Christian Dior." (Min Joo Kim, [The Washington Post](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea has co-sponsored a U.N. human rights council draft resolution on North Korea's gross rights violations for the first time in five years, the foreign ministry said Thursday. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea co-sponsored for the first time in four years the UN Human Rights Council's resolution on North Korea to be adopted early next month, the Foreign Ministry in Seoul announced. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- South Korea's unification minister met with Japan's foreign minister and its chief cabinet secretary on Thursday to discuss North Korea's threats and other pending issues, according to his office. ([Yonhap](#))
- There is no indication that North Korea may use its nuclear weapons to attack the United States or its allies in the near future, a spokesperson for the U.S. National Security Council (NSC) said Wednesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean defector-turned-lawmaker Rep. Ji Seong-ho is set to attend the upcoming House Democracy Partnership Summit for Democracy in Washington DC as the only South Korean lawmaker. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Japan on Thursday lifted export curbs on high-tech materials to South Korea, the Japanese trade ministry said, as the two U.S. allies mend ties in the face of North Korea's frequent missile launches and China's more muscular role on the global stage. ([Reuters](#))
- South Korean and U.S. troops launched their largest amphibious landing drills in years involving a U.S. amphibious assault ship, officials said on Thursday, a day after North Korea tested four long-range cruise missiles. (Soo-Hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))

Prepared by Joseph Choi, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509080732/https://mailchi.mp/d5deef557245/hrnk-news-itemshrnk-quoted-34-times-in-the-us-department-of-states-dprk-2022-human-rights-report>

Friday, March 24, 2023

**Defector explains how North Korea's weapons overshadow human rights abuses;
N. Korea tests undersea drone in latest nuclear drills**

Top News:

[Defector explains how North Korea's weapons overshadow human rights abuses](#) (Devdiscourse, 03/21/2023)

[North Korean human rights remain virtually non-existent, State Department finds](#) (Fox News, 03/21/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un oversees launch of nuclear-capable underwater drone - state media](#) (BBC, 03/24/2023)

[N. Korea tests undersea drone in latest nuclear drills](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/24/2023)

[N. Korea tests 'underwater nuclear attack drone,' cruise missiles for nuclear warhead: KCNA](#) (Yonhap, 03/24/2023)

[North Korean hackers target South Koreans with malicious Excel add-ins: Report](#) (NK Pro, 03/24/2023)

[North Korea claims to have tested a nuclear-capable underwater drone. Analysts are skeptical](#) (CNN, 03/24/2023)

[North Korea reveals undersea drone able to trigger 'radioactive tsunamis' on US](#) (NK News, 03/24/2023)

[North tests 'underwater nuclear attack drone'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/24/2023)

[To find missing 653 bullets, North Korean city is locked down, houses searched](#) (Radio Free Asia, 03/24/2023)

[Torture, forced abortions and insects for food: Life inside North Korean jails, says this NGO](#) (CNN, 03/24/2023)

In South Korea:

[Yoon vows to make N. Korea pay for reckless provocations](#) (Yonhap, 03/24/2023)

[Yoon warns North Korea will pay for 'reckless provocations' in emotional speech](#) (NK News, 03/24/2023)

Inter-Korea Relationship:

[S. Korea calls on N. Korea to pay back US\\$80 mln loan](#) (Yonhap, 03/24/2023)

International:

[Food imports help drive North Korean trade with China to three-year high](#) (NK Pro, 03/24/2023)

[Inside China's 'Red Zone' where North Korean women are sold as slaves](#) (The Telegraph, 03/24/2023)

[Unification minister discusses cooperation on N. Korea with top Japanese officials](#) (Yonhap, 03/24/2023)

Top News:

- "North Korea is a living hell," Jung Gwang-il, a North Korean defector and president of the No Chain rights organization, told DW on the sidelines of an EU Parliament event last week investigating the dire human rights situation in North Korea. "The challenge before, during and after the [formation of] the UN Commission of Inquiry is that human rights are always outperformed by other issues: military, nuclear, missiles, security," said Greg Scarlatoiu, executive director of HRNK. He emphasized, however, that human rights should be a priority for the international community, DW reported. Robert Collins, a Korean expert and a senior advisor at HRNK, said Pyongyang's nuclear and missile program and human rights abuses in the country are linked in several ways. "For instance, Kim's regime wants to spend money on

its nuclear and missile program and not on providing food to its people," Collins told DW, adding that the country is facing an unprecedented food crisis. "The food crisis in the mid-1990s killed about 1.5 million people in North Korea. It is approaching the same level now," he added. The North Korean expert believes the recent ballistic missile tests by Pyongyang carry a two-fold message. "The regime wants to tell the South Korea-US alliance that it is powerful and can strike them if they try to interfere with them," he said. He added that the threats are intended to send a message to the North Korean people that they should take pride in that the regime is powerful enough to attack South Korea, DW reported ([Devdiscourse](#))

- The U.S. State Department on Monday released its annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, showing human rights abuses at every level of North Korean society. The report also pulled information and data from white papers published by foreign governments and third-party human rights groups, including the Transitional Justice Working Group, the Korea Institute for National Unification, the War Crimes Committee of the International Bar Association and the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea. (Timothy H.J. Nerozzi, [Fox News](#))

In North Korea:

- Dubbed "Haeil", Korean for tsunami, the North's weapon is designed to attack enemy vessels and ports by setting off a "super-scale" radioactive wave, KCNA says. "This nuclear underwater attack drone can be deployed at any coast and port or towed by a surface ship for operation," it adds. (Kelly Ng, [BBC](#))
- North Korea tested a new underwater drone capable of nuclear attacks on South Korea and its biggest ally, the United States, in its latest drills in response to the two allies' resumption of their annual military exercises this month after a five-year hiatus failed to bring the North back to nuclear talks. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea tested a new underwater nuclear weapon earlier this week capable of spawning a "radioactive tsunami" and stealthily attacking enemies, Pyongyang's state media said Friday. Separately, the North also conducted a cruise missile drill using missiles "tipped with a test warhead simulating a nuclear warhead" as it slammed the combined military exercises between South Korea and the United States as an "actual drill" for "occupying" Pyongyang, according to the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Expert says 'highly agile' ScarCruft threat group seeks to expand attack vectors to get around security measures. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK Pro](#))
- A report from the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said the drone, called the "Unmanned Underwater Nuclear Attack Craft 'Haeil,'" was tested from March 21 to 23, cruising in waters off the country's east coast for more than 59 hours before its test warhead was detonated on Thursday afternoon. (Brad Lendon, Yoonjung Seo, [CNN](#))
- Kim Jong Un also reportedly oversaw cruise missile tests in warning to allies of 'actual nuclear crisis' on peninsula. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- According to an English-language report by Pyongyang's state-controlled Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), the underwater drone, named Haeil, was deployed off the country's eastern coast at Riwon County, South Hamgyong Province, on Tuesday and detonated its test warhead upon reaching its target outside Hongwon Bay on Thursday afternoon. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- After 653 bullets went missing during a recent military withdrawal, North Korean authorities have locked down the entire city of Hyesan and searched house-to-house for the

ammunition, two sources in the country told Radio Free Asia. The assault rifle ammunition was discovered to be missing on March 7, when soldiers with the Korean People's Army 7th Corp were pulling back from the area surrounding the city, which lies on the border with China. They had been deployed there in 2020 to enforce the border closure at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. (Jieun Kim, [Radio Free Asia](#))

- Extrajudicial executions, rape, forced abortions, jail without trial, torture, starvation rations that leave prisoners so hungry some turn to eating insects. These are just some of the abuses commonplace in North Korean prisons and other detention facilities, according to former detainees whose testimony forms the basis of a new report released by a human rights watchdog this week. Using interviews with hundreds of survivors, witnesses and perpetrators of abuse who have fled the country, along with official documents, satellite images, architectural analysis and digital modeling of penal facilities, the non-profit NGO Korea Future has built up what it says is the most detailed picture yet of life inside the secretive country's penal system.
Yoonjung Seo, Andrew Raine, Gawon Bae, [CNN](#))

In South Korea:

- President Yoon Suk Yeol vowed Friday to make North Korea pay for its reckless provocations as the regime claimed to have carried out additional simulations of nuclear attacks on its enemies. Yoon issued the warning hours after North Korea said it conducted the simulations this week involving cruise missile launches and an underwater nuclear attack drone, with leader Kim Jong-un threatening to make Seoul and Washington "plunge into despair." (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean president honors fallen soldiers as US-ROK forces carry out over half dozen military exercises. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korea Relationship:

- Under an inter-Korean agreement at that time, meant to help improve the North's light industries, the South loaned the North raw materials needed to produce garments, shoes and soaps. In return, Pyongyang was supposed to make a repayment in kind, such as with zinc and other minerals. But after making initial payments in 2007 and 2008, the North has not repaid any more of the debt. The ministry in charge of inter-Korean affairs urged the North to "faithfully" repay the principal and interest, with the maturity coming due Friday. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- China sent large amounts of wheat and sugar in Jan. and Feb., but expert anticipates little impact on food insecurity. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- Hundreds of thousands of female defectors are being abused in the dangerous border region, say rights activists, (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- South Korea's unification minister had discussions with top Japanese government officials on ways to bolster cooperation over North Korea's nuclear and missile problems and the issue of those abducted by the North decades ago, according to his office Friday. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509080856/https://mailchi.mp/e9fc9eb2540a/hrnk-news-itemsdefector-explains-how-north-koreas-weapons-overshadow-human-rights-abusesn-korea-tests-undersea-drone-in-latest-nuclear-drills>

Saturday, March 25, 2023

See photos North Korea says are from nuclear-capable underwater drone test

Top News:

[See photos North Korea says are from nuclear-capable underwater drone test](#) (CNN, 03/24/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea holds general meeting of Olympic Committee](#) (Yonhap, 03/25/2023)

[Sohae Satellite Launching Station: Enhancement Efforts Continue and Possible Missile Silo](#) (38 North, 03/24/2023)

Top News:

- HRNK Executive Director, Greg Scarlatoiu, appears on CNN with Brian Todd and Wolf Blitzer. North Korea claimed to have tested an underwater drone capable of carrying a nuclear warhead that could create a "radioactive tsunami," however, analysts urged skepticism noting a lack of proof. CNN's Brian Todd reports. ([CNN](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea has held a general meeting of its Olympic Committee to discuss plans for this year, vowing to win more medals in international competitions, its state media said Saturday, after the country was reinstated for the Olympic Games. ([Yonhap](#))
- Recent commercial satellite imagery of North Korea's Sohae Satellite Launching Station indicates that work continues on the main launch pad to accommodate larger satellite launch vehicles. In addition, both the construction and recent test at the new Horizontal Engine Test Stand (HETS) and continued work on other major components of the launch station complex underscore the DPRK's commitment toward meeting the ambitious goals set by Kim Jong Un a year ago. (Peter Makowsky, Jack Liu, Olli Heinonen, [38 North](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509081237/https://mailchi.mp/ef989e02b52f/hrnk-news-itemssee-photos-north-korea-says-are-from-nuclear-capable-underwater-drone-test>

Sunday, March 26, 2023

N. Korean propaganda outlets slam S. Korea-U.S. amphibious exercise

In North Korea:

[N. Korean propaganda outlets slam S. Korea-U.S. amphibious exercise](#) (Yonhap, 03/26/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean propaganda outlets continued their criticism of an ongoing South Korea-U.S. amphibious landing exercise Sunday, blaming the allies for heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509081418/https://mailchi.mp/1498d90c6734/hrnk-news-itemsn-korean-propaganda-outlets-slam-s-korea-us-amphibious-exercise>

Monday, March 27, 2023

Human Bodies Shattered to Pieces... U.S. Satellite Captures Photo of Public Execution by Kim Jong-un

Top News:

[Human Bodies Shattered to Pieces...U.S. Satellite Captures Photo of Public Execution by Kim Jong-un](#) (Daily NK Japan, 03/20/2023)

*This article has been translated from Japanese. Please see the full English text at the bottom.

In North Korea:

[North Korea fires ballistic missile into East Sea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/27/2023)

[N.Korea fires 2 missiles as US aircraft carrier arrives in Busan](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/27/2023)

[N. Korea fires 2 SRBMs toward East Sea; U.S. aircraft carrier due in S. Korea for joint training](#) (Yonhap, 03/27/2023)

[North Korea launches two short-range ballistic missiles: ROK military](#) (NK News, 03/27/2023)

[Olympic feat? North Korea hints athletes may return to international competition](#) (NK News, 03/27/2023)

[Satellite Imagery Reveals New Activity at the Old Waste Site at Yongbyon](#) (38 North, 03/26/2023)

In South Korea:

[North Korea 'exaggerated' about new undersea nuclear drone, Seoul says](#) (NK News, 03/27/2023)

[South Korea speeds up full-fledged deployment of US anti-missile battery](#) (The Korea Times, 03/26/2023)

[S. Korea suggests N. Korea may have exaggerated 'underwater nuke attack drone' claim](#) (Yonhap, 03/27/2023)

International:

[\[Herald Interview\] After Putin ICC arrest warrant, will Kim Jong-un ever get his?](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/27/2023)

[North Korea illegally added six cargo ships to aging fleet last year: UN report](#) (NK Pro, 03/27/2023)

[Price to fish in North Korean waters soars ninefold to \\$450K, UN report suggests](#) (NK Pro, 03/27/2023)

[US aircraft carrier to visit Busan amid NK provocations](#) (The Korea Times, 03/27/2023)

[US sends aircraft carrier to peninsula as part of North Korea deterrence efforts](#) (NK News, 03/27/2023)

Top News:

- U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas Greenfield accused China last Friday (March 17) of attempting to conceal North Korean atrocities by blocking online global broadcasting of an informal Security Council meeting discussing human rights abuses in North Korea. ([Daily NK Japan](#))

*This article has been translated from Japanese. Please see the full English text at the bottom .

In North Korea:

- North Korea fired another ballistic missile into the East Sea on Monday, according to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea fired two ballistic missiles toward waters off its eastern coast on Monday, in an apparent protest against combined military exercises between the South Korean and US navies that featured a US aircraft carrier in international waters near the Korean Peninsula. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs) toward the East Sea on Monday, hours before a U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier staged joint drills in waters south of Jeju Island, according to South Korea's military. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs) on Monday morning, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's Olympic committee met last week and announced new performance and compliance standards last Friday, a sign that the country's athletes may be preparing to return to international competition after years of pandemic isolation. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Recent commercial satellite imagery of North Korea's Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center indicates new activities have started at the center's "Old Waste Site." (Olli Heinonen, [38 North](#))

In South Korea:

- The South Korean military dismissed North Korean claims about its newest military capability on Monday, calling state media reports about an undersea nuclear attack drone "exaggerated and manipulated." (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

- The South Korean government is speeding up steps to turn a U.S. anti-missile battery deployed here into a permanent installation. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))
- The South Korean military raised the possibility Monday that North Korea's claim of a recent "underwater nuclear attack drone" test may have been exaggerated, while noting its development appears to be at an "early" stage. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- The International Criminal Court's issuing of an arrest warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin is "one of the most courageous steps taken" and "one that would eventually lead to accountability," according to the war crimes court's former president Hon. Song Sang-hyun. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The price that North Korea is charging to fish in its waters has skyrocketed to \$450,000, according to information in a forthcoming U.N. Panel of Experts report, as much as nine times higher than previously reported figures. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korea newly acquired six cargo ships in violation of U.N. sanctions last year, while likely bringing two other second-hand vessels under its control, according to a forthcoming U.N. Panel of Experts Report. (Ifang Bremer, [NK Pro](#))
- A U.S. Navy carrier strike group will arrive in Busan, today, as part of efforts to bolster the two countries' combined military posture as well as promoting South Korea-U.S. friendship on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of their alliance, Seoul's defense ministry said, Monday. (Kang Seung-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- A U.S. aircraft carrier has visited South Korean waters for the first time in nearly six months to participate in joint drills, as North Korea continues to fire ballistic missiles it has described as warnings to the allies. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

[Translation] Human Bodies Shattered to Pieces...U.S. Satellite Captures Photo of Public Execution by Kim Jong-un ([Daily NK Japan](#))

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas Greenfield accused China last Friday (March 17) of attempting to conceal North Korean atrocities by blocking online global broadcasting of an informal Security Council meeting discussing human rights abuses in North Korea.

Online broadcasting of the informal meeting, co-hosted by the United States and Albania, requires consensus by all 15 Council members. Although China and Russia, permanent members of the Security Council, have long taken a stance against discussion of human rights, the blocking of online transmission still remains a rare move.

In response, Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield mentioned that North Korea's ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction programs threaten international peace and security and are "inextricably linked to the regime's human rights abuses."

Although Chinese interference towards the meeting's online broadcasting is a loss for the alleviation of North Korean human rights issues, it could be argued that if North Korea continues to be a battlefield in which the current U.S.-China clash is fought on, this may be a rather welcome development for the North Korean issue.

The presenting of concrete evidence of human rights abuses in North Korea could be a bargaining chip used to pressure Kim Jong-un and China.

For instance, on October 7, 2014, Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), a U.S.-based NGO, and Joseph Bermudez of AllSource Analysis (ASA), a commercial satellite analysis firm, successfully captured a satellite photo of the Kanggon Military Training Area, located outside of Pyongyang.

In this satellite photo, 10 unidentified objects were seen lined up. Six ZPU-4 anti-aircraft machine guns (anti-aircraft guns in North Korean terminology) are lined up facing them, in front of a viewing area.

Moreover, in October of the same year, Japan's own *Asia Press* reported the execution of 10 senior Korean Worker's Party officials at the military academy, based on inside information from North Korea, which correlates chronologically with HRNK's analysis.

It should be noted that 14.5mm caliber bullets [most likely used for the execution] possess the ability to penetrate and destroy lightly armored vehicles, helicopters, and concrete walls and other barriers. If used against the human body, they are said to literally shatter it to pieces.

The Kanggon Military Training Area is frequently used to execute officials, and was reportedly used to execute a former member of the Unhasu Orchestra, which Kim Jong Un's wife Ri Sol-ju was a member of.

What could happen if the United States presents this kind of information to turn the attention of international public opinion toward the issue of human rights in North Korea? It is unlikely that Kim Jong-un will change his policies. By comparison, however, a change in Chinese policy toward North Korean defectors seems more feasible.

If China stops or becomes reluctant to forcibly repatriate North Korean escapees, this change may gradually affect North Korean society by increasing North Koreans' access to the outside world.

Although an immediate change in the North Korean regime is impossible, the sooner foundations for eventual change are established, the better.

Translated by Yoshino Yamauchi, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509081540/https://mailchi.mp/640069ab0a47/hrnk-news-itemshuman-bodies-shattered-to-pieces-us-satellite-captures-photo-of-public-execution-by-kim-jong-un>

Tuesday, March 28, 2023

Jeon Yeong-hee, Director of the Korean Peninsula Peace Regime Bureau, met with a NK human rights organization in the United States

Top News:

[*Jeon Yeong-hee, Director of the Korean Peninsula Peace Regime Bureau, met with a North Korean human rights organization in the United States](#) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Korea, 03/22/2023)

[*Jeon Yeong-hee, Director of the Korean Peninsula Peace Regime Bureau, met with a North Korean human rights organization in the United States](#) (Konas, 03/23/2023)

*These articles have been translated from from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom.

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong-un reveals nuclear warhead, calls for more weapons-grade material](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/28/2023)

[Kim wants N. Korea to make more nuclear material for bombs](#) (AP News, 03/28/2023)

[NK human right violations must be 'fully exposed': Yoon](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/28/2023)

[N. Korean leader urges more production of weapons-grade nuclear materials; photos of tactical nuclear warheads released](#) (Yonhap, 03/28/2023)

[North displays 'tactical nukes' as Nimitz arrives in Busan](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/28/2023)

[North Korea shows off smaller nuke warhead it says fits on missiles aimed at ROK](#) (NK News, 03/28/2023)

[North Korea's illicit fuel imports jumped 70% in 2022, UN data suggests](#) (NK Pro, 03/28/2023)

In South Korea:

[South Korean president tells ministry to 'stop throwing money' at North Korea](#) (NK News, 03/28/2023)

[Yoon calls for full disclosure of N.K. human rights violations](#) (Yonhap, 03/28/2023)

[Yoon vows not to give single won to N. Korea if it continues nuclear pursuit](#) (Yonhap, 03/28/2023)

[Yoon warns that North won't get a 'single penny' while it builds nukes](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/28/2023)

International:

[China ambassador arrives in North Korea in sign of reopening](#) (AP News, 03/28/2023)

[Cuban ambassador to North Korea set to leave country after 7 years: State media](#) (NK News, 03/28/2023)

[New Chinese ambassador becomes first to enter North Korea in nearly 3 years](#) (NK News, 03/28/2023)

[S. Korea welcomes U.N. report on N. Korea's abduction, enforced disappearances](#) (Yonhap, 03/28/2023)

[UN human rights office 'deeply concerned' about North Korean prison camps](#) (NK News, 03/28/2023)

[U.S., S. Korea enhancing joint deterrence against N. Korean aggression: Austin](#) (Yonhap, 03/28/2023)

Top News:

- Jeon Young-hee, Director of the Peace Diplomacy Planning Group, met with Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), in the late afternoon of the 21st. They shared concerns about the serious human rights situation in North Korea and exchanged views on ways to raise awareness of North Korean human rights issues in the international community. Director Jeon explained the South Korean government's efforts to properly publicize the reality of human rights violations in North Korea at home and abroad. He also highly praised the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea's efforts to improve North Korean human rights through various North Korean human rights events and the publication of reports. ([Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Korea](#))
- In response, Executive Director, Greg Scarlatoiu welcomed the South Korean government's active participation in the international community's efforts to promote human rights in North Korea, such as appointing an ambassador for international cooperation on human rights in North Korea last year and returning as a co-sponsor of the UN resolution on human rights in North Korea. He mentioned that the international community should continue to pay attention to North Korean human rights issues. (Choi Kyung-seon, [Konas](#))

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom.

In North Korea:

- For the first time, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un revealed his country's nuclear warhead in person alongside a system meant to manage such operations, saying the regime needs an "exponentially bigger" nuclear arsenal amid potential preparations for a nuclear test. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has called for his nuclear scientists to increase production of weapons-grade material to make bombs to put on his increasing range of weapons. North Korean photos of the meeting also showed what appeared to be a small new tactical warhead that was possibly designed to fit on a variety of delivery systems developed in recent years to overwhelm South Korean defenses. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol said Tuesday that his administration will "fully expose" North Korea's human rights violations to the international community in its first human rights report on the reclusive regime to be released soon. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has "guided" the country's nuclear weaponization project, calling for expanding the production of weapons-grade nuclear materials for an exponential increase in its nuclear arsenal, Pyongyang's state media said Tuesday. Kim also inspected what appeared to be tactical nuclear warheads Monday, with South Korea and the United States staging combined naval exercises, involving a U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.S. Navy carrier strike group, led by the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Nimitz, arrived in Busan on Tuesday ahead of trilateral exercises with South Korea and Japan amid high tensions in the Korean Peninsula over North Korea's advancing missile and nuclear weapons program. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- State media shows leader Kim Jong Un inspecting warhead, reports on airburst missile test and tests of undersea drone. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

- Member states tell Panel of Experts that DPRK imported nearly 800K barrels through August, exceeding annual cap. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK Pro](#))

In South Korea:

- Unification ministry says it has not been involved with government-level payments to DPRK under current administration. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol said Tuesday that North Korea's human rights abuses should be fully laid bare around the world, as the government prepares to publish a report on the North's human rights situation for the first time. "The reality of the appalling human rights violations against the North Korean people must be fully revealed to the international community," Yoon said during a Cabinet meeting. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- Yoon made the remark during a Cabinet meeting after being briefed by Unification Minister Kwon Young-se on the government's first public release of a North Korean human rights report this Friday. "Disclosing the reality of North Korea's human rights situation is very important to national security as well, because it shows where the legitimacy of a state can be found," he was quoted as saying by Lee Do-woon during a press briefing. "From now on, the unification ministry should stop giving away to North Korea and make it clear that as long as North Korea pursues nuclear development, we cannot give them a single won," he said, apparently referring to economic aid under past administrations. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol instructed the Unification Ministry to halt giving handouts to Pyongyang as long as the Kim Jong-un regime continues to pursue its nuclear weapons program on Tuesday. Yoon told Unification Minister Kwon Young-se in a Cabinet meeting to "make it clear that in a situation where North Korea is pursuing nuclear development, the South Korean government will be not be giving it even a single penny," according to presidential spokesman Lee Do-woon in a press briefing. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- China said Tuesday its new ambassador to North Korea has taken up his post, in a sign the North is reopening amid reports it has been suffering heavily from the COVID-19 pandemic and food shortages. ([AP News](#))
- NHK also reports new Chinese ambassador allowed to enter DPRK, in possible sign of reopening to diplomatic travel. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- Beijing's foreign ministry says Wang Yajun arrived in DPRK on Monday, though implications for COVID controls unclear (Arius Derr, [NK News](#))
- The South Korean government on Tuesday welcomed a new report by the United Nations Human Rights Office condemning North Korea's abductions and human rights violations. In the report published Tuesday, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) highlighted the economic, social and emotional suffering of victims of the forcibly disappeared. It also criticized systematic abductions and enforced disappearances by North Korea as "crimes against humanity." ([Yonhap](#))
- Report based on defector interviews says DPRK continues to execute prisoners and stonewall UN investigations. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- In his opening remarks in a Senate armed services committee hearing on a defense budget request, Austin also reaffirmed U.S. commitment to providing extended deterrence to South Korea. "We continue to shore up security on the Korean Peninsula despite the DPRK's

provocations, including through bilateral and trilateral cooperation," he said (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

[Translation] Jeon Yeong-hee, Director of the Korean Peninsula Peace Regime Bureau, met with a North Korean human rights organization in the United States

Properly inform the international community of the human rights situation in North Korea and strengthen communication with civil society

Jeon Young-hee, Director of the Peace Diplomacy Planning Group, met with Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), in the late afternoon of the 21st. They shared concerns about the serious human rights situation in North Korea and exchanged views on ways to raise awareness of North Korean human rights issues in the international community.

Executive Director of HRNK, Greg Scarlatoiu is in South Korea to attend a seminar commemorating the 10th anniversary of the UN Commission of Inquiry (COI) on human rights in North Korea.

Director Jeon explained the South Korean government's efforts to properly publicize the reality of human rights violations in North Korea at home and abroad. He also highly praised the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea's efforts to improve North Korean human rights through various North Korean human rights events and the publication of reports.

In response, Executive Director, Greg Scarlatoiu welcomed the South Korean government's active participation in the international community's efforts to promote human rights in North Korea, such as appointing an ambassador for international cooperation on human rights in North Korea last year and returning as a co-sponsor of the UN resolution on human rights in North Korea. He mentioned that the international community should continue to pay attention to North Korean human rights issues.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that it will continue to make efforts to properly inform the international community of the serious human rights situation in North Korea while strengthening communication with civil society such as North Korean human rights groups.

[Translation] Jeon Yeong-hee, Director of the Korean Peninsula Peace Regime Bureau, met with a North Korean human rights organization in the United States

Properly inform the international community of the human rights situation in North Korea and strengthen communication with civil society

Jeon Young-hee, Director of the Peace Diplomacy Planning Group, met with Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), in the late afternoon of the 21st. They shared concerns about the serious human rights situation in North Korea and

exchanged views on ways to raise awareness of North Korean human rights issues in the international community.

Executive Director of HRNK, Greg Scarlatoiu is in South Korea to attend a seminar commemorating the 10th anniversary of the UN Commission of Inquiry (COI) on human rights in North Korea.

Director Jeon explained the South Korean government's efforts to properly publicize the reality of human rights violations in North Korea at home and abroad. He also highly praised the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea's efforts to improve North Korean human rights through various North Korean human rights events and the publication of reports.

In response, Executive Director, Greg Scarlatoiu welcomed the South Korean government's active participation in the international community's efforts to promote human rights in North Korea, such as appointing an ambassador for international cooperation on human rights in North Korea last year and returning as a co-sponsor of the UN resolution on human rights in North Korea. He mentioned that the international community should continue to pay attention to North Korean human rights issues.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that it will continue to make efforts to properly inform the international community of the serious human rights situation in North Korea while strengthening communication with civil society such as North Korean human rights groups. (konas)

Reporter Choi Kyung-seon from Konas

Translated by Doohyun Kim, HRNK Social Media Associate

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509081639/https://mailchi.mp/9bc9f165c94e/hrnk-news-itemsjeon-yeong-hee-direct-or-of-the-korean-peninsula-peace-regime-bureau-met-with-a-nk-human-rights-organization-in-the-united-states>

Wednesday, March 29, 2023

U.S. vows to ensure readiness against North's threats; Inside North Korean hackers' unusual money laundering technique

In North Korea:

[Inside North Korean hackers' unusual money laundering technique](#) (Washington Post, 03/29/2023)
[\[Column\] Kim Jong-un's dream to be ruined by nukes](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/29/2023)

[North Korea appears to rip up Pyongyang airfield just years after construction](#) (NK News, 03/29/2023)

[North Korea asserts first evidence of tactical nuclear weapons](#) (BBC, 03/28/2023)

[North Korean hackers play the 'long con' by targeting experts](#) (Washington Post, 03/29/2023)

[North Korean robbers kill two women as crime wave intensifies](#) (Radio Free Asia, 03/28/2023)

In South Korea:

[Envoy to U.S. named new national security adviser](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/29/2023)

[Ex-journalist to lead NK defector support foundation](#) (The Korea Times, 03/29/2023)

[Unionist accused of photographing U.S. bases for North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/29/2023)

[Yoon's 'audacious initiative' for NK denuclearization hangs in balance](#) (The Korea Times, 03/29/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[US and South Korea send thousands of troops and 23-ton vehicles to practice beach assault](#) (CNN, 03/29/2023)

[US, ROK stage amphibious drills to show 'decisive' posture against North Korea](#) (NK News, 03/29/2023)

International:

[North Korean radio equipment shipped to Ethiopian military last year: UN report](#) (NK News, 03/29/2023)

[UN report calls for sanctioning North Korean spy chief to counter cybercrime](#) (NK Pro, 03/29/2023)

[U.S. vows to ensure readiness against North's threats](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 03/29/2023)

[U.S. will continue building defense capabilities against N. Korean nuclear threats: Kirby](#) (Yonhap, 03/29/2023)

In North Korea:

- Stealing cryptocurrency, cryptomining, and money laundering fill the toolbox of a North Korean hacking group. (Tim Starks and David DiMolfetta, [Washington Post](#))
- Kim cannot turn the country into a normal state with nuclear weapons. He cannot hand down his gargantuan power to his children, either, not to mention withstanding economic hardship for over a decade. (Kim Byung-yeon, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea has likely started to demolish a modern airfield built just eight years ago on an exclusive patch of riverfront property in Pyongyang, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- The North has long claimed it has tactical nuclear weapons, capable of hitting targets in South Korea. But the photos published in its state newspaper on Tuesday are the first time it has provided evidence. (Jean Mackenzie, [BBC](#))
- The report, which offers a comprehensive look at APT43's activities, highlights Pyongyang's increasingly complex cybercrime operation. (Michelle Lee and Tim Starks, [Washington Post](#))
- Residents in a northern province of North Korea are reporting an increase in violent crime, seemingly driven by a worsening economy, hunger and a lack of affordable food, sources told Radio Free Asia. (Jieun Kim, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In South Korea:

- Korean Ambassador to the United States Cho Tae-yong was named as new national security adviser Wednesday after Kim Sung-han stepped down from the post that day. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The Ministry of Unification has appointed Cho Min-ho, a former editorial writer of the Segye Ilbo, a local Korean-language daily, as the new president of the Korea Hana Foundation, an organization aimed at supporting North Korean defectors in South Korea. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- A high-ranking official at the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) under arrest for allegedly violating the National Security Act is accused of taking photos inside U.S. military bases in South Korea and sending them to North Korean agents. (Cho Jung-woo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Escalating tensions on the Korean Peninsula, triggered by North Korea's pursuit of an "exponential" increase in its nuclear arsenal, are making President Yoon Suk Yeol's "audacious initiative" for Pyongyang's denuclearization look like an increasingly far-fetched idea, according to analysts, Wednesday. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Washington and Seoul have been showing their firepower through an increasing number of exercises, all of which the two allies say are defensive in nature. But on Wednesday morning, they used thousands of troops and high-end weaponry to practice an amphibious assault, a maneuver offensive in its nature and designed to take territory, not defend it. (Brad Landon, Paula Hancocks, Yoonjung Seo, [CNN](#))
- U.S. and ROK troops carried out amphibious landing drills on South Korea's east coast on Wednesday, as the allies ramp up joint exercises that they say seeks to ensure a "decisive combat" posture against North Korea's military escalations. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

International:

- Two shipments of radio equipment produced by the North Korean corporation Glocom were delivered to the Ethiopian military last year, a forthcoming U.N. Panel of Experts report states, raising questions about the efficacy of sanctions on the DPRK's military-industrial complex. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- The U.N. Security Council should sanction the head of North Korea's intelligence agency to counter cyberattacks and cut off a key source of funding for its nuclear and weapons programs, a forthcoming U.N. report recommends. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK Pro](#))
- The United States will continue to ensure its readiness to defend itself and regional allies against North Korea's advancing nuclear and missile capabilities, White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said Tuesday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The United States will continue to build its defense capabilities against North Korea's evolving nuclear threats, a U.S. National Security Council spokesperson said Tuesday, noting the North continues to ignore U.S. overtures for dialogue. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

Thursday, March 30, 2023

Leading activist in North Korea human rights movement shares atrocities of tyranny; Kim Jong Un takes threats to new level

Top News:

[Leading activist in North Korea human rights movement shares atrocities of tyranny](#) (Liberty University, 03/22/2023)

[Kim Jong Un takes threats to new level](#) (Fox News, 03/25/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korea launches anti-divorce campaign, targeting women](#) (Radio Free Asia, 3/30/2023)

[‘Rip them apart, slice them up’: North Korea ramps up gruesome anti-US rhetoric](#) (NK News, 3/30/2023)

[State media review: North Korea hints at imminent space launch](#) (NK News, 3/30/2023)

[Kim wants N. Korea to make more nuclear material for bombs](#) (AP News, 3/30/2023)

[Satellite photos point to chemical plant's role in North Korea's nuclear program](#) (Radio Free Asia, 3/29/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea releases report on N. Korea's human rights violations](#) (Yonhap, 3/30/2023)

[South Korea nominates new ambassador to US](#) (Korea Times, 3/30/2023)

[Gov't reshuffles foreign policy team after resignation](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/30/2023)

[\[Editorial\] An alarming change of hands before summits \(KOR\)](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 3/30/2023)

International:

[Burkina Faso to revive ties with North Korea, seek 'exemplary' weapons trade](#) (NK News, 3/30/2023)

[Russia to offer food for North Korean weapons - US](#) (BBC, 3/30/2023)

[North Korea may have sent voice phishing apps to Chinese crime ring: UN report](#) (NK News, 3/30/2023)

Top News:

- Liberty University welcomed North Korea human rights activist Dr. Suzanne Scholte to Convocation on Wednesday to speak on modern-day persecution in North Korea. Scholte serves as the chairman for the North Korea Freedom Coalition, which works to provide freedom and aid to North Koreans suffering under the Kim Jong-Un regime. She is also the president of the Defense Forum Foundation and the vice-chairman of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea. Because of her work to help North Koreans, she received the Seoul Peace Prize in 2008. Scholte argued that while South Korea provides enormous avenues for the Gospel, the current North Korean government, headed by the grandson of

Kim Il-Sung, continues the persecution started decades ago. “Having twisted the Holy Trinity into a perversion of worship, this regime is an affront to what God created,” she said, noting that North Koreans face the constant threat of government surveillance and are not allowed any independent thought. “It is an affront to our God who creates, loves, forgives and redeems because it is a regime that destroys, hates, starves, and enslaves. This is why Christians are drawn to this fight. Standing up for the freedom and human rights of North Koreans is like storming the gates of hell because it is going against one of the most evil regimes in modern history — a God-hating, Christ-rejecting tyranny. This is why there is so much death and destruction in that country. It is a hell on earth. (Christian Shields, *Liberty University*)

- Kim Jong Un claims he has drones that can create radioactive tsunamis. Greg Scarlatoiu, HRNK Executive Director's interview with CNN appears in a video. (Fox News)

In North Korea:

- North Korea is trying to stop couples from getting divorced by launching an education campaign targeting married women, but residents say the initiative blames women unfairly, sources in the country told Radio Free Asia. (Myung Chul Lee, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- North Korean state media has ramped up grisly anti-U.S. and South Korea rhetoric in recent weeks, showing teens taking to the streets in state-led rallies and holding signs vowing to “slice [enemies] into pieces,” “rip them apart to death” and “beat them to a pulp.” (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea announced late last year that it would launch a military satellite by April 2023. As that apparent deadline approaches, the ruling Workers’ Party initiated a meeting on aerospace development with leading party and academic figures. (Seung-Yeon Chung, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has called for his nuclear scientists to increase production of weapons-grade material to make bombs to put on his increasing range of weapons. North Korean photos of the meeting also showed what appeared to be a small new tactical warhead that was possibly designed to fit on a variety of delivery systems developed in recent years to overwhelm South Korean defenses. The report in state media Tuesday followed a series of missile launches — seven launch events in this month alone — and rising threats to use the weapons against his enemies. ([AP News](#))
- A new report strongly suggests that a chemical plant in northern North Korea is the main supplier for the country’s nuclear program, citing satellite evidence that appears to show shipments of chemicals from the plant to the Yongbyon nuclear facility. (Eugene Whong, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's unification ministry made public details of its report on North Korea's human rights violations for the first time Thursday, highlighting widespread rights abuses by the North, such as public executions and torture. (Kim Soo-yeon and Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- First Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Cho Hyun-dong was nominated as the new South Korean ambassador to the United States. He will fill the vacancy created by the appointment of former ambassador Cho Tae-yong to the new national security director role, as he officially took the position Thursday. (Nam Hyun-woo, [Korea Times](#))

- The Korean government reshuffled its diplomatic team with figures well-versed in U.S. and North Korean affairs within a day after the resignation of former National Security Office chief Kim Sung-han in an attempt to avoid any vacuum in foreign affairs and security matters. ([Korea JoongAngDaily](#))
- The presidential office's foreign and security affairs front is undergoing a reshuffle ahead of President Yoon Suk Yeol's state visit to the United States next month. Yoon's secretary on foreign affairs Lee Moon-hee has recently been replaced. His secretary of protocol Kim Il-bum also resigned about a week before Yoon's visit to Japan on March 16. The shakeup in the working-level officials responsible for summit arrangements is quite rare ahead of important events for the president. ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- Burkina Faso will restart diplomatic relations with North Korea in part to invigorate weapons trade between the two countries, its military government announced Thursday. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- Russia is sending a delegation to North Korea to offer food in exchange for weapons, US national security spokesperson John Kirby has said. (Antoinette Radford, [BBC](#))
- North Korea may be supporting an organized crime ring in China by supplying it with voice phishing technology linked to over half-a-billion dollars in losses, a forthcoming U.N. report states. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Cherise Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509082146/https://mailchi.mp/f27338a71fe1/hrnk-news-itemsleading-activist-in-north-korea-human-rights-movement-shares-atrocities-of-tyranny-kim-jong-un-takes-threats-to-new-level>

Friday, March 31, 2023

Mok Yongjae's "We must continue to collect evidence for the prosecution of Kim Jong-un"; Soyoung Kim's "10th Anniversary of COI."

Top News:

["We must continue to arouse public opinion and collect evidence for the prosecution of Kim Jong-un by the ICC."](#) (RFA, 03/20/2023)

[\[Q&A\] 10th Anniversary of COI... Seoul actively participates in discussion on North Korean Human Rights](#) (RFA, 03/22/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea plans to send weapons, munitions to Russia in exchange for food: NSC](#) (Yonhap, 03/31/2023)

[North Korean hackers target popular banking software in South Korea: NIS](#) (NK News, 03/31/2023)

[North Korean hackers targeting phone conferencing software, security firm says](#) (NK News, 03/31/2023)

[UN sanctions committee should consider North Korea export exemptions: Report](#) (NK News, 03/31/2023)

In South Korea:

[Arrest warrant issued for ex-military commander over martial law scandal](#) (Yonhap, 03/31/2023)

[Conservative base still behind Yoon, but broader support appears to wane](#) (Korea Pro, 03/31/2023)

['Momentum for change': Ji Seong-ho highlights North Korea human rights during US trip](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/31/2023)

[Opposition leader planned solo trip to North Korea: prosecutors](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/31/2023)

[Why South Korea is paying close attention to the indictment of Donald Trump](#) (Korea Pro, 03/31/2023)

International:

[Indonesia detains bulk carrier blacklisted for violating North Korea sanctions](#) (NK News, 03/31/2023)

[U.S. lawmaker introduces bill on providing healthcare to Korean veterans of Vietnam War](#) (Yonhap, 03/31/2023)

[US sanctions Slovak middleman for alleged North Korean arms sales to Russia](#) (NK News, 03/31/2023)

[US says Russia seeks munitions from NK in exchange for food](#) (The Korea Herald, 03/31/2023)

Top News:

- At a debate held to mark the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea (COI), it was argued that in order to prosecute Kim Jong-un at the International Criminal Court (ICC), the international public opinion and evidence collection work must continue. (Mok Yongjae, English translation by Haeun Moon, [RFA](#))
- In celebration of the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Commission of Inquiry (COI) on human rights in North Korea (COI), various discussions on human rights in North Korea have recently been held by the United Nations , governments, and private organizations . Let's take a look at some meetings and what messages they wanted to convey with reporter Kim So-young. (Soyoung Kim, English translation by Yubin Jun, [RFA](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea is working to send dozens of kinds of weapons and munitions to Russia to be used in the ongoing Russian war against Ukraine, a National Security Council (NSC) official said Thursday. ([Yonhap](#))
- Seoul's National Intelligence Service (NIS) issued an advisory on Thursday warning that North Korean hackers are exploiting vulnerabilities in a financial security certificate software installed on over 10 million systems in South Korea and abroad. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- A U.S. cybersecurity firm has attributed a recent attack on a popular business communications tool to a North Korean hacker network associated with the Lazarus Group. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

- The U.N. committee tasked with sanctions implementation on North Korea should consider adjusting aspects of the sanctions regime, a forthcoming U.N. report seen by NK News says, to reduce the unintended impact of sanctions on the DPRK's humanitarian situation. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- A Seoul court issued a warrant Friday to arrest Cho Hyun-chun, a former head of the now-defunct Defense Security Command, over the suspected masterminding of a martial law plan while then President Park Geun-hye faced an impeachment trial in 2017. ([Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk-yeol's approval numbers declined from the previous week, but the reasons for this drop are not entirely clear. It is likely the result of concurrent factors, but a closer look at the numbers shows that the president's base is solidly behind him. (Karl Friedhoff, [Korea Pro](#))
- Rights activist-turned-lawmaker Rep. Ji Seong-ho of South Korea's ruling People Power Party met with US Department of State officials on Thursday to discuss possible joint efforts in protecting the rights of North Korean defectors. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Seoul prosecutors believe onetime presidential hopeful and Democratic Party of Korea head Rep. Lee Jae-myung planned a solo trip to North Korea while he was still the governor of Gyeonggi Province, which neighbors Seoul. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Donald Trump became the first former U.S. president to be indicted on criminal charges on Thursday, and experts say the unprecedented development could have implications as far-reaching as the Korean Peninsula. (John Lee, [Korea Pro](#))

International:

- Indonesia has detained a bulk carrier blacklisted for illegally transporting coal for North Korea after it entered the country's waters disguised with a new name and flag, according to an upcoming U.N. Panel of Experts report. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- A U.S. lawmaker has submitted a bill calling for the provision of healthcare services to former Korean veterans of the Vietnam War who have since become naturalized citizens of the United States, the lawmaker's office said Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. has sanctioned a Slovakian national for attempting to facilitate arms sales between North Korea and Russia as it looks to take firm action aimed at countering Pyongyang's alleged support for Russia's invasion of Ukraine. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The US authorities announced on Thursday that Russia is pursuing a plan to secure additional ammunition in exchange for food to North Korea, targeting a Slovak national arms dealer with sanctions for allegedly facilitating the exchange of goods between Russia and North Korea. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Tessa Aguilar, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240509082425/https://mailchi.mp/19c8531466d6/hrnk-news-itemsleading-activist-in-north-korea-human-rights-movement-shares-atrocities-of-tyranny-kim-jong-un-takes-threats-to-new-level-1119131>

4. APRIL

Saturday, April 1, 2023

Growing Activity at North Korea's Experimental Light Water Reactor; NK hacker group poses as journalists and experts to steal intel

In North Korea:

[Growing Activity at North Korea's Experimental Light Water Reactor](#) (38 North, 04/01/2023)

[High activity spotted at North Korea nuclear complex after Kim's bomb-fuel order, report says](#) (Reuters, 04/01/2023)

[N.K. leader's sister accuses Zelenskyy of gambling with Ukraine's destiny](#) (Yonhap, 04/01/2023)

[North Korean hacker group poses as journalists and experts to steal intel](#) (Radio Free Asia, 03/31/2023)

[North Korean Leader May Be Brainwashing Daughter, Experts Say](#) (VOA, 04/01/2023)

In North Korea:

- Recent commercial satellite imagery of North Korea's Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center indicates a high level of activity around the complex. The 5 MWe Reactor continues to operate, and construction has started on an additional support building around the Experimental Light Water Reactor (ELWR). Furthermore, water discharges have been detected that could be associated with testing of the ELWR's cooling system. This is not the first time water discharges have been observed coming from the ELWR over the past few years but may indicate the reactor is nearing completion. (Peter Makowsky, Jack Liu, [38 North](#))
- Satellite images show a high level of activity at North Korea's main nuclear site, a U.S. think tank reported on Saturday after the North Korean leader ordered an increase in production of bomb fuel to expand the country's nuclear arsenal. ([Reuters](#))
- Kim Yo-jong, the younger sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, accused Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Saturday of "gambling" with his country's destiny by talking about developing nuclear weapons or placing U.S. nukes in Ukraine. Kim, vice department director of the Central Committee of the ruling Workers' Party, also accused the Ukrainian authorities of being "seized with the incurable megalomania that (they) can defeat Russia," and "incurring a nuclear disaster threatening their existence." ([Yonhap](#))
- A criminal cyber spy group believed to be backed by the North Korean government poses as journalists, academics and experts to trick its victims into giving out information that can be used for espionage. It also spoofs websites of legitimate organizations to trick targets into giving out information that can be used in cybercrimes the group carries out to fund itself, according to a new report that tracked the cyber attackers' operations over five years. (Eugene Whong, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- North Korea has long sought to convince its own people that the U.S. and South Korea are its mortal enemies, leaving the nation no choice but to develop advanced weapons for self-protection. Analysts are questioning whether that closed society is giving leader Kim

Jong Un's daughter a similarly constricted view of the outside world. Kim Ju Ae, believed to be about 10, has been spotted at military events with her father about 10 times since he introduced her to the public on November 18, a little girl standing in front of a gigantic Hwasong-17 ICBM at a launch site. (Kim Hyungjin, Christy Lee, [VOA](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517120858/https://mailchi.mp/d7c68ee47aed/hrnk-news-itemsgrowing-activity-at-north-koreas-experimental-light-water-reactor-nk-hacker-group-poses-as-journalists-and-experts-to-steal-intel>

Sunday, April 2, 2023

N. Korea says its nuclear capabilities 'not empty talk'; North Korea likely to heighten provocations in April

In North Korea:

[Activity detected at Yongbyon nuclear site: 38 North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/02/2023)

[N. Korea repeats nuclear threat as S. Korea steps up joint drills](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/02/2023)

[N. Korea says its nuclear capabilities 'not empty talk'](#) (Yonhap, 04/02/2023)

[North Korea likely to heighten provocations in April](#) (The Korea Times, 04/02/2023)

[Sister of North's leader blasts Ukraine over nukes](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/02/2023)

In North Korea:

- A high level of activity has been detected at North Korea's Yongbyon nuclear complex, suggesting ongoing preparation for a possible nuclear test, a U.S.-based think tank said Saturday. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea reiterated Sunday that it was serious about its warning that it would use nuclear weapons against South Korea if its annual military exercises with the US continued, calling them “provocations” warranting countermeasures. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea is not making “empty talk” about its nuclear capabilities, Pyongyang's state media said Sunday, adding that the United States and South Korea are engaging in “wrong behavior of bringing themselves to a grave danger.” ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea is expected to continue escalating provocations this month in connection with major political events in Pyongyang, as well as in protest of President Yoon Suk Yeol's state visit to the United States slated for April 26. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's powerful sister, Kim Yo-jong, condemned the Ukrainian president for seeking protection under the U.S. nuclear umbrella, saying

this would only make it “a more vivid target” of Russia. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517121047/https://mailchi.mp/c9fd2d47e1d1/hrnk-news-itemsn-korea-says-its-nuclear-capabilities-not-empty-talknorth-korea-likely-to-heighten-provocations-in-april>

Monday, April 3, 2023

S.Korea, US, Japan stage anti-submarine drills, N. Korea not opening border to anyone else after Chinese ambassador

In North Korea:

[A Fresh Look at North Korea at Night](#) (38th North, 04/02/2023)

[North Korea not opening border to anyone else after Chinese ambassador: Experts](#) (NK News, 04/03/2023)

[N. Korea's nuclear test would be 'out of character' given call for mass production of nukes: expert](#) (Yonhap, 04/03/2023)

[North Korea reveals internal names for several missile systems: Analysis](#) (NK News, 04/03/2023)

[Why North Korea responds the way it does to US-ROK exercises](#) (Breaking Defense, 04/02/2023)

International:

[China Blames U.S. and Allied War Games for 'High Fever' on Korean Peninsula](#) (Newsweek, 04/03/2023)

[North Korean and Chinese ships delivered sanctioned vehicles to Nampo: UN report](#) (NK News, 04/03/2023)

[North Korea decries 'war maniacs' US, ROK and Japan as naval drills get underway](#) (NK News, 04/03/2023)

[North Koreans Trapped in 'State-Sponsored Slavery' in Russia](#) (New York Times, 04/03/2023)

[Myanmar's military leaders may have purchased weapons from North Korea: Report](#) (NK News, 04/03/2023)

[She Escaped North Korea and Now ICE Is Trying to Deport Her](#) (Documented, 04/03/2023)

[S.Korea, US, Japan stage anti-submarine drills amid escalating NK underwater threats](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/03/2023)

[Two Koreas take opposing sides in Ukraine war](#) (Korea Times, 04/03/2023)

[Vice unification minister to meet Japanese nuclear envoy to discuss N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 04/03/2023)

In North Korea:

- Examination of nighttime images from the past seven years shows that North Korea is getting brighter at night, although it is still outpaced by its richer, more industrialized neighbors. The patterns of newly lit-up areas do tend to align with Kim Jong Un's priority

development projects, such as large industrial complexes and housing projects, and even active construction sites. In the Samjiyon region, for instance, entire towns that were not visible a few years ago are now faint dots in nighttime imagery. (Martyn Williams, [38 North](#))

- North Korea is not likely to open its borders to future inbound travelers any time soon, multiple diplomats, aid workers and international organization staff told NK News, calling last week's entry of Chinese Ambassador Wang Yajun and his delegation a one-off event. Wang was the first known person to enter the country in nearly three years after the DPRK shut its borders in an effort to keep out COVID-19. But rather than a signal that Pyongyang is ready to begin moving past the pandemic and re-open to others, the Chinese ambassador's party's entrance was likely just the result of political pressure on a narrow issue. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- North Korea appears to be preparing for another nuclear test, but it would be "out of character" if such a test is carried out now, given its leader Kim Jong-un's call for the mass production of a nuclear arsenal, an expert at 38 North said Monday. Jenny Town, director at 38 North also said there have been no "notable" movements indicating an imminent nuclear test at the Punggye-ri nuclear test site. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea revealed internal designators for several short-range missile systems for the first time during a report on its new Hwasan-31 nuclear warhead designed to fit atop the weapons, NK Pro analysis of state media shows, as part of a report on the new Hwasan-31 nuclear warhead module designed to fit on the weapons. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- "It is important to keep in mind that while the US and ROK certainly have the right to conduct drills as they see fit, what they have been doing is NOT business as usual," Jenny Town, a Korean analyst at the Stimson Center in Washington, wrote in an email. (Colin Clark, [Breaking Defense](#))

International:

- American-led military exercises were to blame for the ongoing feverish tensions on the Korean Peninsula, a Chinese official said Monday as the United States and its Asian allies kicked off two days of naval war games to deter North Korea. "The continuous holding of various military exercises by certain countries is the main reason for the recent high fever on the peninsula," said Mao Ning, a spokesperson for China's foreign ministry. "The parties concerned should stop their military pressure and create favorable conditions for easing conflict and restarting dialogue." (John Feng, [Newsweek](#))
- Three shipments of trucks were delivered to North Korea in May 2022 aboard a combination of DPRK and Chinese-flagged vessels, a forthcoming U.N. report shows, despite sanctions prohibiting Pyongyang from importing vehicles in place since 2017. An unnamed U.N. member state provided satellite imagery that suggests the trucks and "other items" were brought into the country by the DPRK-flagged Kum San Bong and Kum San Bong as well as the China-flagged Peng Lu 9. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- The South Korean navy kicked off a joint anti-submarine exercise with U.S. and Japanese forces in international waters near the Korean Peninsula, Seoul's defense ministry announced on Monday. The two-day drill comes after North Korean state media lashed out at the U.S. and South Korea, which it described as "war maniacs," over the allies' continued military exercises on and around the peninsula. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Despite sanctions and the pandemic, laborers from the country remain abroad, earning desperately needed cash for the regime, according to a new report. For more than three

decades, North Korea has sent workers abroad to make money for its regime. (Choe Sang-Hun, [New York Times](#))

- Myanmar's military government may have recently purchased weapons from North Korea in defiance of sanctions barring DPRK arms trade, according to an upcoming U.N. Panel of Experts report. The Panel cites information from a member state suggesting that Myanmar enterprise Royal Shune Lei Company Ltd. acted as a broker between the Myanmar military – known as the Tatmadaw – and U.N.-sanctioned Korea Mining Development Trading Corporation. The latter allegedly sent weapons to the Southeast Asian country in mid-2022. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- After arriving in the U.S., Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is moving forward with deportation proceedings, which has left her lawyer Michelle Doherty of the Brooklyn Defender Services to think: If not her, who are the asylum laws designed to protect? (Giulia McDonnell Nieto Del Rio, [Documented](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan kicked off their two-day large-scale combined maritime exercises, mobilizing the US nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, the USS Nimitz, and its strike group to enhance combat readiness and interoperability against North Korea's continued threats, South Korea's Defense Ministry said Monday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea and North Korea have positioned themselves on opposite sides of the protracted war in Ukraine, with the South supporting Kyiv and the North siding with Moscow. The calculated involvements of the two Koreas in the war taking place more than 6,500 kilometers away from the Korean Peninsula reflect their own geopolitical interests, according to analysts. (Lee Hyo-jin, [Korea Times](#))
- Vice Unification Minister Kim Ki-woong will meet Japan's top nuclear envoy this week to discuss ways to boost bilateral ties amid North Korea's continued provocations, the unification ministry said Monday. The talks between Kim and Takehiro Funakoshi, director-general for Asian and Oceanian Affairs at Tokyo's foreign ministry, will be held Thursday as a follow-up measure to the unification minister's visit to Japan last month. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Kathy Yu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517121242/https://mailchi.mp/848581068b4a/hrnk-news-itemsskorea-us-japan-stage-anti-submarine-drillsn-korea-not-opening-border-to-anyone-else-after-chinese-ambassador>

Tuesday, April 4, 2023

**UNHRC adopts resolution on N. Korea's human rights, N. Korean hacking group
Kimsuky funds espionage operations through cybercrime**

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un's steady campaign to undercut his father's legacy](#) (NK News, 04/04/2023)

[N. Korean hacking group Kimsuky funds Pyongyang's espionage operations through cybercrime](#) (Yonhap, 04/04/2023)

[North Korea appears to stop extended quarantine for imported goods: Imagery](#) (NK Pro, 04/04/2023)

Inter-Korean Relations:

[S. Korea approves this year's first private humanitarian aid to N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, (04/04/2023)

International:

[China's new envoy to N. Korea starts duty](#) (Yonhap, 04/04/2023)

[Chinese shipyard firms linked to 'several' transfers of vessels to North Korea](#) (NK Pro, 04/04/2023)

[How China let a ship banned for ferrying North Korean coal go rogue](#) (Washington Post, 03/31/2023)

[N. Korea demands U.S. extradite 2019 embassy raid suspects to Spain](#) (Yonhap, 04/04/2023)

[North Korea's Madrid embassy demands extradition of 2019 raid suspects](#) (NK News, 04/04/2023)

[North Koreans Trapped in 'State-Sponsored Slavery' in Russia](#) (The New York Times, 04/03/2023)

[Nuclear envoys of S. Korea, U.S., Japan to meet in Seoul to discuss N. Korea: ministry](#) (Yonhap, 04/04/2023)

[South Korea, US, Japan hold anti-North Korea submarine drill](#) (AP News, 04/03/2023)

[U.S. closely monitoring N. Korea but no indication of imminent nuclear test: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 04/04/2023)

[UNHRC adopts resolution on N. Korea's human rights](#) (Yonhap, 04/04/2023)

In North Korea:

- A new series in North Korea's main newspaper has been recounting the illustrious deeds of prominent historical figures in recent months, and in the process shedding light on the current priorities and concerns of the regime. (Fyodor Tertitskiy, [NK News](#))
- A North Korean hacking group known as Kimsuky has hacked cryptocurrency to fund the country's espionage operations related to its nuclear program, Mandiant, Google's cybersecurity unit, said Tuesday. (Kim Boram, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea no longer appears to be quarantining imports at its giant COVID-19 disinfection complex on the Chinese border, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery, in what could signal major changes to the country's pandemic era trade policies. (Colin Zwirko, [NK Pro](#))

Inter-Korean Relations:

- South Korea has approved 240 million won (\$183,000) worth of private humanitarian aid deliveries to North Korea, marking this year's first approval of aid to the North, a unification ministry official said Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- China's new ambassador to North Korea began his official activities Tuesday, according to China's Embassy in Pyongyang, after his arrival was delayed for years due to the North's COVID-19-related border restrictions. ([Yonhap](#))
- A forthcoming U.N. sanctions report identifies two Chinese shipyard firms as entities of interest in North Korea's acquisition of at least five ships since 2020, raising questions about

their level of involvement in the DPRK's sanctions-busting supply chain. (Chad O' Carroll, [NK Pro](#))

- The United Nations in 2017 placed a port ban on a Chinese-owned ship that had been ferrying North Korean coal to China. With the help of Chinese courts, the vessel would not only survive its near-shipwreck but be resold, repaired, and returned to open waters in breach of sanctions. United Nations reports show that China has increasingly turned a blind eye to illicit North Korean activity, but the Petrel 8 is a rare, detailed example of exactly how that happens. (Ellen Nakashima, Cate Cadell, Dera Menra Sijabat, [The Washington Post](#))
- North Korea demanded the United States hand over members of an anti-Pyongyang group accused of breaking into the North's embassy in Madrid in 2019 to Spain and apologize for the raid, state media reported Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- The North Korean Embassy in Madrid said the U.S. must extradite the alleged perpetrators of a raid on their facilities for "severe punishment," in its first public comments on the incident after four years. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- For more than three decades, North Korea has sent workers abroad to make money for its regime. Thousands still remain in China and Russia according to a new report. Human rights groups have compared the conditions faced by North Korean workers abroad to "state-sponsored slavery". (Choe Sang-Hun, [The New York Times](#))
- The top nuclear envoys of South Korea, the United States and Japan will hold trilateral talks in Seoul this week over North Korea's denuclearization and other pending issues, Seoul's foreign ministry said Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean, U.S. and Japanese navies began their first anti-submarine drills in six months on Monday to boost their coordination against increasing North Korean missile threats, South Korea's military said. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- The United States continues to closely monitor North Korea for signs of an upcoming nuclear test but there has been no clear indication of a test, a Pentagon spokesperson said Monday. ([Yonhap](#))
- The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on Tuesday adopted a resolution denouncing North Korea's gross human rights violations, which was co-sponsored by South Korea for the first time in five years. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517121514/https://mailchi.mp/3f43a66df0ec/hrnk-news-itemsunhrc-adopts-resolution-on-n-koreas-human-rightsn-korean-hacking-group-kimsuky-funds-espionage-operations-through-cybercrime>

Wednesday, April 5, 2023

**NK journalists summoned to Pyongyang, urged to become 'loyal spokespersons';
South turns hawkish as UN council condemns North**

In North Korea:

[Class sizes in North Korea are shrinking as more women become breadwinners](#) (Radio Free Asia, 04/05/2023)

[Kicking and smuggling: North Korean taekwondo master accused of arms trafficking](#) (NK News, 04/05/2023)

[N. Korea holds conference of journalists' union for 1st time in 22 years](#) (Yonhap, 04/05/2023)

[NK journalists summoned to Pyongyang, urged to become 'loyal spokespersons'](#) (Yonhap, 04/05/2023)

[North Korea demands 'new and fresh' propaganda to inspire total obedience](#) (NK News, 04/05/2023)

International:

[Book Review: "A Pyongyang Woman From London"](#) (38 North, 04/05/2023)

[South Korea votes for UN resolution condemning North Korean human rights abuses](#) (NK News, 04/05/2023)

[South turns hawkish as UN council condemns North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/05/2023)

[US and ROK conduct bomber drill to deter North Korean aggression, Seoul says](#) (NK News, 04/05/2023)

In North Korea:

- The trend appears to be making authorities nervous, a person who works in education in South Pyongan province, north of the capital Pyongyang, told Radio Free Asia on condition of anonymity for security reasons: "Yesterday we welcomed the newly enrolled students at Toksong Elementary School, but there were not many new students," he said. "Ten years ago, we used to divide the new, incoming students into four or five separate classes, but each year the number of new students decreases. So there are only three classes [of first graders] this year. (Hyemin Son, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- Ri Chol Nam may have brokered weapons and bulletproof vests on behalf of Pyongyang, says UN Panel of Experts report. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korea held a conference of its journalists' union earlier this week for the first time in 22 years and urged its members to become "devoted spokespeople" of the ruling Workers' Party, state media reported Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea held a rare conference of the national union of journalists earlier this week for the first time in 22 years to discuss ways to strengthen state-controlled media's role as a propaganda tool to "maximize the effectiveness of indoctrination and ideological penetration," state media reported Wednesday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- At state propagandists conference, authorities call for stronger 'ideological weapon' to fight unapproved beliefs. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

International:

- When North Korean defector Thae Yong-ho released his memoir in 2018, it became one of South Korea's most-read books, ranking 15 out of the 30 top-selling books that year. Thae's book promised pizzazz and delivered exactly that to a certain extent by sharing his experiences as an interpreter for Kim Jong Il, shepherding one of Kim Jong Il's sons in London and working shoulder-to-shoulder with some of North Korea's most famous diplomats. In the book, Thae delved a bit into his family life and his relationship with his two sons, but most of those stories took a backseat to stories and anecdotes focused on his

professional career as a diplomat in North Korea and at embassies abroad. As if to bring Thae's family life into clearer focus, Oh Hye Son, Thae's wife, released her own book in February of this year entitled [A Pyongyang Woman From London](#). Given their shared experience living abroad in North Korean embassies, Oh's book traces the outlines of some of the events already covered in her husband's book, but through the perspective of that of a diplomat's wife and a working mother of two sons. She also shares details about her own life, which are almost absent from Thae's work, revealing more information about what life as a female member of North Korea's elite is like, and her own views on North Korea's society and economy. As such, the book is an interesting addition to what is a growing body of literature being written by North Korean defectors. (Robert Lauler, [38 North](#))

- Expert calls Seoul's first vote on the annual resolution in five years a 'welcome development,' but more could be done. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea's recent international engagement regarding North Korea suggests Seoul may be returning to a hawkish stance toward Pyongyang. The UN Human Rights Council in Geneva adopted a resolution Tuesday condemning human rights violations by the North Korean regime. South Korea co-sponsored the resolution, ending a multi-year hiatus that began during the previous liberal administration, which favored improving relations with the North. (Park Hyun-ju, Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Nuclear-capable B-52 flies over the peninsula with fighter jets in allies' latest effort to bolster deterrence. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517121609/https://mailchi.mp/a355cc0f343b/hrnk-news-itemsnk-journalists-summoned-to-pyongyang-urged-to-become-loyal-spokespersonssouth-turns-hawkish-as-un-council-condemns-north>

Thursday, April 6, 2023

A National Strategy for Countering N. Korea; N. Korea executes "extralegal" shooting for Hallyu and border entrance

Top News:

[A National Strategy for Countering North Korea | LIVE STREAM](#) (American Enterprise Institute, 04/05/2023)

[*Will the lie of "Paradise on Earth" be exposed... North Korea executes "extralegal" shooting for Hallyu and border entrance](#) (JoongAng-Ilbo, 03/30/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text below

In North Korea:

[Cables show NK tried to undermine US amid efforts for Korean peace](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/06/2023)

[Historic buildings razed in major renovation project at inter-Korean border](#) (NK News, 04/06/2023)

[N. Korea slams UNHRC's adoption of resolution on its human rights as 'intolerable act'](#) (Yonhap, 04/06/2023)

[N. Korea warns of 'offensive' actions against S. Korea-U.S. joint military drills](#) (Yonhap, 04/06/2023)

[North Korea continues crackdown on foreign music, outside information, and porn](#) (NK Pro, 04/06/2023)

[State media review: North Korean kids show loyalty to state by walking 215 miles](#) (NK Pro, 04/06/2023)

In South Korea:

[N. Korea ready to conduct nuke test 'at any time': Seoul's defense minister](#) (Yonhap, 04/06/2023)

[Over 60 pct of S. Koreans support own nuclear armament: poll](#) (Yonhap, 04/06/2023)

[S. Korea warns of actions over N. Korea's unauthorized use of Kaesong complex](#) (Yonhap, 04/06/2023)

[Vice FM urges cooperation on N. Korea's denuclearization during NATO talks](#) (Yonhap, 04/06/2023)

International:

[Dossier reveals accounts of 1st high-level diplomacy between N. Korea, U.S.](#) (Yonhap, 04/06/2023)

[Nuclear envoys of S. Korea, U.S. vow to keep close tabs on N. Korea's possible provocations](#) (Yonhap, 04/06/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S., Japan to hold security talks this month: defense chief](#) (Yonhap, 04/06/2023)

Top News:

- Since the emergence of the nuclear threat from North Korea in the early 1990s, the primary objective of US policy has been to convince Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear weapons program. While successive administrations have adopted different combinations of incentives and disincentives, all have pursued denuclearization primarily through diplomacy and negotiations. All have failed. Kim Jong Un's New Year's Eve call for an "exponential increase" in North Korea's nuclear arsenal underscores the need for a fundamental shift in US policy. A recent report from several experts offers fresh strategies for countering North Korea. Join some of the authors of the report, including Nicholas Eberstadt, Joseph DeTrani, Robert Joseph, and Greg Scarlatoiu, for a discussion on the current challenges and opportunities in the United States' North Korea policy. ([American Enterprise Institute](#))
- In 2012, 'Kwanliso No. 22', a political prison camp in northern North Korea, was known to have been closed, but claims have been raised that it is still in operation. In a report published at the time, the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK) presented dozens of satellite images taken by Digital Globe, a private satellite company, of satellite images of Kwanliso No. 22 in Hoeryong, North Hamgyong Province, and said, "It turns out that the camp is still in operation." (Kang Tae-hwa, [JoongAng-Ilbo](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea had sought to undermine the US-led United Nations Command and joint military exercises between US and South Korea, the two biggest deterrents preventing the North's potential attacks, amid efforts for peace on the Korean Peninsula, according to the latest diplomatic cables released Thursday. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The original buildings used by the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission to ensure compliance with the Korean armistice agreement after the war were demolished this week

as part of a major renovation project in the area, according to United Nations Command (UNC). Photos from the Joint Security Area seen by NK News show multiple forklift diggers tearing down the decades-old structures alongside workers wearing yellow vests, with little left of the original buildings at the time the scenes were captured. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))

- North Korea on Thursday condemned the latest adoption of a resolution by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) that denounced the North's human rights violations as an "intolerable act of political provocation and hostility." Han Tae-song, the North's permanent representative to the U.N. office in Geneva, said his country "categorically" rejected the U.N. resolution as "the most heavily politicized document of fraud," according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Thursday denounced South Korea and the United States' latest joint military drills as an "unprecedented" war rehearsal, vowing to take "offensive" military steps against such actions. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea recently made available its new Law on Rejecting Reactionary Ideology and Culture in full, which provides critical insights into how the regime identifies and interprets threats to its ability to control information. As the lack of changes to the law by Aug. 2022 implies, the leadership does not seem to plan to ease its policy of punishing people for consuming and distributing undesirable foreign content any time soon. (Martin Weiser, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korean state media celebrated the sacrifices of children as young as 11 years old who retraced the alleged steps of Kim Il Sung and walked 216 miles (348 km) from the Chinese border down to Pyongyang. The children reportedly chanted loyalty slogans as they marched in the biennial event, meant to signal to other youth nationwide the sorts of sacrifices the state expects of them. Right after the children walked almost the entire length of North Korea, they began a new school year, with state media celebrating the start of the academic semester on April 1. Reports featured happy students and parents who received school uniforms and supplies at the state's expense, the latest report demonstration of Kim Jong Un's benevolence. (Seung-Yeon Chung, [NK Pro](#))

In South Korea:

- North Korea is ready to conduct a nuclear test "at any time," South Korea's Defense Minister Lee Jong-sup said Thursday, reiterating Seoul's policy focus on bolstering deterrence against Pyongyang's evolving nuclear and missile threats. Lee made the remarks in a briefing to the National Assembly's defense committee, amid tensions heightened by the North's provocative acts, such as its recent unveiling of the Hwasan-31 tactical nuclear warhead and the test of an underwater nuclear attack drone. ([Yonhap](#))
- More than 60 percent of South Koreans voiced the need for Seoul to independently build its own nuclear weapons, a survey showed Thursday, in the latest indication that the people are more open to atomic weapons amid growing military threats from North Korea. According to the poll of 1,000 adults commissioned by the Asan Institute for Policy Studies, 64.3 percent replied that South Korea needs to develop its own nuclear weapons to counter Pyongyang's escalating nuclear threats. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's unification ministry said Thursday it will take necessary steps if North Korea does not respond to Seoul's call to stop the unauthorized use of a now-shuttered joint industrial park in the North. The ministry's call came as Rodong Sinmun, the North's main newspaper, carried photos of a South Korean bus running in Pyongyang on Wednesday. It was presumed to be one of about 300 buses used in the Kaesong Industrial Park to transport

North Korean workers before the complex was closed down in 2016. Seoul's unification ministry said it attempted to notify North Korea of stopping the unauthorized use of the Kaesong complex earlier in the day, but the North has not responded as of now. ([Yonhap](#))

- South Korea's Second Vice Foreign Minister Lee Do-hoon called Thursday for continued cooperation on North Korea's denuclearization as he attended a meeting of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) foreign ministers. During the ministerial meeting held in Belgium, Lee pledged to ramp up cooperation with NATO against several global challenges, Seoul's foreign ministry said in a press release. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- The South Korean government on Thursday made public newly declassified documents on the first-ever senior-level diplomacy in 1992 between the United States and North Korea, offering a glimpse into the diplomatic tug-of-war over the North's nuclear program. The set of mostly 1992 diplomatic documents, spanning some 360,000 pages, highlights accounts of discussions between Washington and Pyongyang amid the then reconciliatory mood fueled over the Korean Peninsula following the adoption of the Inter-Korean Basic Agreement and the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula at the end of 1991. ([Yonhap](#))
- The chief nuclear envoys of South Korea and the United States met in Seoul on Thursday to discuss security issues on the Korean Peninsula amid concerns over North Korea's growing nuclear and missile threats. South Korea's chief nuclear negotiator, Kim Gunn, and his U.S. counterpart, Sung Kim, shared their assessments of the regional security situation at the foreign ministry building, following the North's recent missile launches. ([Yonhap](#))
- Senior defense officials of South Korea, the United States and Japan will hold trilateral talks later this month, Seoul's defense chief said Thursday, as the three nations seek to bolster security cooperation against military threats from North Korea. ([Yonhap](#))

[Translation] Will the lie of "Paradise on Earth" be exposed... North Korea executes "extralegal" shooting for Hallyu and border entrance (Kang Tae-hwa, [JoongAng-Ilbo](#))

According to the 2023 North Korean Human Rights Report, which was prepared and released by the Ministry of Unification on the 30th based on the testimonies of 508 North Korean defectors between 2017 and 2022, North Korea has recently significantly increased the number of crimes that can warrant the death penalty. The basis for actual execution cases testified by North Korean defectors is concentrated in the Act on Elimination of Reactionary Ideology and Culture and the Emergency Quarantine Act enacted in 2020.

The provisions each contain information on crackdowns on the inflow of external culture, such as the Korean Wave (Hallyu), and border and coastal blockades to prevent the spread of COVID-19. All of them give the pretense of 'law', but in reality, they are more like extralegal regulations that allow immediate execution of residents who come into contact with the outside world.

In 2012, 'Kwanliso No. 22', a political prison camp in northern North Korea, was known to have been closed, but claims have been raised that it is still in operation. In a report published at the time, the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK) presented dozens of satellite images taken by

Digital Globe, a private satellite company, of satellite images of Kwanliso No. 22 in Hoeryong, North Hamgyong Province, and said, "It turns out that the camp is still in operation."

When Korean culture, including dramas, movies, and music, was introduced en masse and popularized, the Kim Jong-un regime defined it as "reactionary culture." Not only acts of dissemination, but also foreign-style clothing, way of speaking, and lifestyle are being cracked down.

To this end, a large-scale censorship organization called the 109 Combined Command Department, consisting of experts from the Party, the National Security Agency, social safety, and technology, is operating.

In particular, unlike the provision of up to 10 years of correctional labor punishment for general external culture distribution, the act of distributing a movie or book of an "enemy country" can be punished with more than 10 years, life imprisonment or the death penalty. Hostile countries are South Korea and the United States.

Based on this, the North Korean regime publicly shot a man who imported South Korean video from China and distributed it to residents in 2020, and in 2017, a man who circulated a Korean drama was shot immediately after being sentenced to death. Even those who sold Korean cosmetics and other items were included in the target of public execution.

It was found that in border areas where foreign materials and culture flowed in, de facto immediate executions were being carried out, ignoring even the minimum formal judicial process.

According to the testimonies of North Korean defectors, the North Korean regime issued a guideline for the border guards to "shoot if they do not stand down after being warned three times to stand still," in the Emergency Quarantine Act, which was created in the name of COVID-19 prevention. In particular, there were testimonies that after 2020, residents and border guards had a policy of "immediately killing anyone who enters the border blockade area without prior warning."

This means that arbitrary firing squads without prior warning are officially being carried out at the border between North Korea and China.

The Kim Jong-un regime also carries out general executions by firing squad rather than shooting on the spot, openly in marketplaces, riversides, and playgrounds, where many people tend to gather. According to testimonies, 1,000 people were mobilized to observe the public execution in 2018, the crowd so large that it took over an hour to leave the scene after the executions.

It has been confirmed that shootings were also carried out with machine gun fire, similar to the way Kim Jong-un shot his uncle Jang Song-taek with an anti-aircraft gun in 2013. According to the testimonies of North Korean defectors, in 2018, in a public execution by firing squad in Chongjin, North Hamgyong Province, five shooters aimed machine guns at the death row inmate, and the machine gun fire continued even after death.

The Kim Jong-un regime's extremely sensitive measures against contact with the outside world are interpreted as measures to prevent residents from figuring out that North Korean society is not the "paradise on earth", like the Kim family has been propagating for decades.

Oh Gyeong-seop, a researcher at the Korea Institute for National Unification, said, “The North Korean regime perceives the rapidly spreading Hallyu (Korean Wave), especially among young people, as the greatest threat to the stability of the system. In the case of the North Korea-China border, it is understood that ruthless control is being exercised by deploying the ‘Storm Corps’ (11th Corps), a front-line unit, in order to completely block residents approaching the border as well as the practice of existing border guards colliding with residents.”

Translated by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517121804/https://mailchi.mp/2e7f6cfc3a23/hrnk-news-itemsa-national-strategy-for-countering-n-korea-n-korea-executes-extralegal-shooting-for-hallyu-and-border-entrance>

Friday, April 7, 2023

Inter-Korean hotlines go dead amid tensions; Nuclear envoys urge repatriation of NK workers abroad

In South Korea:

[The daughter who fled North Korea to find her mother](#) (BBC, 04/07/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Inter-Korean hotlines go dead amid tensions](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/07/2023)

[N. Korea unresponsive to daily calls via military hotline, inter-Korean liaison line: gov't](#) (Yonhap, 04/07/2023)

[Regular inter-Korean call goes unanswered by North twice on Friday](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/07/2023)

International:

[China, others have obligation under U.N. resolutions to engage N. Korea: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 04/07/2023)

[North Korea harnessing network of overseas workers to fund weapons programs: US](#) (NK News, 04/07/2023)

[North Korea suggests ‘war machine’ NATO will cause ‘Ukraine crisis’ in Asia](#) (NK News, 04/07/2023)

[Nuclear envoys urge repatriation of NK workers abroad](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/07/2023)

[US, S.Korea, Japan concerned over N.Korea's 'malicious' cyber activities](#) (Reuters, 04/07/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S., Japan urge international community to repatriate N. Korean workers](#) (Yonhap, 04/07/2023)

[South Korea, US, Japan warn of North Korea's overseas workers](#) (The Korea Times, 04/07/2023)

[South-U.S. drills push region to 'brink of nuclear war': North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/07/2023)

[SKorea, US, Japan call for support of ban on NKorea workers](#) (AP, 04/07/2023)

In South Korea:

- If she was caught she would certainly be punished, perhaps even shot. But she felt a pull far stronger than her fear. She was leaving North Korea to find her mother, who had left her behind as a child. (Jean Mackenzie, [BBC](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea did not answer the routine calls South Korea makes twice a day using its military and nonmilitary hotlines -- another sign that inter-Korean tensions have been escalating quickly as the North accuses the South and its biggest ally, the US, of ramping up tensions with their annual military drills. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Daily communication between the two Koreas was suspended Friday, as North Korea did not respond to regular contact via a cross-border liaison line and a military hotline, the South Korean government said. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea failed to respond to regularly scheduled calls via the inter-Korean liaison line Friday, South Korea's Unification Ministry said. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- China and any other countries that have a relationship with North Korea have an obligation to encourage Pyongyang to halt its provocative actions, a state department spokesperson said Thursday, amid reports that the North is prepared to conduct a nuclear test at anytime. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The Kim Jong Un regime continues to leverage a network of North Korean nationals abroad to raise funds for its weapons programs, according to a joint statement from the U.S., South Korea and Japan that calls on all countries to repatriate these individuals immediately. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) expansion will end in destruction and disaster, North Korean state media said Friday, slamming the alliance for its attempts to "dominate the world." (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The chief nuclear envoys from South Korea, the US and Japan called on countries employing North Korean workers to repatriate them as per United Nations Security Council resolutions preventing overseas income from bankrolling the North's nuclear and missile programs. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The United States, South Korea and Japan expressed deep concern over North Korea's "malicious" cyber activities to support its weapons programmes, in comments released in a joint statement on Friday. (Soo-Hyang Choi, Ju-min Park, [Reuters](#))
- The top nuclear envoys of South Korea, the United States and Japan held trilateral talks here on Friday during which they called for the international community to repatriate all North Koreans working overseas in line with U.N. sanctions over the North's provocations. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea, Japan and the United States urged member states of the United Nations, Friday, to repatriate all North Korean overseas workers that they believe are key sources of foreign currency and revenue for the development of Pyongyang's nuclear program. (Kang Seung-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- Pyongyang warned Seoul and Washington on Thursday that their latest "unparalleled" joint military drills are pushing the security situation of the Korean Peninsula "to the brink of a nuclear war." (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- South Korea, the U.S. and Japan called for stronger international support of efforts to ban North Korea from sending workers abroad and curb the North's cybercrimes as a way to block the country's means to fund its nuclear program. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP](#))

Prepared by Myriam Aribaud, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517121950/https://mailchi.mp/85317857c232/hrnk-news-items-inter-korean-hotlines-go-dead-amid-tensions-nuclear-envoys-urge-repatriation-of-nk-workers-abroad>

Saturday, April 8, 2023

SK government published the first human rights report regarding NK: "North Korea executed Juveniles and pregnant women publicly."

Top News:

*South Korean government published the first human rights report regarding North Korea: "North Korea executed Juveniles and pregnant women publicly." (Wikileaks Korea, 03/30/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text below

In North Korea:

N. Korea conducted another test of underwater nuclear-capable attack drone this week (Yonhap, 04/08/2023)

North Korea reveals Haeil-2 undersea 'nuclear attack drone' test for first time (NK News, 04/08/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

N. Korea remains unresponsive to regular contact via military hotline for 2nd day (Yonhap, 04/08/2023)

International:

China's Xi tells N. Korea's Kim to bolster 'strategic guidance' over bilateral ties (Yonhap, 04/08/2023)

U.S. S. Korea forging closer cooperation on N. Korea, regional issues: CRS report (Yonhap, 04/08/2023)

Top News:

- North Korea's human rights report, which the government prepared for a long time based on years of data, pieces of evidence, and testimonies, will be released. North Korea's human rights situation was expected to be serious, but it is shocking that most of them go beyond common sense, such as "Young people who watched South Korean videos were executed", and "Pregnant women pointed the Kim Il-sung's statue with her finger were executed." Ministry of Unification said that the '2023 North Korean Human Rights report' based on 500 escapees(estimated) testimonies will be released tomorrow. It is the first time

to reveal this report to the public even though it has been published annually since after the North Korean Human Rights Act has been enacted. (Hye-won Kang, [Wikileaks Korea](#))

**This article has been translated from Korean. Please refer to the bottom of the release to view the full translation.*

In North Korea:

- North Korea said Saturday it carried out another test of an underwater nuclear-capable attack drone this week, proving the weapon system's reliability and "fatal" striking capability. The North tested the Haeil-2 underwater strategic weapon system from April 4-7, according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). "The system will serve as an advantageous and prospective military potential of the armed forces of the DPRK essential for containing all evolving military actions of enemies, removing threats and defending the country," the KCNA said in an English-language dispatch. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea revealed the "'Haeil-2' underwater nuclear attack drone" for the first time Saturday, reporting the system was tested earlier this week to "deter all sorts of escalated military actions of the enemy." It is the third test of the new category of nuclear weapon to be disclosed in state media. In a report unveiling the "Haeil" system last month, Pyongyang said it had been in development since 2012 and undergone dozens of tests in secret. ([NK News](#), Colin Zwirko)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea remained unresponsive to regular contact via a military hotline for the second day Saturday, military officials said. The North did not respond to the regular 9 a.m. opening call between the two sides after daily calls through the cross-border liaison line and the military hotline the previous day went unanswered, the officials said. The two Koreas typically hold phone calls twice a day in the morning and in the afternoon using the joint liaison office channel and their military channel. While the liaison office channel operates only on weekdays, the military channel also conducts calls on weekends. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- The remarks came as Kim received a message from Xi as the Chinese leader thanked the North Korean leader for congratulating him on his reelection as president of China, according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). In the message, Xi "attaches great importance to the relations between the two parties and two countries, expressing his willingness to accelerate the development of the socialist cause of the two countries and promote regional peace, stability, development and prosperity by strengthening the strategic guidance" over the China-DPRK relations," the KCNA reported in an English-language dispatch. ([Yonhap](#))
- The United States and South Korea are enhancing their cooperation to tackle various issues including North Korea, a U.S. congressional report said Friday. President Joe Biden and his South Korean counterpart, Yoon Suk Yeol, are also seeking to expand their countries' multilateral cooperation with Japan to rein in North Korea's escalating provocations, the report by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) suggested. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

[Translation] South Korean government published the first human rights report regarding North Korea: “North Korea executed Juveniles and pregnant women publicly.”

North Korea’s human rights report, which the government prepared for a long time based on years of data, pieces of evidence, and testimonies, will be released. North Korea’s human rights situation was expected to be serious, but it is shocking that most of them go beyond common sense, such as “Young people who watched South Korean videos were executed”, and “Pregnant women pointed the Kim Il-sung’s statue with her finger were executed.”

Ministry of Unification said that the ‘2023 North Korean Human Rights report’ based on 500 escapees(estimated)’ testimonies will be released tomorrow. It is the first time to reveal this report to the public even though it has been published annually since after the North Korean Human Rights Act has been enacted.

Considering the privacy of North Korean defectors and the backlash of North Korea, it was confidential. But the government changed its policy to let the public know about North Korea’s poor human rights situation. According to the Ministry of Unification, the 450-page report consists of four major chapters: △Civil and Political Rights, △Economic Social, and Cultural Rights, △Vulnerable groups, △political prisoners of war, abductees, and separated families.

According to the report, it says “In North Korea, arbitrary deprivation of life by authorities has been found.” and added that testimonies regarding the ‘immediate execution’ has been collected continuously. Also, they mentioned that “Not only for violent crime, but also for the acts that cannot be imposed under the terms of freedom, such as drug transactions, watching and distributing Korean videos, and religious and superstitious acts.” It explained.

The report mentioned that the women were exposed to violence in the whole society such as at home, school, military, and detention facilities, and a huge number of youths had been executed since they watched the South Korean videos. In 2015, 6 juveniles who watched some South Korean videos and used opium got a life sentence and were executed immediately.

In 2017, a video of a woman dancing at home was circulated in public, and the woman, who was six months pregnant at the time, was publicly executed due to a problem that she pointed to a portrait of Kim Il-sung using her finger. In addition, as the food distribution system did not work properly, most residents secured food through personal economic activities. Additionally, public medical service was not properly operated, so people should give the medical doctor cash as an allowance in kind.

The report added that serious human rights violations have occurred, such as executions and forced labor of prisoners of war, abductees, and separated families suffering from surveillance and discrimination. Most of these contents are contained in some other reports released by the United Nations or domestic and foreign private organizations, but this report is meaningful as it has been issued officially by the government.

This report was based on more than 1,600 human rights violation testimonies from 508 North Korean defectors who escaped from North Korea between 2017 and 2022. An official from the Ministry of Unification explained, “Among the total of 3,412 people surveyed, 2,075 North Korean

defectors filled out the questionnaires.” And added that 508 testimonies that met the conditions of defecting after 2017 were selected and reflected in the report.

The proportion of women(53%) and men(47%) testifiers was similar, and 20s(31.1%) were the most common. By their residence, Yanggang-do(59.1%), Hamgyeongbuk-do(17.3%), and Pyongyang(10.8%). The Ministry of Unification explained that many cases in the border area were cited and that there are very few cases after 2022 as the number of North Korean defectors plunged due to North Korea’s border blockade because of COVID-19.

The official said, “This report is significant in that it is the government’s first public report published under the North Korean Human Rights Act enacted in 2016 through bipartisan cooperation.” And added, “No other government agency has ever investigated and published the report about North Korean human rights.”

The Ministry of Unifications plans to distribute 2,500 copies online and offline and push for the publication of the English version so that the report can be used as reliable basic data in the field of human rights in North Korea. The official added that it will be published annually in the form of an annual report, but it depends on the situation, such as a decrease in North Korean defectors.

Unification Minister Yong-se Kwon said, “The publication of this report is the result of the South Korean government’s willingness to make more efforts to substantially improve human rights in North Korea.” And added, “We hope to play a meaningful role in bringing meaningful changes in attitudes and responsible actions by the North Korean authorities,” he said. Finally, he emphasized that the government will continue to work together with the international society to improve human rights until the day North Koreans have their own rights for granted.

Reporter Hye-won Kang of Wikileaks Korea

Translated by Yubin Jun, HRNK Intern

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517122242/https://mailchi.mp/aa29148a8f45/hrnk-news-itemssk-government-published-the-first-human-rights-report-regarding-nk-north-korea-executed-juveniles-and-pregnant-women-publicly>

Sunday, April 9, 2023

Inside the international sting operation to catch North Korean crypto hackers

In North Korea:

[No more fancy photo shoots, wedding veils or banquets in North Korean weddings](#) (Radio Free Asia, 04/08/2023)

[North continues to ghost South as it tests undersea drone](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/09/2023)

[North Korea claims another test of underwater nuclear drone](#) (AP News, 04/08/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea remains unresponsive to military hotline calls from S. Korea for 3rd day](#) (Yonhap, 04/09/2023)

International:

[Inside the international sting operation to catch North Korean crypto hackers](#) (CNN, 04/09/2023)

[SKorea, US, Japan call for support of ban on NKorea workers](#) (AP News, 04/08/2023)

In North Korea:

- No more wedding photos of bride and groom clinking wine glasses. No wedding veils. No extravagant banquets or over-the-top flower arrangements. And no pictures of the bride lighting the groom's cigarette. All those smack of anti-socialist attitudes, and don't embrace traditional North Korean ideals, authorities in the country say. Instead, women should dress in traditional if colorful attire (men can wear Western suits), and weddings should be humble, "patriotic" affairs that are less wasteful as the country suffers chronic food and fuel shortages, sources in the country told Radio Free Asia. (Chang Gyu Ahn, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- North Korea didn't respond to routine calls from the South over the weekend, heightening tensions on the peninsula amid reports that it conducted another underwater nuclear drone test. South Korea's military said Sunday that the North did not answer its calls through the military hotlines installed near the Yellow Sea and East Sea for the third consecutive day. (Lee Sung-Eun, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea on Saturday claimed it tested this week a second known type of nuclear-capable underwater attack drone designed to destroy naval vessels and ports, adding to a flurry of weapons demonstrations this year that have heightened tensions with rivals. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea did not answer routine calls from South Korea via a military hotline for the third day in a row Sunday for unclear reasons, officials said. The two Koreas are supposed to hold calls twice a day -- once in the morning and the other in the afternoon -- via military and liaison hotlines set up across the border, but the North stopped answering calls from the South on Friday afternoon. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- A spokesperson for South Korea's National Intelligence Service told CNN it has developed a "rapid intelligence sharing" scheme with allies and private companies to respond to the threat and is looking for new ways to stop stolen cryptocurrency from being smuggled into North Korea. Recent efforts have focused on North Korea's use of what are known as mixing services, publicly available tools used to obscure the source of cryptocurrency. (Sean Lyngaas, [CNN](#))
- South Korea, the U.S. and Japan called for stronger international support of efforts to ban North Korea from sending workers abroad and curb the North's cybercrimes as a way to block the country's means to fund its nuclear program. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP News](#))

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517122158/https://mailchi.mp/49324af5f17c/hrnk-news-items-inside-the-international-sting-operation-to-catch-north-korean-crypto-hackers>

Monday, April 10, 2023

US Urges Countries to Return North Koreans Illegally Working Abroad

Top News:

[US Urges Countries to Return North Koreans Illegally Working Abroad](#) (Bloomberg, 04/06/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korea says 'virgin girl soldier' died for Kim Jong Un at construction site](#) (NK News, 04/10/2023)

['Secret rooms' in North Korean restaurants create a space to conduct illicit affairs](#) (Radio Free Asia, 04/10/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea kicks off Hwarang defense drills](#) (Yonhap, 04/10/2023)

[South begins exercises, North won't pick up phone](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/10/2023)

[Korean Defense Ministry denies security breach after U.S. spying report](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/10/2023)

[NK's underwater drones mean more defense costs for Seoul: analysts](#) (The Korea Times, 04/10/2023)

['Heightened' North Korean threats spur nationwide drills in South Korea: JCS](#) (NK News, 04/10/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea unresponsive to routine inter-Korean liaison, military hotline calls for 4th day](#) (Yonhap, 04/10/2023)

[North Korea 'blocking' hotlines to South Korea, unification ministry says](#) (NK News, 04/10/2023)

International:

[S. Korea, U.S., Japan to hold trilateral defense talks in U.S. this week](#) (Yonhap, 04/10/2023)

[North can hit all of South, U.S. bases in Japan: Experts](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/10/2023)

[Yoon's office to request 'appropriate measures' from US over spying fiasco](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/10/2023)

Top News:

- When the pandemic hit, workers in places such as neighboring Russia and China were stranded, finding themselves at the mercy of brokers and employers looking to pay them as little as possible, the report from the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea said. "The

economic difficulties created by the Chinese authorities' zero-Covid policy appear to have worsened the situation," it said. (Jeong-Ho Lee, [Bloomberg](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea state media has heaped praise upon an 18-year-old "virgin girl soldier" who died from overwork while fulfilling Kim Jong Un's orders to carry out rapid construction on a greenhouse last year. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- In North Korea, couples involved in secret, illicit or private business who need places to meet away from prying eyes don't have many options. (Chang Gyu Ahn, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's military kicked off an annual joint exercise with local governments, police and firefighting authorities Monday as part of efforts to maintain an integrated defense posture against North Korea's military threats. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's military began its annual Hwarang exercises Monday with local governments, police and firefighting authorities to maintain comprehensive defensive readiness against North Korea's escalating military threats, according to Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The Ministry of National Defense has denied allegations of security breaches at the ministry's headquarters located next to the presidential office. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- After North Korea claimed it successfully tested a nuclear-capable underwater attack drone recently, South Korea's military immediately played it down, saying the capabilities of the weapon may have been exaggerated or even faked. (Jung Min-Ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- The South Korean military announced Monday that it is holding nationwide field training exercises with police and fire departments through October this year to better respond to "heightened" North Korean threats. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea remained unresponsive to daily routine calls with South Korea through an inter-Korean liaison communication channel and a military hotline for the fourth straight day Monday, according to the South's government. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea is ignoring calls from South Korea across multiple hotlines, Seoul announced Monday, in what the unification ministry suggested was an intentional move to block any cross-border communication for the first time in more than a year. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- South Korea, the United States and Japan will hold a trilateral senior-level defense meeting in the U.S. later this week, an informed source said Monday, amid joint efforts to sharpen deterrence against North Korean threats. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has noticeably advanced its tactical nuclear weapons program to target not only the rest of the Korean Peninsula but also U.S. bases in the region, according to experts in Seoul. (Chung Yeong-Gyo, Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- The presidential office said Monday it would request "appropriate measures" from the US if necessary after the two countries finish assessing allegations that the US intelligence agency had wiretapped the South Korean government. (Shin Ji-hye, Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Joseph Choi, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517122845/https://mailchi.mp/10b12c6738cf/hrnk-news-itemsus-urges-countries-to-return-north-koreans-illegally-working-abroad>

Tuesday, April 11, 2023

Seoul Prioritizes Pyongyang's Human Rights Abuses Amid Growing Nuclear Tensions; Unification minister issues 'strong warning' to N.K.

Top News:

[Seoul Prioritizes Pyongyang's Human Rights Abuses Amid Growing Nuclear Tensions](#) (VOA, 04/05/2023)

[Us urges countries to return north koreans illegally working abroad](#) (AJOT, 04/06/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un reviews 'attack plans' on South Korea at top military meeting](#) (NK News, 04/11/2023)

[Kim Jong-un vows 'offensive' nuclear expansion to counter US and South Korea](#) (The Telegraph, 04/11/2023)

[N. Korea unresponsive to regular contact via inter-Korean liaison, military hotlines for 5th day](#) (Yonhap, 04/11/2023)

[N. Korean leader calls for expanding war deterrence in more 'offensive' way: KCNA](#) (Yonhap, 04/11/2023)

[North Korean leader vows 'offensive' nuclear expansion](#) (AP News, 04/11/2023)

[To curb theft and skip days at factories, North Korea is installing security cameras](#) (Radio Free Asia, 04/11/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea voices 'strong' regret over N. Korea's refusal to answer daily calls](#) (Yonhap, 04/11/2023)

[Seoul accuses critics of using 'forged' US reports as anti-alliance 'propaganda'](#) (NK News, 04/11/2023)

[Seoul condemns Pyongyang for refusing to answer hotline calls, using its property](#) (The Korea Times, 04/11/2023)

[Seoul-Tokyo tensions heat up again over Dokdo report](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/11/2023)

[South begins exercises, North won't pick up phone](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/11/2023)

[Unification Minister blames North for 'irresponsible' silence](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/11/2023)

[Unification minister issues 'strong warning' to N.Korea](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/11/2023)

International:

[Details in US intel leak 'altered': Yoon's office](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 04/11/2023)

[Russian governor asks Putin to invest in North Korea border infrastructure](#) (*NK News*, 04/11/2023)

Top News:

- South Korea has issued an unprecedented report on North Korea's treatment of its own citizens, signaling Seoul no longer believes that silence on the rights abuses will ease the way for progress on negotiating an end to Pyongyang's burgeoning nuclear and missile programs. The Ministry of Unification (MOU), which deals with inter-Korean affairs, issued the report detailing Pyongyang's human rights abuses based on testimony from more than 500 North Koreans who defected to South Korea between 2017 and 2022. According to Roberta Cohen, former deputy assistant secretary of state for human rights under the Carter administration, "Both actions mark a refreshing departure from the policies of the Moon administration and herald South Korea's return to the promotion of human rights internationally and to supporting accountability for those responsible for crimes against humanity in the North." Cohen, who is now co-chair emeritus of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, continued that the human rights report by the Yoon administration "is also an effort to reach out to the North Korean people and express solidarity with them." She added, "Word may well get into North Korea" that Seoul published the report and "bring hope to some in North Korea that they are not forgotten, and that change may well come in future. North Korean officials might also begin to question their own association with the regime which can lead to some improvement." (Kim Hyungjin, Christy Lee, [VOA](#))
- The US, Japan and South Korea urged countries to repatriate North Korean workers illegally sent abroad to earn cash for Kim Jong Un's regime, as Pyongyang appears to be easing Covid-based border restrictions that left them in limbo. The nuclear envoys of the three countries issued a statement after a meeting in Seoul on Friday saying the workers were sent abroad in violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions, and nations that host the laborers could be aiding in illegal activity. When the pandemic hit, workers in places such as neighboring Russia and China were stranded, finding themselves at the mercy of brokers and employers looking to pay them as little as possible, the report from the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea said. "The economic difficulties created by the Chinese authorities' zero-Covid policy appear to have worsened the situation," it said. (Lee Jeong-ho, [AJOT](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un reviewed "frontline attack operation plans" while pointing to areas of South Korea on a map at a high-level military meeting Monday, according to state media. The *Rodong Sinmun* reported that top military officials at a Central Military Commission (CMC) meeting the previous day also discussed "expanding more practically and offensively our war deterrent," appearing to refer to nuclear weapons. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- The reclusive regime has been angered by ongoing joint military drills between the United States and South Korea. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- Earlier in the day, Unification Minister Kwon Young-se issued a rare statement expressing "strong regret" over the North's "unilateral and irresponsible" move. The ministry said it is

"putting weight" on the possibility of Pyongyang's "unilateral" suspension of the liaison communication channel. ([Yonhap](#))

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has called for expanding his country's war deterrence in a more "practical and offensive" manner, state media said Tuesday, in response to joint military drills by South Korea and the United States. Kim made the remarks while presiding over an enlarged meeting of the Central Military Commission of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) on Monday, according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed to enhance his nuclear arsenal in more "practical and offensive" ways as he met with senior military officials to discuss the country's war preparations in the face of his rivals' "frantic" military exercises, state media said Tuesday. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- As North Korea's economy worsens, factory workers are stealing more parts, tools and other items to sell elsewhere and bring in a bit more income. Others are bribing their bosses to skip work so they can make more money doing other side jobs. (Hyemin Son, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In South Korea:

- The government expresses strong regret over the North's unilateral and irresponsible attitude. We strongly warn that this will only lead the North to isolate itself and face more difficult situations," Kwon said in a statement. The North's unresponsiveness raised speculation that the secretive regime may have intentionally cut off the liaison channel to protest joint military drills between South Korea and the United States or the release by the South of a report on the North's human rights violations. (Kim Soo-yeon, Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Leaked U.S. documents that appeared to show Washington wiretapped the South Korean government were "forged," Seoul's presidential office said Tuesday, criticizing the opposition party for using the leak as anti-U.S. "propaganda" despite growing North Korean threats. The Yoon administration made the claim in a statement outlining its "official" position on the leaked U.S. intelligence documents first reported by *The New York Times* earlier this week. According to the reports, the leaks cite signal intelligence when detailing internal debates in the ROK government about providing arms to Ukraine. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Unification Minister Kwon Young-se's remarks come as the North remains unresponsive to inter-Korean communication channels for the fifth straight day without giving any reasons. "The government expresses strong regret over its unilateral and irresponsible attitude. We sternly warn that North Korea is on the path to more serious trouble as it isolates itself [with such behavior]," Kwon said at the government complex in Seoul. "Moreover, North Korea has violated the property rights of our companies by using their equipment and facilities at the Kaesong Industrial Complex without their permission despite our government's requests and warnings." (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea on Tuesday strongly denounced Japan's latest claims to the Dokdo islets, calling in Tokyo's deputy envoy in Seoul, as tensions reignite ahead of a potential summit to be held on the sidelines of a Group of Seven meeting in Tokyo in May. (Choi Si-Young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea's military began its annual Hwarang exercises Monday with local governments, police and firefighting authorities to maintain comprehensive defensive readiness against North Korea's escalating military threats, according to Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The first exercise kicked off in Daegu and surrounding North Gyeongsang and will run for five

days, the JCS said. Hwarang exercises will take place in other regions of the country each month until October. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- South Korean Unification Minister Kwon Young-se blamed North Korea for suspending inter-Korean communication in a statement on Tuesday, where he said the regime's sudden silence would only deepen its isolation. In his statement, Kwon expressed "regret" for the North's "unilateral and irresponsible" suspension of communication with the South via the inter-Korean liaison line and the military hotline since Friday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The South Korean unification minister on Tuesday strongly warned that North Korea's unilateral severance of cross-border hotlines will eventually put itself in a predicament, urging North Korean leader Kim Jong-un to stop heightening tensions and make a "wise decision." (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- President Yoon Suk Yeol's first deputy national security adviser has played down the significance of the recent leak of highly classified US intelligence documents involving South Korea, shortly before boarding a plane to the US to discuss a Seoul-Washington summit scheduled for late April. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Primorsky Krai leader touts proximity to DPRK but bemoans road and rail facilities, as countries seek to boost ties. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517123015/https://mailchi.mp/c4f5b6c298d6/hrnk-news-itemsseoul-prioritizes-pyongyangs-human-rights-abuses-amid-growing-nuclear-tensionsunification-minister-issues-strong-warning-to-nk>

Wednesday, April 12, 2023

N.Korea vows to initiate vibrant space projects; N.Korea unresponsive to regular contact via inter-Korean liaison line for 6th day

In North Korea:

[Breaking down North Korea's advancing cyber prowess](#) (Axios, 04/12/2023)

[N. Korea vows to initiate vibrant space projects amid worries over potential spy satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 04/12/2023)

[N. Korea adopts law on state control of science and technology talents](#) (Yonhap, 04/12/2023)

[North Korea's Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Site: No Signs of an Imminent Test](#) (38 North, 04/12/2023)

In South Korea:

[FM says purported Pentagon documents likely fabricated](#) (Yonhap, 04/12/2023)

[S. Korea to hold tabletop exercise against space hazards](#) (Yonhap, 04/12/2023)

[Yoon gives credentials to new ambassador to U.S.](#) (Yonhap, 04/12/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea unresponsive to regular contact via inter-Korean liaison line for 6th day](#) (Yonhap, 04/12/2023)

International:

[Japan, US, S. Korea defense officials to discuss N. Korea at meeting on Friday](#) (NHK World Japan, 04/11/2023)

[No evidence shows ill intentions from U.S. in alleged tapping of presidential office: security advisor](#) (Yonhap, 04/12/2023)

[North Korea parade "probably oversells" ICBM threat-leaked document](#) (Reuters, 04/11/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. to discuss "qualitative enhancement" of deterrence against N.K. threats](#) (Yonhap, 04/12/2023)

[South Korea to lend 500,000 rounds of artillery shells to US](#) (Reuters, 04/12/2023)

[U.S. expressed intent to cooperate with S.Korea over issue of leaked Pentagon documents: Seoul FM](#) (Yonhap, 04/12/2023)

In North Korea:

- Recent attacks linked to North Korean state-backed hackers are spotlighting how technically adept and creative the regime's cyber activity has become. Experts say public perception of North Korea's cyber threat risks painting the regime as an underfunded country solely focused on cybercrime to fund its government, but those perceptions aren't quite right. (Sam Sabin, [Axios](#))
- North Korea vowed Wednesday to pursue more space development projects on the occasion of the International Day of Human Space Flight, according to state media, amid concerns over its potential launch of a military spy satellite this month. (Yonhap)
- North Korea has adopted a new law aimed at strengthening state control of talents in the science and technology field, state media said Wednesday, amid the country's efforts to urge self-reliance during economic hardships. The decision was made at a plenary meeting of the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) held Tuesday, according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). The law on the sci-tech talents management is designed to "realize the unified state control and administration of the talents on a higher level so that they can play a leading and pivotal role in developing the country's economy and improving the people's living standard," the KCNA said in an English-language dispatch. (Yonhap)
- Commercial satellite imagery of North Korea's Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Site indicates that work continues throughout the site, with evidence of personnel in both the north and south areas and minor activity around Tunnels 3 and 4. While the support infrastructure and instrumentation around Tunnel No. 3 suggest that it is capable of fielding a test if and when the decision is made, there are no major activities—such as increased vehicle traffic and personnel near the tunnel—that would indicate a test may be imminent. (Jack Liu, Olli Heinonen, and Peter Makowsky, [38 North](#))

In South Korea:

- Foreign Minister Park Jin said Wednesday much of the information contained in purported Pentagon documents leaked online appears to have been fabricated. Park made the remark to reporters after delivering a lecture to lawmakers of the ruling People Power Party, saying the government is closely communicating with the United States on this matter. The authenticity of the documents has gained wide attention after The New York Times and The Washington Post reported them revealing that U.S. intelligence services allegedly eavesdropped on Seoul's internal debates about providing weapons to the U.S. for use in Ukraine. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea will stage a joint tabletop exercise (TTX) between its military and government officials Wednesday against potential dangers from space, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said. The TTX will be joined by officials from the military, the defense and science ministries, and other state-run space research centers, such as the Korea Aerospace Research Institute, according to the JCS. ([Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol on Wednesday gave a letter of credence to new South Korean Ambassador to the United States Cho Hyun-dong. The letter was presented during a ceremony at the presidential office. Cho, a career diplomat and former first vice foreign minister, will replace Cho Tae-yong, who was recently appointed national security adviser. ([Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea remained unresponsive to daily routine calls with South Korea through an inter-Korean liaison communication channel for the sixth straight day Wednesday, Seoul's unification ministry said. The North has not answered the daily calls from the South via the liaison line since last Friday, including both opening and closing calls as of late Wednesday afternoon, according to the ministry. Seoul's routine calls via the militaries' East and West seas communication lines also went unanswered. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- Senior defense officials from Japan, the United States and South Korea will meet on Friday to discuss responses to North Korea's nuclear and missile development. The Japanese Defense Ministry said on Tuesday that the working-level talks will be held in Washington DC. The Japanese ministry's Director-General for Defense Policy Masuda Kazuo, US Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs Ely Ratner and South Korea's Deputy Minister for National Defense Policy Heo Tae-keun are scheduled to attend the meeting. ([NHK World Japan](#))
- A South Korea's national security adviser insisted on Tuesday insisted that the U.S. may not have had any ill intentions when it possibly eavesdropped on conversations at Seoul's presidential office. Kim Tae-hyo, principal deputy national security adviser, also said the allies believe a "large portion" of the classified documents believed to have leaked from the U.S. Department of Defense may be fake. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- U.S. intelligence analysts believe a recent military parade in North Korea "probably oversells" the threat its inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) pose to the United States, according to a leaked document purportedly from the U.S. government. (Idrees Ali, David Brunnstrom, [Reuters](#))
- South Korea and the United States plan to discuss ways to qualitatively enhance Washington's extended deterrence against growing nuclear and missile threats from North

Korea on the occasion of a bilateral summit later this month, Seoul's foreign ministry said Wednesday. In a report submitted to the National Assembly's foreign affairs committee, the ministry said Seoul and Washington will discuss ways to "qualitatively enhance the extended deterrence capabilities against North Korea's advancing nuclear and missile threats" during President Yoon Suk Yeol's state visit to the U.S. this month. ([Yonhap](#))

- South Korea has reached an agreement to lend the United States 500,000 rounds of 155mm artillery shells that could give Washington greater flexibility to supply Ukraine with ammunition. The report came after leaked highly classified U.S. military documents highlighted South Korea's difficulties dealing with pressure from Western allies to help with the supply of military aid to Ukraine. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- South Korea's top diplomat said Wednesday that Washington has expressed its intent to cooperate with Seoul in dealing with the issue of leaked Pentagon documents that purport the U.S. had eavesdropped on Seoul's top security officials. Foreign Minister Park Jin said during a session of the National Assembly's foreign affairs committee that the United States takes the issue "seriously" and it has "expressed its willingness to fully cooperate with our government through close communication." ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Yoshino Yamauchi, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517123209/https://mailchi.mp/e6d15f17724a/hrnk-news-items-nkorea-vows-to-initiate-vibrant-space-projects-nkorea-unresponsive-to-regular-contact-via-inter-korean-liaison-line-for-6th-day>

Thursday, April 13, 2023

President Yun's Speech to the US Congress Emphasizes 'Human Rights First North Korea Policy'

Top News:

["President Yun's Speech to the US Congress Emphasizes 'Human Rights First North Korea Policy' and 'Inflow of Information to North Korea'"](#) (VOA, 04/08/2023)

**This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text below*

In North Korea:

[N. Korea fires missile that may have been new type of weapon](#) (Associated Press, 04/12/2023)

[North Korean missile launch triggers evacuation order in Japan](#) (NK News, 04/13/2023)

[N. Korea unresponsive via inter-Korean liaison line for 7th day](#) (Yonhap, 04/13/2023)

[North Korea sentences 20 young athletes for 'speaking like South Koreans](#) (Radio Free Asia, 04/13/2023)

In South Korea:

[Most Korean plaintiffs in Japan forced-labour cases accept Seoul's compensation plan](#) (Reuters, 04/13/2023)

[S. Korea to conduct radiation tests on 89 N. Korean defectors](#) (Yonhap, 04/13/2023)

International:

[National Security Council 'strongly' denounces N.K. missile launch](#) (Yonhap, 04/13/2023)

[Russian Far East region says it sent nearly 3K tons of corn to North Korea](#) (NK News, 04/13/2023)

[US and ROK convene high-level defense dialogue on North Korean nuclear threats](#) (NK News, 04/13/2023)

[U.S. urges N. Korea to halt missile provocation, come to negotiating table](#) (Yonhap, 04/13/2023)

Top News:

- Human rights experts and North Korean defectors said Yoon Seok-yeol, South Korean president should emphasize the importance of human right-centered North Korea policies and information inflow about North Korea in upcoming speech at the US Congress at the end of April. There has been a suggestion that it is necessary to make it clear that North Korean human rights are not a negotiating topic. (Kim Young-Kwon, [VOA](#))
**This article has been translated from Korean. Please refer to the bottom of the release to view the full translation.*

In North Korea:

- North Korea on Thursday conducted its first intercontinental ballistic missile launch in a month, possibly testing a new more mobile, harder-to-detect missile for the first time, its neighbors said, as it extends its provocative run of weapons tests. (Hyung Jin-Kim, Kim Tong-Hyung, Mari Yamaguchi, [AP](#))
- North Korea launched one intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) from the Pyongyang area Thursday morning, prompting Japanese authorities to issue evacuation warnings to residents of the northern island of Hokkaido. (Collin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea did not respond to daily routine calls with South Korea via an inter-Korean liaison communication channel for the seventh straight day Thursday, Seoul's unification ministry said. ([Yonhap](#))
- About 20 aspiring North Korean winter athletes were abruptly sentenced to three to five years of hard labor in prison camps after they were found to have used South Korean vocabulary and slang while playing a word game, sources in the country say. (Jieun Kim, [RFA](#))

In South Korea:

- The bereaved families of 10 South Koreans who won court cases over being forced to work under Japanese colonial rule have accepted compensation proposed by Seoul as it seeks to mend ties with Tokyo, South Korea's foreign ministry said on Thursday. (Soo Hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))
- South Korea plans to conduct radiation exposure tests on 89 North Korean defectors who hailed from areas near the North's Punggye-ri nuclear testing site, Seoul's unification ministry said Thursday. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- The presidential National Security Council (NSC) "strongly" denounced North Korea's launch of an intermediate- or longer-range ballistic missile Thursday. The NSC held a meeting led by National Security Adviser Cho Tae-yong to discuss what South Korea's military described

as an intermediate- or longer-range ballistic missile launch earlier in the day. President Yoon Suk Yeol was immediately briefed on the launch, his office said. ([Yonhap](#))

- Russia has sent thousands of tons of corn to North Korea this year from the far east region of Amur, according to the Russian government. In a press release, the Amur veterinary customs agency said it took advantage of high yields this year to export 2,800 tons of corn to the DPRK out of a total of 130,000 tons sent to six Asian countries. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- U.S. and South Korean defense officials convened for a two-day meeting this week to discuss combined readiness against North Korean nuclear and missile threats and other alliance issues, according to Seoul and Washington. The 22nd Korea-U.S. Integrated Defense Dialogue (KIDD) concluded the same day that North Korea fired an intercontinental ballistic missile that prompted evacuation alerts in Hokkaido, Japan. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The United States strongly condemns North Korea's latest ballistic missile launch and calls on the country to stop further escalating tension on the Korean Peninsula, a National Security Council (NSC) spokesperson said Wednesday, hours after Pyongyang fired a ballistic missile into the East Sea. ([Yonhap](#))

"Human rights experts and North Korean defectors urge President Yoon to emphasize 'human rights-first' policy and 'information inflow to North Korea' in his speech to the US Congress."

North Korean citizens in Pyongyang watched a performance on February 16 to celebrate the 81st birthday of Kim Jong-il, the former leader of North Korea.

Human rights experts and North Korean defectors said Yoon Seok-yeol, South Korean president should emphasize the importance of human right-centered North Korea policies and information inflow about North Korea in upcoming speech at the US Congress at the end of April.

There has been a suggestion that it is necessary to make it clear that North Korean human rights are not a negotiating topic.

This is Kim Yeong-kwon reporting.

US human right experts said that they hope Yoon Seok-yeol, South Korean president, about to make a speech at US Congress Joint Convention on April 27th, to surely emphasize North Korean human right problems.

Robert King, the former North Korean Human Right Ambassador-at-large at US department of state, said to VOA on April 7th that the president Yoon should suggest North Korean human rights problem in the speech explaining that US Congress has traditionally supported the improvement of North Korean human rights.

[Transcript: The former ambassador-at-large King] “Congress is supportive of efforts to deal with North Korea's human rights problem. The US adopted the North Korean Human Rights Act. They've renewed it periodically. I think it's one of many issues on which the United States and South Korea are very much in agreement. And I think the North Korea human rights issue should be raised in this speech,”

The former ambassador-at-large King said, “Congress is supportive of efforts to deal with North Korea's human rights problem” and “The US adopted the North Korean Human Rights Act and they've renewed it periodically.”

Furthermore, he emphasized that North Korea's human rights problem is “one of the many agendas that US and South Korea strongly agree” and “Upcoming speech should suggest North Korea's human rights problem.”

The former ambassador-at-large King wished that President Yoon to emphasize the continuous cooperation between two countries on the problem and added “I hope President Yoon to say that he looks forward to the passage of the bill”.

The executive director of the private organization in Washington DC, the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, Greg Scarlatoiu, said that he hopes President Yoon will emphasize the human rights first policy through his congressional speech.

[Transcript: Executive Director Scarlatoiu] “It is time for a paradigm shift. Let's lead with human rights. Let us implement human rights upfront policy on North Korea, involving serious information campaigns, relying on content customized for all socio-economic strata in North Korea.”

Executive Director Scarlatoiu hopes President Yoon emphasizes the importance of a human rights-based policy through his speech at the upcoming Congress. Scarlatoiu particularly wants President Yoon to declare that it is a “time for a paradigm shift” and to “lead with human rights.” He especially emphasized the need for a human rights-based policy towards North Korea, including a serious information campaign relying on customized content for all socio-economic strata.

Executive Director Scarlatoiu has pointed out that there was not any positive result even though they focused North Korea policy and negotiation on the nuclear and missiles agenda for the past 30 years regarding human rights as an obstacle.

Additionally, he said that over the President Yoon's state visit to the US, South Korea and US should

push ahead to support the use of advanced technology to enable North Korean citizens to access the internet via mobile phones.

North Korean defectors from elite backgrounds also emphasized the importance of President Yoon highlighting not only the severity of North Korea's human rights issues to the international community, but also awakening the consciousness of North Korean authorities

Lee Hyun-seung, a researcher at the Global Peace Foundation, active in Washington as a child of a North Korean elite

[Transcript: Researcher Lee Hyun-seung] "It is important to inform the international community, but it is actually more important to inform internally (about external information). Especially, many of people who lead the society, in other words assailants who commit human rights' abuses do not think that they are committing human rights' abuses. Therefore, it is necessary to inform them clearly that what they are doing is a clear violation of human rights and a crime, so that even they hesitate."

Researcher Lee urged President Yoon to emphasize two things regarding North Korean human rights in his speech to the US Congress."

[Transcript: Researcher Lee Hyun-seung] "Firstly, I would like President Yoon to clearly mention that North Korean human rights cannot be used as a bargaining chip. Please emphasize that this is an inalienable right of North Korean residents. Secondly, I hope President Yoon will clearly state that the responsibility for North Korean human rights lies with North Korean dictators."

Serious human rights violations in North Korea and leader Kim Jong-un's dictatorial regime cannot be separated, so it is necessary to clearly establish the responsibility of the supreme leader for human rights crimes.

Ryu Hyun-woo, former deputy ambassador to Kuwait's North Korean embassy who sought asylum in South Korea in 2019, expressed his hope that President Yoon would declare his commitment to consistency on North Korean human rights regardless of the unique nature of inter-Korean relations or negotiating conditions."

[Transcript: Former Deputy Ambassador Ryu Hyun-woo] "Every time there is a change in government, there is a phenomenon of North Korean human rights losing direction and inconsistency. So, I hope there will be consistency on this issue. We must consistently uphold the

values of freedom, democracy, and human rights held by the free world without wavering."

Former Deputy Ambassador Ryu also expressed his hope that President Yoon would emphasize in his speech that North Korean citizens are the agents of change and that the efforts of the international community to awaken them are of paramount importance."

[Transcript: Former Deputy Ambassador Ryu Hyun-woo] "First of all, aren't people the agents of change, including all activities such as coups and revolutions? So I see changing the consciousness of those people as the first step. Don't we also need to understand that we are the ones who need to recognize human rights as human rights? That's what I mean by making people aware."

Suzanne Scholte, the chairman of the North Korea Freedom Coalition (NKFC) which is supported by over 70 civil society organizations and activists around the world, expressed great appreciation for President Yoon's recent emphasis on the human rights of North Korean citizens. She expects that President Yoon will continue to emphasize this issue in his speech to the US Congress, and emphasized that the most important thing is to strengthen campaigns to save the lives of North Korean defectors in China and provide objective information to the people of North Korea.

She added that "We hope that North Korean citizens will have the same rights as citizens of South Korea and the United States."

[Transcript: Chairman Scholte] "We want the people of North Korea to have the same rights as the people of South Korea, the United States. They are not their enemy. The enemy of the North Korean people is Kim Jong-un."

She said, "The people of South Korea and the United States are not enemies of North Korean citizens, and their enemy is Kim Jong-un."

This is Kim Young-kwon with VOA.

Translated by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Jack Boone, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517123226/https://mailchi.mp/e9020fb72a28/hrnk-news-items/president-yoons-speech-to-the-us-congress-emphasizes-human-rights-first-north-korea-policy>

Friday, April 14, 2023

North Korea says it tested "most powerful" missile to date; A Beacon of Hope for the North Korean People

Top News:

[A Beacon of Hope for the North Korean People](#) (RFA Korean Service, 04/13/2023)

In North Korea:

[New ICBM could make it easier for North Korea to launch nuclear strike, analysts say](#) (CNN, 04/14/2023)

[North Korea claims it launched new Hwasong-18 solid-fuel ICBM](#) (UPI, 04/14/2023)

[North Korea missile launch was new kind of ICBM, regime says, as first images emerge](#) (The Guardian, 04/14/2023)

[N. Korea says it conducted first test launch of new solid-fuel ICBM](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/14/2023)

[North Korea says it tested 'Hwasong-18' solid-fuel ICBM for first time](#) (NK News, 04/14/2023)

[North Korea says it tested "most powerful" missile to date](#) (BBC, 04/14/2023)

[N. Korea says it tested new solid-fuel ICBM to improve nuclear counterattack posture](#) (Yonhap, 04/14/2023)

[North Korea says it tested new solid-fuel ICBM, warns of 'extreme' horror](#) (Reuters, 04/14/2023)

[N. Korea says it tested new solid-fuel long-range missile](#) (AP News, 04/14/2023)

[North says it test-fired solid-fuel ICBM, South confirms it](#) (Korea Joongang Daily, 04/14/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[South ready to improve relations with North, but won't tolerate provocations: Unification Ministry](#) (Korea Joongang Daily, 04/14/2023)

International:

[Chief nuclear envoy to visit Sweden, Germany](#) (Yonhap, 04/14/2023)

[US, Japan hold air drills after North Korean missile prompts evacuation orders](#) (NK News, 04/14/2023)

Top News:

- In this video interview with Radio Free Asia, Ambassador Lee Jung-Hoon, the inaugural ROK Ambassador-at-Large for North Korean Human Rights and a member of HRNK's Board of Directors, shares his thoughts on the human rights situation in North Korea and the international community's role in addressing the issue. Specifically, he discusses the role of the ROK Ministry of Unification's N. Korean Human Rights Promotion Committee, for which he was recently appointed as the Chair. ([RFA Korean Service](#))

*Please note that this interview is in Korean. To view machine-generated English subtitles, please click on Settings > Subtitles/CC > Auto-translate > English.

In North Korea:

- North Korea says the new intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) it tested Thursday was solid-fueled, a development that analysts say could allow it to launch long-range nuclear strikes more quickly and easily as it ramps up its missile program. (Brad Lendon and Gawon Bae, [CNN](#))
- North Korea successfully test-fired the Hwasong-18, a new solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile that will "strike extreme uneasiness and horror" into the regime's enemies, state media reported Friday. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- North Korea claims it has successfully tested a solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) for the first time – a breakthrough that the country's leader, Kim Jong-un, warned would make its enemies "suffer in endless fear". (Justin McCurry, [The Guardian](#))
- North Korea claimed Friday that the country had successfully test-fired a new-type solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile for the first time on Thursday., under the guidance of the country's leader Kim Jong-un. It labeled the ICBM as its "powerful, strategic attack means." (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea test-launched a "Hwasong-18" solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) for the first time on Thursday, according to state media. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea says it tested a new solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile - its "most powerful" missile to date. (Kelly Ng and John Mackenzie, [BBC](#))
- North Korea on Friday said the missile used in its recent launch was its new solid-fuel "Hwasong-18" intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), with leader Kim Jong-un claiming that the launch significantly improved its nuclear counterattack posture. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea announced on Friday it had tested a new solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), a development set to "radically promote" its forces, which experts said would facilitate missile launches with little warning. (Soo-hyang Choi and Ju-min Park, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea said Friday it flight-tested a solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile for the first time, a possible breakthrough in its efforts to acquire a more powerful, harder-to-detect weapon targeting the continental United States. (Kim Tong-hyung and Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- North Korea on Friday said it successfully tested a solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) for the first time, marking significant progress in its missile program. (Lee Sung-eun, [Korea Joongang Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea stands ready to improve relations with North Korea on the basis of reciprocity, but will not tolerate armed provocations by the regime "in any shape or form," according to a new policy document released by the Unification Ministry on Friday. (Michael Lee, [Korea Joongang Daily](#))

International:

- South Korea's chief nuclear negotiator will visit Sweden and Germany next week to discuss issues related to the Korean Peninsula and North Korea's nuclear weapons program, the foreign ministry said Friday. ([Yonhap](#))

- The U.S. and Japanese air forces conducted a joint exercise over the Sea of Japan (East Sea) on Thursday to strengthen deterrence against North Korean missile threats, according to Tokyo, after the latest DPRK missile test triggered evacuation orders in Japan. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517123551/https://mailchi.mp/67dfe6f3109/hrnk-news-itemsnorth-korea-says-it-tested-most-powerful-missile-to-date-a-beacon-of-hope-for-the-north-korean-people>

Saturday, April 15, 2023

Advancing North Korean Human Rights: The Role of Civil Society, Leaked US docs raise questions about N. Korea's missile capabilities

Top News:

[Advancing North Korean Human Rights: The Role of Civil Society](#) (HRNK, 04/13/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea set to mark late founder's birthday](#) (Yonhap, 04/15/2022)

In South Korea:

[Ministry officially uses term 'N. Korea's denuclearization' in white paper on unification](#) (Yonhap, 04/15/2022)

International:

[G7 diplomats to grapple with Ukraine, China, N. Korea crises](#) (AP News, 04/15/2023)

[Leaked US documents raise questions about North Korea's missile capabilities](#) (NK News, 04/14/2023)

[Negotiation is only way N. Korean nuclear issue can be resolved: U.S. official](#) (Yonhap, 04/15/2023)

Top News:

- The urgency to address human rights in North Korea has never been greater as the international community marks the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the UN Commission of Inquiry (COI) on Human Rights in North Korea. On April 20, the Center for East Asia Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution, the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, and the North Korea Freedom Coalition will host Ambassador Shin-wha Lee for an interactive discussion on these issues. Registration is required. You may RSVP for this event by clicking [on this link](#). (HRNK)

In North Korea:

- North Korea appears set to hold celebrations for the 111th birth anniversary of its late founder Kim Il-sung on Saturday with dance performances in its capital and fireworks. ([Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's unification ministry officially used the term "North Korea's denuclearization" in the first white paper on inter-Korean affairs issued by the conservative Yoon Suk Yeol administration Friday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- This year's G7 talks are crucial in revitalizing diplomacy aimed at pressuring a hostile North Korea to return to disarmament negotiations, especially with a dysfunctional U.N. Security Council that's divided between permanent members, according to Park Won Gon, a professor at Seoul's Ewha Womans University. (Foster Klug, [AP News](#))
- North Korea continues to push ahead in developing long-range missiles capable of delivering nuclear warheads to the continental U.S., conducting a landmark test of a solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) on Thursday. (James Fretwell, [NK News](#))
- Negotiation is the only way the nuclear standoff between the United States and North Korea can be resolved, a senior U.S. official said Friday, urging Pyongyang to come to the dialogue table. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Venesia Delancy, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517123429/https://mailchi.mp/e2358e55b8cd/hrnk-news-itemsnorth-korea-says-it-tested-most-powerful-missile-to-datea-beacon-of-hope-for-the-north-korean-people-11191418>

Sunday, April 16, 2023

S. Korea fires warning shots over North border

In North Korea:

[N. Korean leader apparently skipped to visit mausoleum on his late grandfather's birthday](#) (Yonhap, 04/16/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea fires warning shots after N. Korea patrol boat crosses maritime border](#) (Yonhap, 04/16/2023)

[S. Korea fires warning shots over North border](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 04/16/2023)

[South Korea fires warning shots at North Korea vessel west of peninsula: JCS](#) (NK News, 04/16/2023)

International:

[Chinese boat collides with Coast Guard after pursuit by North Korean patrol vessel](#) (*Korea JoongAng Daily*, 04/16/2023)

[S. Korean and U.S. to kick off large-scale combined air drills this week](#) (*Yonhap*, 04/16/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un does not appear to have visited a mausoleum for his late grandfather on the occasion of the national founder's 111th birthday. ([Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- A South Korean Navy vessel fired warning shots to drive out a North Korean patrol boat that crossed the western de facto maritime border last week, the South's military said Sunday. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea fired warning shots at a North Korean patrol boat that crossed the maritime border in the West Sea on Saturday, amid escalating tension prompted by the North's latest missile test Thursday. (Choi Si-Young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea fired warning shots at a North Korean patrol boat late Saturday morning, according to a statement by South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) released the following day. (Ifang Bremer, Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- The incursion of a North Korean sea patrol that crossed the inter-Korean maritime border in the Yellow Sea on Saturday in pursuit of a Chinese fishing vessel led to a minor collision between a South Korean Coast Guard patrol and the Chinese boat, Seoul military officials said Sunday. (Micheal Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea and the United States will kick off a large-scale regular joint air exercise later this week, the South's Air Force said Sunday, in the latest drill meant to step up deterrence against North Korea's evolving military threats. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ava Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517123842/https://mailchi.mp/2d85e65cea7b/hrnk-news-itemss-korea-fires-warning-shots-over-north-border>

Monday, April 17, 2023

**S Korea, Japan hold first security talks of diplomats, defense officials in 5 years;
A closer look at NK's post-COVID food shortages**

In North Korea:

[A closer look at North Korea's post-COVID food shortages](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/17/2023)

[Kim Jong Un opens first stage of 10,000-home construction project in Pyongyang](#) (NK News, 04/17/2023)

[N. Korean leader celebrates completion of building more new homes in Pyongyang](#) (Yonhap, 04/17/2023)

[N. Korean leader watches sports games on occasion of his late grandfather's birthday](#) (Yonhap, 04/17/2023)

[N. Korea says strategic weapon development means of 'self-defense,' accuses UNSC of domestic interference](#) (Yonhap, 04/17/2023)

International:

[Russia 'sincerely hopes' North Korea will ease COVID controls: Senior official](#) (NK News, 04/17/2023)

[S. Korea, Japan hold first security talks of diplomats, defense officials in 5 years](#) (Yonhap, 04/17/2023)

[S. Korea, Japan hold senior-level security talks after 5-year hiatus](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/17/2023)

[S. Korean lawmakers to hold conference with British, Japanese counterparts on N.K. hacking attempts](#) (Yonhap, 04/17/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S., Japan hold missile defense drills in East Sea amid N. Korean threats](#) (Yonhap, 04/17/2023)

[South Korea, U.S., Japan kick off missile defense exercise in East Sea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/17/2023)

[US and allies hold trilateral missile defense drill after North Korean ICBM test](#) (NK News, 04/17/2023)

[US, ROK, Japan push to increase intel sharing to deal with North Korean threats](#) (NK News, 04/17/2023)

In North Korea:

- In North Korea, acute and chronic food shortages have been exacerbated following the triple whammy of economic sanctions, self-imposed border closures and years of extreme weather events. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un opened the first stage of a 10,000-home construction project in Pyongyang's Hwasong district on Sunday, according to state media, as the ruling party promotes a campaign to build 50,000 homes in the capital by 2025. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has attended a ceremony to mark the completion of building 10,000 homes in Pyongyang, state media said Monday, describing the project to supply more homes as "the most important" one. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has watched sports games, together with his daughter and younger sister, in celebration of his late grandfather Kim Il-sung's birthday, according to state media Monday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said Monday its strategic weapon development was aimed at strengthening its self-defense against threats from Washington while accusing moves by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) against Pyongyang as domestic interference. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- Russia's deputy foreign minister has expressed his "sincere hope" that North Korea will ease its COVID-19 border controls, stating that the restrictions are hindering bilateral trade and cooperation. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea and Japan held a joint meeting of senior diplomats and defense officials here on Monday, the first such talks since March 2018, Seoul's foreign ministry said, amid signs of a slow thaw in bilateral ties. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and Japan on Monday agreed to develop "future-oriented security cooperation" in the face of escalating North Korean threats and a changing security environment in Northeast Asia at the first senior-level security talks in five years. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Former and incumbent lawmakers of the ruling and opposition parties plan to hold a conference with Japanese and British lawmakers in London later this week to discuss how to deal with North Korea's cyber hacking attempts, a lawmaker said Monday. (Kim Jae-eun, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan held a trilateral missile defense exercise in the international waters of the East Sea on Monday, Seoul's Navy said, amid stepped-up efforts to sharpen deterrence against North Korean threats. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan kicked off a trilateral missile defense exercise in the East Sea on Monday to strengthen deterrence in the face of North Korea's military threats, South Korea's Navy said. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The U.S., South Korea and Japan conducted a joint missile defense drill off the east coast of the peninsula on Monday, according to Seoul's defense ministry, as the three countries seek to counter North Korean threats following Pyongyang's test of a new solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Senior defense officials from the U.S., ROK and Japan agreed to strengthen information sharing and security cooperation to deter North Korea's nuclear and missile threats and promote regional peace, according to a joint statement issued following their latest talks. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517123720/https://mailchi.mp/82d15a48996a/hrnk-news-itemss-korea-japan-hold-first-security-talks-of-diplomats-defense-officials-in-5-years-a-closer-look-at-nks-post-covid-food-shortages>

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

**American victim of Kim Jong Un, Otto Warmbier, honored by N. Korean defectors;
North Korea says it tested new solid-fuel ICBM**

Top News:

[American victim of Kim Jong Un, Otto Warmbier, honored by N. Korean defectors](#) (Pop Smoke Media, 04/04/2023)

[North Korea says it tested new solid-fuel ICBM](#) (CNA, 04/14/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korea warns of 'insurmountable threats' after US calls for UNSC meeting](#) (NK News, 04/18/2023)

[North Korea says it tested 'Hwasong-18' solid-fuel ICBM for first time](#) (NK News, 04/18/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea again warns N. Korea over its unauthorized use of Kaesong complex](#) (Yonhap, 04/18/2023)

[S. Korea urges 'extraordinary responsibility' from UNSC over N. Korea's nuclear provocations](#) (Yonhap, 04/18/2023)

[S. Korea's nuclear envoy discusses N.K. denuclearization with senior Swedish diplomat](#) (Yonhap, 04/18/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Images show North running inter-Korean factories](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/18/2023)

[NK's Lazarus Group hacked 61 S. Korean media, organizations: police](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/18/2023)

International:

[In letter to N. Korea's Kim, China's Xi voices willingness for strong bilateral ties](#) (Yonhap, 04/18/2023)

[North Korea will never be accepted as a nuclear-weapon state, G7 says](#) (NK News, 04/18/2023)

[U.S. military discloses photos of 'attack' drills with S. Korea amid N.K. threats](#) (Yonhap, 04/18/2023)

[G-7 diplomats reject Chinese, N. Korean, Russian aggression](#) (AP News, 04/18/2023)

Top News:

- In a quiet protest of the horrors of Kim Jong UN's regime, North Korean defectors fighting for freedom and honoring a well-known American victim of the barbaric regime, Otto Warmbier, placed a wreath of flowers at the North Korean Mission to the United Nations (UN) in New York City this week. The group of escapees remembered Otto as an international symbol of human rights, dignity, and freedom. Suzanne Scholte, the chair of the NKFC and president of the Defense Forum Foundation from Washington D.C., spoke

about the event. She said that there are hundreds of North Korean children, women and men detained in China who are trying to get to South Korea. They brought some escapees from North Korea, women who had suffered brutally in detention centers in China and political prison camps in North Korea, to Washington to make a plea for these families. North Korean women have a heartfelt connection to Cindy Warmbier, Otto's mother. They understand what Otto went through because they were tortured as he was. If those family members in detention in China get sent back to North Korea, they will suffer the same fate as Otto Warmbier. Scholte urged the international community to pressure Xi Jinping to allow these people safe passage to South Korea. ([Pop Smoke Media](#))

- North Korea said on Friday (Apr 14) it had successfully tested a solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), which state media hailed as a key breakthrough for the country's nuclear counterattack capabilities. South Korea's military had earlier said that a Thursday launch conducted by the North - which briefly triggered a seek shelter order in parts of [Japan](#) - was likely a new type of ballistic missile. Professor Gordon Flake, CEO of the Perth USAsia Centre at the University of Western Australia, said the range of the missile is "deeply concerning" for countries in the region. "There needs to be a serious discussion about how you can counter, if even possible, something at that trajectory and that speed," Prof Flake told CNA's Asia Now. He added that the North's nuclear programme has outpaced others, including France, China and India, and the latest launch indicates Pyongyang's determination to press on with its nuclear activities. "This is a programme that continues to develop at a far faster rate than most would like to believe ... and has real security ramifications," he said. "It's a deep concern not just to South Korea or Japan, but to the region as a whole." By bringing his young daughter to witness the launch, North Korean leader Kim also showed that the nation's nuclear advancement is a "generational endeavour", Prof Flake said. Pyongyang has spent decades refining its nuclear arsenal since its withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1993 under the leadership of Kim's grandfather Kim Il-sung. "North Korea is seeking to develop its own long-range missile, intercontinental blessed missile, and ultimately nuclear strike capability as part of its own national defence," said Prof Flake. ([CNA](#))

In North Korea:

- A senior North Korean military official warned the U.S. of "insurmountable threats" after it called for an open U.N. Security Council (UNSC) meeting on the DPRK's missile development, claiming Pyongyang's pursuit of "new-type strategic weapons" is purely for self-defense. (Chad O'Carroll and Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea test-launched a "Hwasong-18" solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) for the first time on Thursday, according to state media. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's unification ministry warned North Korea again Tuesday against its unauthorized operation of a now-shuttered joint industrial park in the North, saying it will take necessary measures even if it takes time. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's top envoy at the United Nations called Monday on permanent members of the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) to take "extraordinary responsibility" to curb North Korea's nuclear provocations. ([Yonhap](#))

- South Korea's chief nuclear negotiator has met with a senior Swedish diplomat in Stockholm to discuss cooperation on the denuclearization of North Korea, Seoul's foreign ministry said Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Infrared thermal cameras picked up signs that North Korea could have been unilaterally resuming factory operations at the suspended inter-Korean industrial park, a breach of an agreement that South Korea says will have consequences. (Choi Si-Young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea's state-sponsored hacking group conducted a series of cyberattacks targeting South Korean public and private organizations by leveraging websites of South Korean media outlets to distribute malware, the South Korean police said Tuesday. But South Korea has foiled the Lazarus Group's potential attempts to launch hacking attacks on a massive scale. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- Chinese President Xi Jinping has sent a letter to North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, expressing his willingness to strengthen strategic communication with North Korea, Pyongyang's state media reported Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- Leading industrial nations renewed calls for North Korea to abstain from nuclear testing and comply with nonproliferation treaties on Monday, emphasizing that the international community will not accept the DPRK as a nuclear state despite its "reckless" nuclear and missile advances. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The U.S. military has revealed it conducted "combined attack" drills with the South Korean military earlier this month, in the allies' latest Marine training to bolster deterrence against growing North Korean threats. ([Yonhap](#))
- Top diplomats from the Group of Seven wealthy democracies vowed a tough stance on China's increasing threats to Taiwan and on North Korea's unchecked tests of long-range missiles, while building momentum on ways to boost support for Ukraine and punish Russia for its invasion. (Matthew Lee and Foster Klug, [AP News](#))

Prepared by Cherise Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517124226/https://mailchi.mp/77ed2718b621/hrnk-news-itemsamerican-victim-of-kim-jong-un-otto-warmbier-honored-by-n-korean-defectorsnorth-korea-says-it-tested-new-solid-fuel-icbm>

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

North Korea has completed first military recon satellite; North Korea's trade with China more than doubles in March on-year

In North Korea:

[How Kim Jong Un's fears shape North Korea's nuclear weapons agenda](#) (NK Pro, 04/19/2023)

[Kim says North Korea's 1st spy satellite is ready for launch](#) (AP News, 04/19/2023)

[North Korea genetically engineering biological weapons for military use: US](#) (NK News, 04/19/2023)

[North Korea has completed first military recon satellite, state media says](#) (NK News, 04/19/2023)

[North Korea's 'Day of the Sun' canceled due to rain](#) (Radio Free Asia, 04/18/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim orders launch of military reconnaissance satellite as planned](#) (Yonhap, 04/19/2023)

[North Korea's trade with China more than doubles in March on-year](#) (NK News, 04/19/2023)

In South Korea:

[South Korea's Yoon opens door for possible military aid to Ukraine](#) (Reuters, 04/19/2023)

[ROK police say they stopped possible nationwide cyberattack by North Korea](#) (NK Pro, 04/19/2023)

International:

[UN Security Council fails to take any action against North's missile launches](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/18/2023)

[U.S. deterring conflict in Indo-Pacific amid N. Korean missile provocations: U.S. commanders](#) (Yonhap, 04/19/2023)

[U.S. 'hopeful' on dialogue restart with North Korea: special rep](#) (Nikkei Asia, 04/19/2023)

In North Korea:

- DPRK leader claims he needs nukes to defend against US invasion, but his own people are likely a bigger concern. (Bruce W. Bennett, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said his country has built its first-ever military spy satellite and that he planned to launch it on an undisclosed date, state media reported Wednesday. (Hyung-Jin Kim and Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- North Korea continues to maintain a national program for biological weapons that has likely developed bacteria, viruses, and toxins for military campaigns, the U.S. State Department assesses in a new report published Tuesday. (Arius Derr, [NK News](#))
- Kim Jong Un justifies satellite's development as response to US-ROK exercises during visit to space agency with daughter. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- They prepared for almost a month, practicing for the "songs of loyalty" competition and massive choreographed dances, fixing food and decorating cities – only to have officials call off the "Day of the Sun," arguably North Korea's most important holiday, due to a forecast for rain. (Jieun Kim and Soyoung Kim, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un said Pyongyang has completed building its first military spy satellite and ordered final preparations to launch the satellite as planned, the North's state media reported Wednesday, in a move that is expected to further heighten tensions on the Korean Peninsula. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean trade with China more than doubled in March compared to the same month last year, official trade data shows, in what one expert called a positive sign for the DPRK economy battered by years of severe COVID-19 controls. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea might extend its support for Ukraine beyond humanitarian and economic aid if it comes under a large-scale civilian attack, President Yoon Suk Yeol said, signalling a shift in

his stance against arming Ukraine for the first time. (Soyoung Kim, Ju-min Park and Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))

- North Korean hackers targeted a popular security software South Koreans use for financial transactions in what may have been part of preparations for a nationwide cyberattack, police announced on Tuesday. (Jeongmin Kim and Shreyas Reddy, [NK Pro](#))

International:

- Another UN Security Council meeting hosted on the heels of a North Korean military provocation finished with no results after much finger-pointing and blaming between the United States, Russia and China in New York on Monday. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The United States is successfully and continuously preventing conflict with no imminent signs of war in the Indo-Pacific but North Korea's continued missile provocations, along with other threats, pose serious challenges to peace and stability in the region, the chief of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command said Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. is hopeful that dialogue with North Korea could restart as the hermit nation reopens from COVID-19 lockdowns, a senior U.S. diplomat said in a recent interview amid growing concerns over its military capabilities following the launch of a new type of ballistic missile last week. (Erwida Maulia, [Nikkei Asia](#))

Prepared by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517124339/https://mailchi.mp/d96bafb26cf4/hrnk-news-itemsnorth-korea-has-completed-first-military-recon-satellitenorth-koreas-trade-with-china-more-than-doubles-in-march-on-year>

Thursday, April 20, 2023

The Biden-Yoon Summit: An Opportunity To Chart A New Alliance Course; Ri Pyong Chol issues statement

Top News:

[Advancing North Korean human rights: The role of civil society \[Article\]](#) (Brookings, 04/20/2023)

[Advancing North Korean human rights: The role of civil society \[Video\]](#) (Brookings, 04/20/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea says its status as nuclear weapons state 'final, irreversible'](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/21/2023)

[N. Korea uses upgraded backdoor scheme to attack US video-conferencing firm 3CX](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/21/2023)

[North Korean hackers execute first-ever 'cascading' supply chain attack](#) (NK Pro, 04/21/2023)

In South Korea:

[DP leader urges Yoon not to reach deal on weapons aid to Ukraine during summit with Biden](#) (Yonhap, 04/21/2023)

[Minister sees possibility of major N. Korean provocation ahead of Yoon-Biden summit](#) (Yonhap, 04/21/2023)

[South Korea's ruling party shines spotlight on case for going nuclear](#) (NK Pro, 04/21/2023)

International:

[North Korea's rice imports soar in March to largest monthly total of pandemic](#) (NK Pro, 04/21/2023)

[Outside information can bring change to N. Korea's dire human rights conditions: S. Korean envoy](#) (Yonhap, 04/21/2023)

[Politics and shortages undercut Russian threat to arm North Korea](#) (NK News, 04/21/2023)

Top News:

- The urgency to address human rights in North Korea has never been greater as the international community marks the 10th anniversary of the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea. What role does civil society and NGOs play in advocating on behalf of North Korean human rights? How can civil society in conjunction with governments help revitalize and sustain North Korean human rights advocacy? How have local and global politics affected the direction of human rights advocacy on North Korea? ([Brookings \[Article\]](#) & [\[Video\]](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean hackers gained access to videoconferencing service 3CX through an online investment platform in the first-ever "cascading" supply chain attack, according to a new cybersecurity report published Thursday. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korea has used its upgraded skills to stage a backdoor attack against the network of US virtual phone service company 3CX last month, Mandiant, Google's cybersecurity unit, said Thursday. ([The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea's foreign minister said Friday that the United States and the West have no right to argue about its status as a nuclear weapons power, slamming a recent joint statement by the Group of Seven (G-7) diplomats as interference in internal affairs. ([The Korea Herald](#))

In South Korea:

- At the Korea-U.S. summit, no form of agreement should be made on weapons provision to Ukraine," Lee, chairman of the DP, said during an emergency press conference, three days before Yoon goes on a state visit to Washington for talks with Biden. He also said the move could also hurt peace in Northeast Asia because it could bring North Korea and Russia closer to each other and turn relations between South Korea and Russia back to a point before the 1990 establishment of relations. (James Fretwell, [Yonhap](#))
- Unification Minister Kwon Young-se said Friday the possibility of North Korea launching a "high-intensity" provocation ahead of President Yoon Suk Yeol's upcoming state visit to the United States cannot be ruled out. ([Yonhap](#))

- As North Korea pushes ahead with tactical nukes and more responsive long-range missiles, South Korea has begun seriously considering the once unthinkable: going nuclear itself. And a recent event at the National Assembly showcased just how actively Seoul's political class is flirting with the idea and creating spaces to discuss it. (James Fretwell, [NK Pro](#))

International:

- Rice far outstripped all other North Korean imports from China in March, customs data shows, marking the largest monthly total for grain imports since the COVID-19 pandemic began over three years ago. (Ifang Bremer, [NK Pro](#))
- Exposing North Koreans to outside information may be the key to bringing a much needed change to worsening human rights conditions in North Korea, South Korea's special envoy for North Korean human rights said Friday. Lee Shin-hwa, ambassador-at-large for international cooperation on North Korean human rights, insisted North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and his regime are one of the "worst" violators of human rights. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- Political considerations and material shortages are likely to stop Russia from providing arms to North Korea, experts told NK News this week, despite Moscow's threat to send its "newest weapons" to the DPRK if South Korea directly arms Ukraine. (Arius Derr & Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Tessa Aguilar HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517124453/https://mailchi.mp/4af312f69687/hrnk-news-itemsthe-biden-yoon-summit-an-opportunity-to-chart-a-new-alliance-courseri-pyong-chol-issues-statement>

Friday, April 21, 2023

HRNK's "Advancing North Korean human rights: The role of civil society"

Top News:

[Advancing North Korean human rights: The role of civil society \[Article\]](#) (Brookings, 04/20/2023)

[Advancing North Korean human rights: The role of civil society \[Video\]](#) (Brookings, 04/20/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea says its status as nuclear weapons state 'final, irreversible'](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/21/2023)

[N. Korea uses upgraded backdoor scheme to attack US video-conferencing firm 3CX](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/21/2023)

[North Korean hackers execute first-ever 'cascading' supply chain attack](#) (NK Pro, 04/21/2023)

In South Korea:

[DP leader urges Yoon not to reach deal on weapons aid to Ukraine during summit with Biden](#) (Yonhap, 04/21/2023)

[Minister sees possibility of major N. Korean provocation ahead of Yoon-Biden summit](#) (Yonhap, 04/21/2023)

[South Korea's ruling party shines spotlight on case for going nuclear](#) (NK Pro, 04/21/2023)

International:

[North Korea's rice imports soar in March to largest monthly total of pandemic](#) (NK Pro, 04/21/2023)

[Outside information can bring change to N. Korea's dire human rights conditions: S. Korean envoy](#) (Yonhap, 04/21/2023)

[Politics and shortages undercut Russian threat to arm North Korea](#) (NK News, 04/21/2023)

Top News:

- The urgency to address human rights in North Korea has never been greater as the international community marks the 10th anniversary of the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea. What role does civil society and NGOs play in advocating on behalf of North Korean human rights? How can civil society in conjunction with governments help revitalize and sustain North Korean human rights advocacy? How have local and global politics affected the direction of human rights advocacy on North Korea? ([Brookings \[Article\]](#) & [\[Video\]](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean hackers gained access to videoconferencing service 3CX through an online investment platform in the first-ever "cascading" supply chain attack, according to a new cybersecurity report published Thursday. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korea has used its upgraded skills to stage a backdoor attack against the network of US virtual phone service company 3CX last month, Mandiant, Google's cybersecurity unit, said Thursday. ([The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea's foreign minister said Friday that the United States and the West have no right to argue about its status as a nuclear weapons power, slamming a recent joint statement by the Group of Seven (G-7) diplomats as interference in internal affairs. ([The Korea Herald](#))

In South Korea:

- At the Korea-U.S. summit, no form of agreement should be made on weapons provision to Ukraine," Lee, chairman of the DP, said during an emergency press conference, three days before Yoon goes on a state visit to Washington for talks with Biden. He also said the move could also hurt peace in Northeast Asia because it could bring North Korea and Russia closer to each other and turn relations between South Korea and Russia back to a point before the 1990 establishment of relations. (James Fretwell, [Yonhap](#))
- Unification Minister Kwon Young-se said Friday the possibility of North Korea launching a "high-intensity" provocation ahead of President Yoon Suk Yeol's upcoming state visit to the United States cannot be ruled out. ([Yonhap](#))
- As North Korea pushes ahead with tactical nukes and more responsive long-range missiles, South Korea has begun seriously considering the once unthinkable: going nuclear itself. And

a recent event at the National Assembly showcased just how actively Seoul's political class is flirting with the idea and creating spaces to discuss it. (James Fretwell, [NK Pro](#))

International:

- Rice far outstripped all other North Korean imports from China in March, customs data shows, marking the largest monthly total for grain imports since the COVID-19 pandemic began over three years ago. (Ifang Bremer, [NK Pro](#))
- Exposing North Koreans to outside information may be the key to bringing a much needed change to worsening human rights conditions in North Korea, South Korea's special envoy for North Korean human rights said Friday. Lee Shin-hwa, ambassador-at-large for international cooperation on North Korean human rights, insisted North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and his regime are one of the "worst" violators of human rights. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- Political considerations and material shortages are likely to stop Russia from providing arms to North Korea, experts told NK News this week, despite Moscow's threat to send its "newest weapons" to the DPRK if South Korea directly arms Ukraine. (Arius Derr & Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Tessa Aguilar HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517124457/https://mailchi.mp/048110d03642/hrnk-news-itemsthe-biden-yoon-summit-an-opportunity-to-chart-a-new-alliance-courseri-pyong-chol-issues-statement-11191450>

Saturday, April 22, 2023

Japan prepares to shoot down North Korean spy satellite; S. Korea urges global cooperation on N.K. nuclear issue at NATO meeting

International:

[Japan prepared to shoot down North Korean spy satellite rocket if necessary, minister says](#) (CNN, 04/22/2023)

[Japan prepares to shoot down North Korean spy satellite](#) (The Telegraph, 04/22/2023)

[S. Korea urges global cooperation on N.K. nuclear issue at NATO meeting](#) (Yonhap, 04/22/2023)

International:

- Japan says it is prepared to shoot down a North Korean spy satellite rocket if it needs to. (Junko Ogura, [CNN](#))
- Japan has ordered its military to prepare to shoot down a North Korean spy satellite should it fall within its territory. ([The Telegraph](#))

- South Korea and the Indo-Pacific partners of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) discussed expanding cooperation to counter North Korea's escalating provocations, Seoul's foreign ministry said Saturday. (Jules Yi, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517130520/https://mailchi.mp/5afbd39e9891/hrnk-news-itemsjapan-prepares-to-shoot-down-north-korean-spy-satellite-s-korea-urges-global-cooperation-on-nk-nuclear-issue-at-nato-meeting>

Sunday, April 23, 2023

About 60 pct of young people say unification with N. Korea unnecessary; Rules changing as Korea-U.S. alliance turns 70

In North Korea:

[About 60 pct of young people say unification with N. Korea unnecessary](#) (Yonhap, 04/23/2023)

International:

[Japan orders military to prepare to shoot down North Korean spy satellite](#) (The Telegraph, 04/22/2023)

[Rules changing as Korea-U.S. alliance turns 70](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/23/2023)

[South Korea saved itself from Indo-Pacific isolation: Victor Cha](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/23/2023)

In North Korea:

- About 60 percent of South Koreans in their 20s and 30s said unification with North Korea is not necessary, a survey showed Sunday, amid a prolonged impasse in inter-Korean relations and denuclearization talks. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- Japan has ordered its military to prepare to shoot down a North Korean spy satellite should it fall within its territory. Pyongyang said this week that it was ready to launch the satellite, but it would require a long-range projectile to do so, which North Korea is banned from launching. (Verity Bowman, [The Telegraph](#))
- Leading scholars on alliance affairs in Korea and the United States weighed in that while Seoul-Washington security ties are enduring on the surface, they can be more fragile than it appears, taking into consideration the evolving geopolitical situation, the intensifying U.S.-China strategic competition and growing North Korea threats, in addition to domestic political factors. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- The Yoon Suk Yeol administration "saved Korea from self-isolation in the Indo-Pacific" through taking a clearer stance amid the intensifying U.S.-China competition, said former White House official Victor Cha. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517130508/https://mailchi.mp/9ecbb9e9c5d0/hrnk-news-itemsabout-60-pct-of-young-people-say-unification-with-n-korea-unnecessaryrules-changing-as-korea-us-alliance-turns-70>

Monday, April 24, 2023

S. Korea, U.S. sanction N. Korean tied to cybercrime, President Yoon begins US state visit to trumpet stronger alliance

In North Korea:

[North Korean hackers target energy and financial systems in 'Hydra-like' attack](#) (NK Pro, 04/24/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Seoul weighs lawsuit against North Korea for using assets at Kaesong complex](#) (NK News, 04/24/2023)

International:

[S. Korea, US sanction N. Korean tied to cybercrime](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/24/2023)

[S. Korea, US step up efforts to block NK's illegal cyber activities](#) (The Korea Times, 04/24/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. simultaneously sanction N. Korean involved in WMD financing](#) (Yonhap, 04/24/2023)

[Tokyo orders military to shoot down debris from North Korean satellite launch](#) (NK News, 04/24/2023)

[U.S., South Korea sanction a North Korean banker](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/24/2023)

[Yoon begins US state visit to trumpet stronger alliance, resolve trade issues](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/24/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean hackers have targeted critical energy infrastructure and finance sectors as part of a complex series of supply chain attacks, a U.S. cybersecurity firm reported Friday, in a sign that the cascading intrusions could spread far and wide. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK Pro](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Seoul is considering whether to file a lawsuit against North Korea for illegally using ROK companies' assets at the shuttered inter-Korean industrial zone, the unification ministry said Monday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- South Korea and the US sanctioned a North Korean believed to be linked to cybercrimes meant to bankroll North Korea's nuclear and weapons programs -- the first ban the two allies have jointly rolled out on a single individual. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Seoul has imposed independent sanctions on a North Korean national named Sim Hyon-sop for financing the North's nuclear and missile development programs through illegal cyber activities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Monday. (Kim Jae-heun, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea and the United States announced Monday unilateral sanctions on a North Korean individual involved in the financing of Pyongyang's weapons of mass destruction programs through illegal cyber activities, Seoul's foreign ministry said. ([Yonhap](#))
- Japan's defense minister, Yasukazu Hamada, instructed the country's military to prepare "destructive measures" against any debris that falls over Japanese territory in the event of a North Korean satellite launch after Pyongyang reported that it has completed a new military reconnaissance satellite. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Seoul and Washington jointly levied sanctions on a North Korean individual tied with the regime's illicit cyber activities and weapons programs. The sanctions target an individual named Sim Hyon-sop, who is associated with the Korea Kwangson Banking Corporation, a bank in North Korea sanctioned by the UN Security Council since 2016. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol on Monday began his five-day state visit to the US to mark the 70th anniversary of bilateral ties and to set a new direction for the alliance with US President Joe Biden, amid intensifying nuclear threats from North Korea and mounting trade issues. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517130751/https://mailchi.mp/5807d3d49d8f/hrnk-news-items-s-korea-us-sanction-n-korean-tied-to-cybercrime-president-yoon-begins-us-state-visit-to-trumpet-stronger-alliance>

Tuesday, April 25, 2023

Yoon arrives in Washington on state visit; ROK-US alliance evolves from security treaty to comprehensive partnership

In North Korea:

[N. Korea vows strong ties with Russia on leaders' summit anniversary](#) ([Yonhap](#), 04/25/2023)

[North Koreans souring on Kim Jong-un's 'beloved child' Ju-ae: lawmaker](#) ([The Korea Herald](#), 04/25/2023)

In South Korea:

[No. of N.Korean defectors coming to S.Korea reaches 34 in Q1](#) (Yonhap, 04/25/2023)

[Seoul to prevent Pyongyang from acquiring satellite parts, materials](#) (The Korea Times, 04/25/2023)

[S. Korea approves development of advanced missile interceptors](#) (Yonhap, 04/25/2023)

[S. Korea to soon release English version of its report on N. Korea's human rights](#) (Yonhap, 04/25/2023)

International:

[Biden to unveil new efforts to protect S. Korea from nukes](#) (AP News, 04/25/2023)

[Bolton calls for redeploying tactical nuclear weapons in South Korea](#) (Reuters, 04/25/2023)

[ROK-US alliance evolves from security treaty to comprehensive partnership](#) (The Korea Times, 04/25/2023)

[Sung Kim looks forward to strengthened US extended deterrence commitment in Yoon-Biden summit](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/25/2023)

[S. Korea expected to play bigger role in operation of US nuclear assets](#) (The Korea Times, 04/25/2023)

[S. Korea-Japan thaw changes China, NK mentality: ex-envoy](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/25/2023)

[Ukraine hopes for S. Korean arms in fight against Russia](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/25/2023)

[US should redeploy tactical nuke on peninsula: Bolton](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/25/2023)

[US will do what is necessary to defend S. Korea under any circumstances: Kirby](#) (Yonhap, 04/25/2023)

[Yoon arrives in Washington on state visit](#) (Yonhap, 04/25/2023)

[Yoon, Biden to announce 'major deliverables' on extended deterrence: NSA Sullivan](#) (Yonhap, 04/25/2023)

[S. Korea, US to unveil separate documents on extended deterrence](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/25/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea vowed Tuesday to strengthen its ties with Russia on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the first summit between the leaders of the two nations. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's only publicly seen child, Ju-ae, is stirring up ire among local people there for her extravagant clothing and well-fed appearance, according to Rep. Yoo Sang-bum, the executive secretary of the National Assembly intelligence committee. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

In South Korea:

- The number of North Korean defectors coming to South Korea reached 34 in the first quarter, government data showed Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- The government has added 77 parts and devices needed for satellite manufacturing to a list of goods banned from being exported to North Korea, in what Seoul hopes will be the first international effort to deter Pyongyang's spy satellite development plans, the trade ministry said Tuesday. (Lee Kyung-min, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea approved major defense projects to develop advanced missile interceptor systems, the state arms procurement agency said Tuesday, amid efforts to counter evolving military threats from North Korea. The Defense Project Promotion Committee gave the green light to a 2.71 trillion-won (US\$2.03 billion) development plan for the long-range

surface-to-air missile (L-SAM) II system from next year through 2035, according to the Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA). ([Yonhap](#))

- South Korea's unification ministry said Tuesday it plans to release the English version of its report on North Korea's human rights situation within a few days. In late March, the government made public its report on the North's human rights violations for the first time, highlighting widespread rights abuses, such as public executions and torture. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- President Joe Biden will use this week's celebratory state visit by South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol to underscore that the U.S. is ready to step up its efforts to deter a North Korean attack on South Korea, according to the White House. (Aamer Madhani, [AP News](#))
- The United States should redeploy tactical nuclear weapons in South Korea to send a clear message to North Korea and alleviate growing calls in the South for developing its own bombs, former U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton said on Tuesday. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- Upon signing the Mutual Defense Treaty with the U.S. in 1953 after the Korean War, South Korea's first president, Syngman Rhee, said that the agreement would make the war-torn nation prosper "for many generations to come." Seven decades later, that message of hope rings true, as Yoon Suk Yeol makes a state visit to Washington as the president of one of the world's most prosperous countries and a believer in how much the successful partnership can achieve. The two countries celebrate the 70th anniversary of what has expanded to become a comprehensive alliance encompassing a wide range of sectors from science to environment. Over the decades, their ties have been tested by many domestic and geopolitical challenges, only to grow stronger. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- Seoul and Washington are likely to agree on carrying out joint planning and joint execution of U.S. nuclear assets, according to defense analysts, Tuesday, which would mark a major upgrade of the U.S. extended deterrence provided to its ally. According to both governments, President Yoon Suk Yeol and U.S. President Joe Biden will release an additional joint statement on strengthened extended deterrence after their summit at the White House on Wednesday (local time). (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))
- An additional document detailing extended deterrence measures will be unveiled following the summit between South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and US President Joe Biden on Wednesday, according to the South Korean presidential office. (Shin Ji-ye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Closer ties between South Korea and Japan prompted by the recent deal to end a historical feud over Tokyo's colonial rights abuses will change the way China deals with Seoul-Tokyo efforts to curb North Korea's growing nuclear ambitions, a former Japanese ambassador to the US said Tuesday. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- US Special Representative for North Korea Sung Kim on Tuesday expressed his expectation that the leaders of the US and South Korea would exhibit their commitments to a stronger extended deterrence against Pyongyang's nuclear threats at an upcoming summit this week. (Im Eun-byel, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Ukraine is hoping for South Korea's defense support in its fight against Russia, said the Ukrainian Embassy in Seoul on Monday. (Sanjay Kumar, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The United States should redeploy its tactical nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula to make US extended deterrence credible against escalating threats from North Korea, said John Bolton, former White House national security adviser, on Tuesday. This strategy would

also enable South Korea to buy time to weigh up the gains and losses of nuclear armament, he added. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

- The United States will do whatever is necessary to help defend its key ally South Korea, a National Security Council (NSC) spokesperson said Monday, after Russia threatened to arm North Korea should South Korea provide lethal assistance to Ukraine. ([Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol arrived in Washington on Monday for a six-day state visit expected to strengthen the allies' response to North Korea's nuclear threat and other challenges in a symbolic year marking the 70th anniversary of the alliance. ([Yonhap](#))
- U.S. President Joe Biden and his South Korean counterpart, Yoon Suk Yeol, will announce "major deliverables" on ways to strengthen the United States' extended deterrence commitment to South Korea when they meet this week, National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said Monday. (Byun Duk-kun, Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517130710/https://mailchi.mp/618fa9261006/hrnk-news-item-yoon-arrives-in-washington-on-state-visit-rok-us-alliance-evolves-from-security-treaty-to-comprehensive-partnership>

Wednesday, April 26, 2023

One Decade Since the UN COI: Advocating for a Human Rights Up Front Approach

Top News:

[One Decade Since the UN COI: Advocating for a Human Rights Up Front Approach](#) (HRNK YouTube, 04/24/2023)

[\[The Root of All Evil: Money, Rice, Crime & Law in North Korea\] by Joshua Stanton](#) (HRNK YouTube, 04/25/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un upgrades megayachts again as state media stresses 'shortages'](#) (NK Pro, 04/26/2023)

[Over 75% of North Korean children missed key vaccinations during pandemic: WHO](#) (NK News, 04/26/2023)

[Possible Refueling at Yongbyon's 5 MWe Reactor](#) (38 North, 04/26/2023)

In South Korea:

[ROK to spend billions on interceptor to counter advanced North Korean missiles](#) (NK News, 04/26/2023)

[S. Korea releases English version of report on N. Korea's human rights](#) (Yonhap, 04/26/2023)

International:

[\[Alliance in Action\] N. Korea won't be deterred by nuclear-armed S. Korea: ex-USFK commander](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/26/2023)

[Biden says N.K. nuclear attack against U.S., allies will result in end of regime](#) (Yonhap, 04/26/2023)

[Biden warns North Korea that a nuclear attack would mean end of the regime](#) (Radio Free Asia, 04/26/2023)

[Biden warns nuclear attack by N. Korea will result in end of regime](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/26/2023)

[Biden, Yoon warn N. Korea on nukes, unveil deterrence plan](#) (AP News, 04/26/2023)

[British American Tobacco to pay record \\$629 million fine over North Korea sales](#) (NK News, 04/26/2023)

['Clear' before Hanoi that US-North Korea summit would fail: Ex-Trump official](#) (NK News, 04/26/2023)

[Korea, US tout stronger extended deterrence with Washington Declaration](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/26/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. to form nuclear consultative body amid N. Korea's growing threats](#) (Yonhap, 04/26/2023)

[Tobacco company settles with US over business in North Korea](#) (AP News, 04/26/2023)

[US and South Korea issue nuclear warning to Pyongyang as they reaffirm alliance](#) (The Guardian, 04/26/2023)

Top News:

- The event featured welcoming remarks by H.E. Cho Tae-yong, the former Ambassador of the ROK to the United States, and H.E. Lee Shin-wha, the ROK Ambassador-at-Large for North Korean Human Rights. Justice Michael Kirby, the former Chief Commissioner of the UN COI, and H.E. Elizabeth Salmón, the UN Special Rapporteur on North Korean Human Rights, also provided recorded remarks. The event consisted of three panel discussions that reviewed progress on North Korean human rights over the past decade; proposed a "Human Rights Up Front" approach to U.S. policy toward North Korea; and assessed the likelihood of Korean unification under a free, prosperous, democratic, and capitalist Republic of Korea as the key to resolving the North Korea conundrum. ([HRNK YouTube](#))
- On Wednesday, March 29, 2023, HRNK featured its latest report, "The Root of All Evil: Money, Rice, Crime & Law in North Korea" by Joshua Stanton. "The Root of All Evil" examines the record of UN and U.S. sanctions implementation against North Korea, and it "proposes a long-term, multilateral legal strategy...to find, freeze, forfeit, and deposit the proceeds of the North Korean kleptocracy into international escrow." "By forfeiting misspent funds and disbursing them for humanitarian purposes," Stanton argues, "a coalition [of like-minded nations] can compel Kim Jong-un to make better decisions with the wealth that rightfully belongs to the North Korean people." ([HRNK YouTube](#))

In North Korea:

- Satellite imagery shows annual repairs on two of North Korean leader's vessels after remodeling of Wonsan shipyard. (Colin Zwirko, [NK Pro](#))
- At least 75% percent of all children in North Korea missed routine vaccinations during the pandemic, U.N. aid agencies announced Monday, leaving them more vulnerable to death and disease. In a press release, the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF and the vaccine alliance Gavi listed North Korea among 20 countries that are the priority target of a new

campaign to make up for missing the important vaccinations in 2021. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

- Recent commercial satellite imagery of North Korea's Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center indicates that cooling water discharge—observed with a few short interruptions at the 5 MWe reactor over the past 23 months—ceased in early April, suggesting that the reactor has likely been shut down. If this was done for refueling purposes, the removed spent fuel could soon be sent for reprocessing. Given how long the reactor has been running, this could amount to some 5-8 kilograms of new weapons-grade plutonium, once separated, to add to the country's fissile material stockpile. (Olli Heinonen, Peter Makowsky, Jack Liu, [38 North](#))

In South Korea:

- Seoul says L-SAM II will be country's first glide-phase missile defense system, while also announcing new drone command. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The South Korea government on Wednesday released an English version of its report on North Korea's human rights situation, which was made public last month for the first time. The English edition is currently available on the unification ministry's website (www.unikorea.go.kr) and will be distributed to overseas diplomatic missions, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and research institutes, the ministry said. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- The Kim Jong-un regime won't be deterred by a nuclear-armed South Korea, a former United States Forces Korea commander said. It would, in turn, speed up North Korea's already-accelerated pace of nuclear buildup and the nuclear arms race in the Indo-Pacific region, where major flash points have long existed and have become more dangerous and volatile in the midst of the growing US-China rivalry. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- U.S. President Joe Biden on Wednesday warned North Korea that any nuclear attack against the United States or its allies will result in the end of its regime. Biden issued the warning during a joint press conference with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol after discussions how to strengthen the U.S. "extended deterrence" commitment to South Korea during a summit at the White House. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- U.S. President Joe Biden warned North Korea on Wednesday that any nuclear attack on the United States or its allies would result in an end to the isolated regime while promising closer cooperation with South Korea on deterring the nuclear threat. (Eugene Whong, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- S.Korea, US agree to respond swiftly, overwhelmingly in event of North Korean nuclear attack. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- President Joe Biden and South Korea's Yoon Suk Yeol unveiled a new plan Wednesday to counter North Korea's nuclear threat, with the U.S. leader issuing a blunt warning that such an attack would "result in the end of whatever regime" took such action. The new nuclear deterrence effort calls for periodically docking U.S. nuclear-armed submarines in South Korea for the first time in decades, bolstering training between the two countries, and more. The declaration was unveiled as Biden hosted Yoon for a state visit at a moment of heightened anxiety over an increased pace of ballistic missile tests by North Korea. (Aamer Madhani, Colleen Long, Zeke Miller, [AP News](#))

- A leading tobacco company has agreed to pay a record \$629 million in penalties and fines to resolve bank fraud and sanctions violation charges associated with its tobacco operations in North Korea, the U.S. Department of Justice announced Tuesday. British American Tobacco (BAT) has entered into a deferred prosecution agreement and its subsidiary BAT Marketing Singapore (BATMS) pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy to commit bank fraud and violate the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), according to a Justice Department press release. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Randall Schriver says Trump believed he could negotiate deal despite DPRK's insistence on sanctions relief above all. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- Declaration states launch of new consultative mechanism on nukes, but reaffirms Seoul's non-nuclear status. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and U.S. President Joe Biden will issue a joint statement, called the Washington Declaration, under which the allies will establish a joint nuclear consultative body as a way of strengthening Washington's extended deterrence provided to Seoul, U.S. officials said. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- A British tobacco company has agreed to pay more than \$629 million to settle allegations that it did illegal business with North Korea in violation of U.S. sanctions, the Justice Department said Tuesday. British American Tobacco, one of the largest tobacco companies in the world, entered into a deferred prosecution agreement with the Justice Department, while the company's Singapore subsidiary pleaded guilty to conspiring to commit bank fraud and violate sanctions. (Eric Tucker, [AP News](#))
- The presidents of the US and South Korea have reaffirmed their alliance, agreeing that nuclear armed submarines would resume port visits and threatening a "swift, overwhelming and decisive response" to any North Korean nuclear attack, including retaliation in kind by the US. (Julian Borger, [The Guardian](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517130908/https://mailchi.mp/421da487914a/hrnk-news-itemsone-decade-since-the-un-coi-advocating-for-a-human-rights-up-front-approach>

Thursday, April 27, 2023

First lady meets mother of Otto Warmbier; Washington Declaration highlights enhanced deterrence efforts against N.K. threats

In North Korea:

[Chinese travel agency claims North Korea will open for tourism in June](#) (NK News, 04/27/2023)

[N. Korea says space program 'indispensable' for national development](#) (Yonhap, 04/27/2023)

[Signs of progress? Kim Jong Un approves designs at long-stalled hospital project](#) (NK News, 04/27/2023)

[State media review: North Korea slams US over Silicon Valley Bank collapse](#) (NK Pro, 04/27/2023)

In South Korea:

[Former President Moon calls for renewed dialogue with North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/27/2023)

[S. Korea completes project to improve command system against ballistic missiles](#) (Yonhap, 04/27/2023)

[Seoul says it will build 'cyber umbrella' with US to deter North Korean hackers](#) (NK News, 04/27/2023)

[Speaking Loudly and Carrying a Small Stick: South Korea Backtracks Over the Nuclear Rubicon](#) (38 North, 04/27/2023)

International:

[Analysis: Calls for South Korean nuclear arsenal unlikely to fade despite US deal](#) (Reuters, 04/27/2023)

[First lady meets mother of Otto Warmbier](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 04/27/2023)

[US, ROK to establish nuclear consultation group to 'manage' North Korean threat](#) (NK News, 04/27/2023)

[US, South Korea say they want unified peninsula that is 'free and at peace'](#) (NK News, 04/27/2023)

[US submarines to dock in South Korea in show of force as countries reach landmark nuclear pact](#) (The Telegraph, 04/27/2023)

[Washington Declaration highlights enhanced deterrence efforts against N. Korean threats](#) (Yonhap, 04/27/2023)

[Washington Declaration quells debate over S. Korea's nuclear armament but does little to contain N. Korea: experts](#) (Yonhap, 04/27/2023)

[What the US-ROK summit means for security on the Korean Peninsula](#) (NK Pro, 04/27/2023)

[Yoon, Biden pledge 'overwhelming' nuclear response in case of N.K. nuclear attack](#) (Yonhap, 04/27/2023)

[Yoon, Biden reaffirm ironclad alliance, warn NK attack is unacceptable](#) (The Korea Herald, 04/27/2023)

In North Korea:

- A Chinese travel agency says the North Korean border will reopen to tourist traffic from mid-June, a response to a customer inquiry seen by NK News shows, in what would mark a major change to the DPRK's pandemic border closures. But rumors about an imminent North Korea reopening to China have also been circulating in border areas in recent months and have yet to come to pass, a former government official who has visited Dandong told NK News on condition of anonymity last week. The official said the rumors pointed to a late March deadline that was delayed to April and then June. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- North Korea said Thursday the pursuit of space development projects is "indispensable" for national development in what appears to be efforts to justify its potential launch of a military spy satellite. Mentioning North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's recent visit to the state-run space development agency, state media carried an interview with the country's environment and telecommunications vice ministers and a ranking weather agency official to highlight the need to build "application satellites." (Yonhap)
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un approved interior designs last year for the country's "first" modern general hospital, state media has revealed, a rare sign of activity on the stalled project two and a half years after it was supposed to be complete. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

- North Korea's foreign ministry slammed the U.S. capitalism system this week over the Silicon Valley Bank collapse, arguing that "unlimited liberalism" has led to financial ruin and that the world economy is now quickly trying to decouple from the U.S. dollar. State media's hot take on what has been one of the biggest American news stories of the year leans on well-trodden anti-capitalist tropes found in abundance in state media, even as it elides North Korea's own dependence on markets and the dollar. (Seung-Yeon Chung, [NK Pro](#))

In South Korea:

- Former President Moon Jae-in on Thursday stressed the importance of South and North Korea and the United States' efforts to restore dialogue, stressing the South Korean government's role in doing so, during an academic conference marking the fifth anniversary of the April 27 Panmunjom Declaration. Moon's remarks came as President Yoon Suk Yeol and U.S. President Joe Biden adopted the so-called "Washington Declaration" with enhanced measures for extended deterrence at a summit Thursday morning. (Cho Jung-Woo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea has completed a development project to improve a command and control system overseeing defense operations against ballistic missiles, the state arms procurement agency said Thursday, amid efforts to bolster response capabilities against Pyongyang's military threats. ([Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. and South Korea will strengthen cyber intelligence sharing and boost defenses against North Korean hackers under a new cybersecurity cooperation framework, the allies announced after a bilateral summit on Wednesday, framing it as an effort to build a "cyber umbrella" to deter attacks. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Earlier this year, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol made a pronouncement that no leader in Seoul has ever made before. He stated that South Korea—which benefits from US extended nuclear deterrence—could consider acquiring its own nuclear weapons if "North Korean provocations continued intensifying." This claim attracted international attention, particularly in Washington, Pyongyang, Beijing and Tokyo. (Mason Richey, [38 North](#))

International:

- The United States granted South Korea a larger role in planning for a potential nuclear war with North Korea, but that will probably not ease doubts over U.S. defence commitments that have fuelled calls for a South Korean nuclear arsenal, experts said. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- First lady Kim Keon-hee met with the mother of Otto Warmbier, the American citizen who died soon after he was released in a vegetative state by the North Korean regime, in Washington on Wednesday. Conveying her condolences, Kim told Cindy Warmbier how her son's death was "a shock for all of South Korea and its people," according to the presidential office. Mrs. Warmbier was said to have expressed her gratitude. Otto Warmbier was an American university student traveling in North Korea in 2016 when he was arrested. He died less than a week after his release in 2017. (Esther Chung, Lim Sun-Young, Chung Yeong-Gyo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The U.S. and South Korea will establish a new platform for joint nuclear execution and planning, presidents Joe Biden and Yoon Suk-yeol announced after a summit meeting Wednesday, as the allies seek to reinforce efforts to deter North Korean nuclear weapon use. But their joint declaration also stresses that Yoon has promised to abide by agreements on

nuclear nonproliferation and peaceful use of nuclear power, after his controversial remark earlier this year floating the possibility of nuclear armament. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

- The presidents of the U.S. and South Korea declared their support for a unified Korean Peninsula that is “free and at peace” in a joint statement on Wednesday, raising questions about what role the allies envision Kim Jong Un’s government would play if such a future is realized. The remarks following a summit meeting between Joe Biden and Yoon Suk-yeol in Washington mark one of the few times the countries’ presidents have touched on unification in a joint statement since former leaders Barack Obama and Park Geun-hye were in office last decade. (Chad O’Carroll, [NK News](#))
- The United States has pledged to share with South Korea more details about its nuclear planning as the two countries signed a landmark pact amid anxiety over North Korea’s growing arsenal of missiles and bombs. (Andrea Hamblin, [The Telegraph](#))
- From the envisioned launch of a nuclear deterrence dialogue to the plan for the “regular visibility” of U.S. strategic assets, a new South Korea-U.S. security document outlines the allies’ stepped-up deterrence efforts against North Korean threats, Seoul officials said Thursday. At their White House summit Wednesday (local time), President Yoon Suk Yeol and his U.S. counterpart, Joe Biden, adopted the Washington Declaration in what was seen as the culmination of joint endeavors to enhance the credibility of the United States’ extended deterrence. ([Yonhap](#))
- The agreement reached Wednesday by South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and U.S. President Joe Biden on ways to strengthen U.S. extended deterrence may have effectively reassured the South Korean public of the U.S. resolve to help its ally but did little to address the threats posed by North Korea’s evolving nuclear and missile capabilities, U.S. experts said. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- U.S. President Joe Biden and South Korean counterpart Yoon Suk-yeol met for their second summit in Washington on Wednesday, and the outcome included much of significance for security on the Korean Peninsula, including expanded efforts to deter North Korean nuclear weapons use and to diminish the growing South Korean appetite for an indigenous nuclear deterrent. (Chad O’Carroll, [NK Pro](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol and U.S. President Joe Biden agreed Wednesday to significantly strengthen Washington’s nuclear commitment to South Korea, promising “swift, overwhelming, and decisive” action in the event of North Korea’s nuclear attack. Yoon announced the agreement during a joint press conference following summit talks with Biden at the White House, outlining a joint statement, dubbed the “Washington Declaration,” that they adopted to strengthen “extended deterrence” against the North’s nuclear and missile threats. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- Presidents Yoon Suk Yeol and Joe Biden warned Kim Jong-un that a nuclear attack by North Korea against the US and South Korea will be responded to with a nuclear counterattack and that will result in the end of the reclusive regime. “A nuclear attack by North Korea against the United States or its allies or partisans -- partners -- is unacceptable and will result in the end of whatever regime were to take such an action,” said Biden at a press conference held after his summit with Yoon. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

Friday, April 28, 2023

Yoon calls for Congress to help improve North Korea's 'horrendous' human rights

In North Korea:

[North Korea reveals first electric car showroom on new skyscraper street](#) (NK Pro, 04/28/2023)

[The scariest advancements in North Korea missile tech so far](#) (The Washington Post, 04/28/2023)

International:

[Concerned about North Korea, South's Yoon seeks more US help](#) (AP, 04/27/2023)

[Washington Declaration will help deter N. Korean threat but not a 'nuclear sharing' agreement: US official](#) (Yonhap, 04/27/2023)

[Yoon calls for Congress to help improve North Korea's 'horrendous' human rights](#) (NK News, 04/28/2023)

[Yoon says US could use nukes to defend Seoul, muddying waters around summit deal](#) (NK News, 04/28/2023)

In North Korea:

- A North Korean conglomerate appears to have started the country's first major electric car company, according to NK Pro analysis of state media, as the country struggles to produce domestic vehicles. (Colin Zwirko, [NK Pro](#))
- North Korea has been firing off missile after missile this past year — in fact, Kim Jong Un's regime has launched more than 100 since the beginning of 2022. Nearly every time, the regime's propagandists claim they have made significant advancements in their nuclear and weapons program. (Min Joo Kim, Michelle Ye Hee Lee, [The Washington Post](#))

International:

- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol urged ever more strengthening of the U.S.-led security alliance against nuclear-armed North Korea on Thursday, drawing cheers from Congress as he saluted the "great American heroes" who helped preserve his country's democracy in the Korean War. (Ellen Knickmeyer, Stephen Groves, [AP](#))
- The agreement reached by the leaders of South Korea and the United States on strengthening U.S. extended deterrence is not an agreement designed to enable sharing of nuclear weapons between the allies, a senior U.S. official said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's "unspeakable and horrendous" atrocities against its own people require international attention, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol said in a speech to the U.S. Congress on Thursday, pressing the U.S. to do more to address DPRK human rights. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

- The U.S. and South Korea will meet any North Korean use of nuclear weapons against Seoul with an “overwhelming response” that could include U.S. nuclear weapons, ROK President Yoon Suk-yeol said Thursday, appearing to misrepresent the allies’ latest summit agreement. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Myriam Aribaud, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517131412/https://mailchi.mp/bb736fe3634a/hrnk-news-items-yoon-calls-for-congress-to-help-improve-north-koreas-horrendous-human-rights>

Saturday, April 29, 2023

HRNK Executive Director, Greg Scarlatoiu, appears in Al Jazeera program

Top News:

[HRNK Executive Director, Greg Scarlatoiu, appears in Al Jazeera program: What will Washington Declaration mean for the Korean Peninsula?](#) (Al Jazeera, 04/27/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong-un's sister warns of nuclear arms race between North Korea and West](#) (The Telegraph, 04/29/2023)

[Kim's sister says S. Korea-U.S. deterrence plan would result in 'more serious danger](#) (Yonhap, 4/29/2023)

[Kim Yo Jong slams Biden as 'senile' for threatening end of North Korean regime](#) (NK News, 04/29/2023)

[Satellite imagery suggests N. Korea expanding Yongbyon nuclear complex](#) (Yonhap, 04/29/2023)

[Solar power estimated at 7 pct of electricity supply in N. Korea: report](#) (Yonhap, 04/29/2023)

International:

[U.S. lawmakers introduce bill to reauthorize N. Korean rights act](#) (Yonhap, 04/29/2023)

Top News:

- The United States and South Korea sign an agreement to confront possible threats from North Korea -- warning Pyongyang against using nuclear weapons. China says Washington is provoking confrontation. What could this deal mean for the Asia-Pacific region? And what does it mean for peace? ([Al Jazeera](#))

In North Korea:

- Kim Yo-jong's pronouncement follows US-South Korean deal to station submarines on the peninsula. (Verity Bowman, [The Telegraph](#))
- In North Korea's first response to the Washington Declaration adopted during President Yoon Suk Yeol's state visit to the U.S., Kim Yo-jong said that the agreement reflects "the most hostile and aggressive will of action" against the North that will "only result in making peace and security of Northeast Asia and the world be exposed to more serious danger," according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- DPRK leader's sister warns Pyongyang will enhance nuclear deterrent, denouncing US-ROK summit for 'hostile policy'. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Recent commercial satellite imagery indicates North Korea continues to expand and refurbish its Yongbyon nuclear complex, reinforcing concerns the country is acting on leader Kim Jong-un's recent call for an "exponential" increase in its nuclear arsenal, 38 North, a U.S. think tank, said Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- According to the report compiled by the Seoul-based Korea Energy Economics Institute (KEEI), solar power supply in North Korea is estimated at 149 gigawatt-hours, which meets around 7 percent of households' power demand at 2,129 GWh. The report said some 2.88 million solar panels are projected to be used by households across the country. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- Two U.S. lawmakers have introduced a bipartisan bill to reauthorize the North Korean Human Rights Act, which expired in September 2022. Young Kim (R-CA), the chairwoman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Indo-Pacific, and Ami Bera (D-CA), a ranking member, introduced the bill Friday to reauthorize, update and improve the law, which was enacted in 2004 to promote human rights and freedom in North Korea, Kim said. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517131404/https://mailchi.mp/1d50325c9cbc/hrnk-news-item-s-hrnk-executive-director-greg-scarlatoiu-appears-in-al-jazeera-program>

Sunday, April 30, 2023

Top nuclear envoys of SK, US discuss NK threat, NK vows to bolster military deterrence in response to Washington Declaration

In North Korea:

[North Korea's food crisis: How hungry are people in the hermit kingdom?](#) (South China Morning Post, 4/29/2023)

[N. Korea vows to bolster 'military deterrence' in response to Washington Declaration](#) (Yonhap, 04/30/2023)

[North Korea warns of serious danger over US-South Korea deterrence deal](#) (BBC, 04/29/2023)

International:

[Japan PM Kishida to visit South Korea for summit with Yoon](#) (Reuters, 4/29/2023)

[‘Lord Commander’ of the DMZ Has Seen It All on the Korean Frontier](#) (The New York Times, 4/28/2023)

[President Yoon Suk Yeol back from U.S. after 7 days](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 4/30/2023)

[Top nuclear envoys of S. Korea, U.S. discuss N.K. threat in Seoul](#) (Yonhap, 04/30/2023)

In North Korea:

- There are growing concerns among rights groups and aid agencies about North Korea's chronic food shortages. Many experts who keep an eye on the reclusive state say the problem is growing and deaths due to starvation are likely to continue. Some see signs that the country is in the grip of its worst famine since the "Arduous March" blamed for up to 3 million deaths in the 1990s. Others, however, say conditions are not nearly as bad as they look, thanks to Chinese foreign aid propping up the economy. (Bryan Wood, Kelly Le, [South China Morning Post](#))
- North Korea will step up its "military deterrence" against South Korea and the United States, state media said Sunday, blasting this week's summit agreement between the two sides on strengthening the U.S. extended deterrence as a "product of heinous hostile policy" against Pyongyang. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's powerful sister has warned that a recent US-South Korean deal will lead to a "more serious danger". Kim Yo-jong said North Korea's nuclear deterrent "should be brought to further perfection", state media reported. ([BBC](#))

International:

- Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida is expected to visit South Korea in coming weeks and meet with President Yoon Suk Yeol, officials said, reciprocating a Tokyo visit by the South Korean leader last month. (Kevin Buckland, [Reuters](#))
- Lt. Cmdr. D.E. McShane was holding his plane ticket home to begin his retirement in 2019 when President Donald J. Trump announced that he would be flying to the border between the two Koreas to meet Kim Jong-un, the leader of North Korea. Dan-o McShane, as the former U.S. Navy officer is known, had been stationed in the Demilitarized Zone, or DMZ, between North and South Korea for six years. (Choe Sang-Hun, [The New York Times](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol returned to Seoul, ending this week long visit to the U.S. as state guest, on Sunday. There have been mixed reviews on Yoon's visit. Yoon's Washington Declaration has been questioned as to the practical benefits that Korea has gained and the unresolved issue regarding the Inflation Reduction Act that continues to leave out Korean automakers from the tax incentives on electric vehicles. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The top nuclear envoys of South Korea and the United States have met in Seoul to discuss ways to cooperate on countering North Korea's evolving nuclear and military threats, the foreign ministry said Sunday. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Kathy Yu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517131654/https://mailchi.mp/f03850b425ca/hrnk-news-items-top-nuclear-envoys-of-sk-us-discuss-nk-threat-nk-vows-to-bolster-military-deterrence-in-response-to-washington-declaration>

5. MAY

Monday, May 1, 2023

N. Korea slams allies' deterrence plan as 'legal justification' for strategic asset dispatch

In North Korea:

[North Korea blasts U.S.-South Korea summit deal for escalating tension](#) (Reuters, 04/30/2023)

[N.Korea dismisses legitimacy of sending US nuclear submarine](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/01/2023)

[N. Korea slams allies' deterrence plan as 'legal justification' for strategic asset dispatch](#) (Yonhap, 05/01/2023)

International:

[How American leadership, not just North Korea, challenges the US-ROK alliance](#) (NK News, 05/01/2023)

[Korea rising as a defense supplier amid global tensions](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/01/2023)

[Seoul to join web freedom coalition, as it blocks North Korean content at home](#) (NK News, 05/01/2023)

[State visit to U.S. is evolution of ties, not aimed at isolating China: Foreign minister](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/01/2023)

[Yoon returns from productive state visit to the United States](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/01/2023)

[Yoon to meet Japan PM again amid thaw: sources](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/01/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea criticised a recent U.S-South Korea agreement to bolster the deployment of American strategic assets in the region for escalating tension to the "brink of a nuclear war," state media KCNA said on Monday. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- North Korean state media on Monday refuted the legitimacy of deploying a US nuclear-armed submarine to South Korea, as part of its ongoing criticism of the new landmark nuclear deal signed by the leaders of South Korea and the United States. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea denounced the latest summit agreement between South Korea and the United States on Monday for providing "legal justification" to the regular deployment of a U.S. nuclear ballistic missile submarine and other strategic assets against Pyongyang. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- The defensive alliance between the U.S. and South Korea is approaching its 70th birthday, and as ever, all is not well on the Korean Peninsula. (Michael Cohen, [NK News](#))
- U.S. allies and security partners worldwide looking to re-stock their arsenals are increasingly turning to Korean defense companies to procure weapons. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- South Korea will join a 37-member alliance of countries promoting worldwide internet access, the U.S. has announced, raising questions about whether Seoul will also reconsider its own domestic restrictions on accessing North Korean content. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Foreign Minister Park Jin said Monday that President Yoon Suk Yeol's state visit to the United States represented the evolution of the two countries' ties from a military and political alliance to a partnership based on shared democratic values, adding that it was not aimed at "isolating a particular country," such as China. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol concluded a weeklong state visit to the United States Sunday, an occasion to reflect on the 70 years of the alliance and on ways to forge ahead. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol will meet with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida again during Kishida's two-day trip to Seoul starting Sunday, diplomatic sources familiar with the matter said Monday. Japanese media outlets last week reported on a potential visit. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517142928/https://mailchi.mp/e5b231086768/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-slams-allies-deterrence-plan-as-legal-justification-for-strategic-asset-dispatch>

Tuesday, May 2, 2023

First Lady Kim Kun-hee meets Otto Warmbier's bereaved family and young North Korean defectors in Washington D.C.

Top News:

*[First Lady Kim Kun-hee meets Otto Warmbier's bereaved family and young North Korean defectors in Washington D.C.](#) (Donga Ilbo, 04/27/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom

In North Korea:

[North Korea plans massive train factory as it struggles to produce new designs](#) (NK News, 05/02/2023)

[North Korea punishes unwed couples who are living together](#) (Radio Free Asia, 05/02/2023)

[North Korea's ScarCruft Deploys RokRAT Malware via LNK File Infection Chains](#) (The Hacker News, 05/02/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea to release report on N. Korea's economic, social situations for 1st time](#) (Yonhap, 05/02/2023)

International:

[US-ROK nuclear coordination group 'more effective' than NATO analog: Yoon](#) (NK News, 05/02/2023)

[U.S. remains fully committed to diplomacy with N. Korea: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 05/02/2023)

Top News:

- First Lady Kim Kun-hee, wife of President Yoon Seok-yeol who is on a state visit to the United States, met with young North Korean defectors and North Korean human rights activists. According to Voice of America (VOA), on the 26th of April, Mrs. Kim met with North Korean human rights activists and young North Korean defectors at the Old Korean Legation Museum in Washington D.C. The event was moderated by Hwang Joon-guk, the Korean ambassador to the United Nations, and was held as a private meeting for about an hour. VOA reported that Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Park Jeong, Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), and Chairperson Susan Scholte of the North Korean Freedom Coalition (NKFC) participated in the meeting. Also present was Cindy Warmbier, the mother of Otto Warmbier, an American who died shortly after being released after being detained in North Korea. Executive Director Scarlatoiu also stressed the need for a paradigm shift in North Korea policy to a human rights first approach, saying that he felt the will to resolve the North Korean human rights issue from President Yoon and his wife. ([Donga Ilbo](#))

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom .

In North Korea:

- A top North Korean train manufacturer plans to build a massive new factory in Pyongyang, according to NK Pro analysis of state media and satellite imagery, after struggling to produce new train designs for nearly a decade. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea is sending unwed couples who are living together to serve time in labor camps, saying they are poisoning the country's socialist society, sources there told Radio Free Asia. "If the couples were living in a common-law marriage for less than one year, the punishment will be three months imprisonment in a labor training camp," a source from Chongju. (Hyemin Son, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- The North Korean threat actor known as ScarCruft started experimenting with oversized LNK files as a delivery route for RokRAT malware as early as July 2022, the same month Microsoft began blocking macros across Office documents by default. (Ravie Lakshmanan, [The Hacker News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's unification ministry said Tuesday it plans to publish a report on economic and social situations in North Korea for the first time in November to help better understand people's lives in the secretive regime. The report will include statistical analysis on social and demographic features in North Korea, and show changes in the North's economic and social situations, based on testimonies from the North's defectors, according to the ministry. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol hailed a new U.S.-ROK platform for discussing nuclear deterrence against North Korean threats on Tuesday as “more effective” than NATO’s analog for nuclear sharing, though experts say the two mechanisms cannot be compared as they are designed for different roles. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The United States steadfastly remains committed to engaging in dialogue with North Korea, a state department spokesperson said Monday, after Pyongyang denounced the agreement reached by the leaders of South Korea and the U.S. on strengthening U.S. extended deterrence commitment to South Korea. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

[Translation] First Lady Kim Kun-hee meets Otto Warmbier's bereaved family and young North Korean defectors in Washington D.C.

First Lady Kim Kun-hee, wife of President Yoon Seok-yeol who is on a state visit to the United States, met with young North Korean defectors and North Korean human rights activists.

According to Voice of America (VOA), on the 26th of April, Mrs. Kim met with North Korean human rights activists and young North Korean defectors at the Old Korean Legation Museum in Washington D.C.

The event was moderated by Hwang Joon-guk, the Korean ambassador to the United Nations, and was held as a private meeting for about an hour.

VOA reported that Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Park Jeong, Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), and Chairperson Susan Scholte of the North Korean Freedom Coalition (NKFC) participated in the meeting. Also present was Cindy Warmbier, the mother of Otto Warmbier, an American who died shortly after being released after being detained in North Korea.

In addition, young North Korean defectors including Lee Hyun-seung, a researcher at the Global Peace Foundation, Joseph Kim, a North Korea researcher at the Bush Institute, and Lee Seo-hyun, a student at Columbia Graduate School, were also present.

Attendees unanimously said that the event was a great motivation and inspiration.

Researcher Lee said, “I was able to confirm the will of President Yoon and the South Korean government to improve human rights in North Korea.”

Lee Seo-hyun also said, "It was a good opportunity to present and share a new approach to resolving the North Korean problem."

Warmbier's mother, Cindy, said, "I am sure that Mrs. Kim is interested in what happened to Otto and that she will make a big difference in the future."

Executive Director Scarlatoiu also stressed the need for a paradigm shift in North Korea policy to a human rights first approach, saying that he felt the will to resolve the North Korean human rights issue from President Yoon and his wife.

Written by Donga Ilbo

Translated by Haeun Moon, HRNK Intern

Prepared by Kathy Yu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517142909/https://mailchi.mp/f0d0da6e41a0/hrnk-news-items-first-lady-kim-kun-hee-meets-otto-warmbiers-bereaved-family-and-young-north-korean-defectors-in-washington-dc>

Wednesday, May 3, 2023

Warmbier's mother who couldn't meet the former president Moon, met Kim Keon Hee, the wife of South Korean President.

Top News:

[Warmbier's mother who couldn't meet the former president Moon, met Kim Keon Hee, the wife of South Korean President](#) (04/27/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom .

In North Korea:

[Future of North Korea sanctions panel in limbo amid UN Security Council dispute](#) (NK News, 05/03/2023)

[North Korean factory poster urges cyber safety as country's hacking threat grows](#) (NK News, 05/03/2023)

In South Korea:

[N. Korea's youth holds rally against S. Korea-U.S. deterrence deal](#) (Yonhap, 05/03/2023)

[Unification Minister urges efforts to persuade N. Korea to make 'right' decision](#) (Yonhap, 05/03/2023)

International:

[China's support for North Korea forces Seoul to enhance nuclear deterrence](#) (NK News, 05/03/2023)

Top News:

- Kim Keon Hee, The First Lady of South Korea, met with Cindy Warmbier, the mother of Otto Warmbier, an American college student who was detained in North Korea and died after his release, on the 26th local time in Washington DC.
Otto Warmbier died on June 19th, 2017, just 6 days after being released from 17 months of detention in North Korea.
Warmbier's parents requested a meeting with the former President Moon Jae-in during their visit to South Korea in November 2019, but the Blue House refused, citing "difficulty in scheduling". ([Chosun News](#))

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom.

In North Korea:

- Discord among representatives of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) in New York has put a question mark over the future operations of the expert group tasked with monitoring North Korea sanctions implementation, multiple informed sources have told NK News. (Chad O' Carrol, [NK News](#))
- North Korean television provided a glimpse this week into domestic cybersecurity education in the country notorious for its hacking syndicates, showing a poster at a factor bearing buzzwords ranging from "spyware" to "backdoor." (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- North Korean youth and students held a rally to denounce a recent agreement reached by the leaders of South Korea and the United States on strengthening U.S. extended deterrence, Pyongyang's state media said Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- Unification Minister Kwon Young-se on Wednesday called for efforts to persuade North Korea to make the "right" decision for the sake of all members of the Korean Peninsula, although Pyongyang has shown little signs of resuming talks with Seoul and Washington. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- China's unwillingness to enforce sanctions against North Korea and its "hostile activities" toward South Korea are pushing Seoul and Washington closer together, President Yoon Suk-yeol said Tuesday. The remarks came after Beijing criticized the results of last week's U.S.-ROK summit, at which the two countries' announced the new Nuclear Consultative Group to bolster the joint execution and planning of U.S. nuclear operations against Pyongyang. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

[Translation] Warmbier's mother who couldn't meet the former president Moon, met Kim Keon Hee, the wife of South Korean President

In 2019, the former president Moon refused to have a meeting, citing "difficulty in scheduling".

Kim Keon Hee, The First Lady of South Korea, met with Cindy Warmbier, the mother of Otto Warmbier, an American college student who was detained in North Korea and died after his release, on the 26th local time in Washington DC.

Otto Warmbier died on June 19th, 2017, just 6 days after being released from 17 months of detention in North Korea.

Warmbier's parents requested a meeting with the former President Moon Jae-in during their visit to South Korea in November 2019, but the Blue House refused, citing "difficulty in scheduling".

After the meeting with Kim Keon Hee, Warmbier's mother said "The first lady showed a sincere attitude and I am convinced that she wants to take care of and help prevent the suffering that is happening in North Korea.

According to a report, Kim Keon Hee met with North Korean human rights officials, including Cindy Warmbier, the mother of Otto Warmbier, at the Korean Embassy in Washington DC around 3:30 pm local time on the 26th. Washington DC at 3:30pm on 26th.

Hwang Joon-kook, South Korean ambassador to the UN, held a closed-door meeting for about an hour, which was attended by Jung Park, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Greg Scarlatou, executive director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), Suzanne Scholte, Chairman of the North Korean Freedom Coalition (NKFC), Lee Hyun-seung, a researcher at the Global Peace Foundation who was born in North Korea and is now working on human rights issues in the US, and Lee Seo-hyun, a student at Columbia University graduate school and sister of Lee Hyun-seung, Joseph Kim, a North Korea specialist at the Bush Institute, who is also a North Korean defector, was also present.

In a phone conversation with the news agency, Cindy Warmbier said, "Mrs. Kim expressed support for my efforts to raise awareness about North Korean human rights issues and remembered Otto." She added, "The fact that Mrs. Kim had this meeting with me has great significance to me. I felt really supported", and "I believe that the Yoon government will do everything to bring the necessary changes to improve the quality of life for North Koreans. We must speak out against evil. Keeping silent leads to terrible things happening."

In a phone conversation with the researcher Lee Hyun-seung, he said, "When Cindy Warmbier talked about her son, the first lady Kim was very heartbroken," and "she also showed her commitment to North Korean human rights policies by sharing a North Korean human rights report published by the Ministry of Unification last month."

Lee Seo-hyun said, "I don't think the South Korea-US alliance has ever spoken in a concerted voice on North Korean human rights issues like it does now." She added, "This was a great opportunity for the attendees to get big inspiration."

Scarlatoiu, the executive director of HRNK, said, "It's the first time that a South Korean President or first lady has held a meeting with North Korean human rights activists or defectors during their visit to the United States. It was very encouraging to see that Mrs. Kim is deeply concerned about this issue."

Scarlatoiu, the executive director of HRNK, said, "The mention of North Korean human rights issues was included in the joint statement of the South Korean and US leaders, Yoon and Biden, released after their summit. Including human rights issues when addressing North Korea's nuclear and missile issues, political security, and military issues is a very important paradigm shift."

Chairman Scholte said, "I told First Lady Kim that it is necessary to rescue the defectors who are currently detained in China because if they are repatriated to North Korea, they will face execution." and "Kim listened very carefully to what all the participants said."

Chairman Scholte said, "As the South Korean government has shown its commitment to the issue of North Korean human rights, all participants expressed strong support and willingness to help in any ways possible."

Written by Yang Ji-ho

Translated by Nathan Choe, HRNK Intern

Prepared by Jack Boone, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517143304/https://mailchi.mp/b4bcebb91e8f/hrnk-news-items-warmbiers-mother-who-couldnt-meet-the-former-president-moon-met-kim-keon-hee-the-wife-of-south-korean-president>

Thursday, May 4, 2023

North Korea's 'Day of the Sun' canceled due to rain; U.S. working with S. Korea, Japan to address N. Korea's human rights violations

Top News:

[North Korea's 'Day of the Sun' canceled due to rain](#) (Radio Free Asia, 04/18/2023)

[Biden and South Korea's Yoon announce agreement to deter North Korea, including deploying nuclear-armed submarine](#) (CNN, 04/26/2023)

[Biden rolls out red carpet for South Korea's Yoon with state visit and new cooperation against North Korea's nuclear threat](#) (Crossroads Today, 04/26/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea steps up criticism of S. Korea-U.S. deterrence plan](#) (Yonhap, 05/04/2023)

[North Korea stirs anti-US frenzy with new posters, burns Biden and Yoon effigies](#) (NK News, 05/04/2023)

[Food security remains 'fragile' in North Korea but data hard to come by: Report](#) (NK News, 05/04/2023)

International:

[U.S. working with S. Korea, Japan to address N. Korea's human rights violations](#) (Yonhap, 05/04/2023)

[China's exports to North surge close to 2019 levels](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/04/2023)

[Yoon, Kishida to discuss deeper cooperation during visit](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/04/2023)

[US invited ROK and Japanese admirals aboard nuclear submarine, new photos show](#) (NK News, 05/04/2023)

[US 'deeply concerned' about North Korean abductions, human rights violations](#) (NK News, 05/04/2023)

[US-ROK forces to conduct 'annihilation' drills to counter North Korean threats](#) (NK News, 05/04/2023)

Top News:

- The leader's absence from Kumsusan was unusual but was not intended to emphasize his independence, so that he could escape the shadow of his forebears, said David Maxwell of the Washington-based Foundation for Defense of Democracies. (Jieun Kim and Soyoung Kim, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- "The South Koreans don't have experience in using nuclear weapons. This is why we need to do tabletop exercises with them. The Koreans need to be educated in what it means to use nuclear weapons, the targeting, and the effects," said David Maxwell of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, adding that there will be no change to the US having control on the targeting. "The hope is that this will satisfy them and improve readiness." (Betsy Klein, Kylie Atwood, and Sam Fossom, [CNN](#))
- "The South Koreans don't have experience in using nuclear weapons. This is why we need to do tabletop exercises with them. The Koreans need to be educated in what it means to use nuclear weapons, the targeting, and the effects," said David Maxwell of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, adding that there will be no change to the US having control on the targeting. "The hope is that this will satisfy them and improve readiness." (Betsy Klein and Kylie Atwood, [CNN](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean workers and members of social groups have joined the North's criticism of a recent summit agreement between South Korea and the United States on strengthening U.S. extended deterrence, according to state media Thursday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea has started widely displaying anti-U.S. and South Korea propaganda posters for the first time in five years, according to NK News analysis of state media, as authorities whip the population into a frenzy over perceived threats of attack following the allies' recent summit. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- A major report on global food insecurity has excluded North Korea from its list of countries currently facing a food crisis, repeatedly citing a lack of data even as it emphasizes that the food situation appears to be deteriorating. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

International:

- The United States is working closely with South Korea and Japan to address human rights violations committed by North Korea, including the abduction of foreign nationals, a state department spokesperson said Wednesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- Chinese exports to North Korea appear to be recovering to pre-pandemic levels. (Shin Kyung-Jin, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida will hold talks on expanding cooperation between the two countries in security, technology and cultural exchanges at their upcoming meeting during the latter's visit to Seoul early next week, a presidential spokesman said Thursday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The U.S. Navy invited South Korean and Japanese admirals aboard an Ohio-class nuclear submarine last month, according to new Pentagon photos released on Wednesday, in what one expert framed as part of U.S. efforts to encourage trilateral cooperation against North Korea and other threats. (Arius Derr, [NK News](#))
- The U.S. remains "deeply concerned" about North Korean abductions, the State Department said Wednesday, following a meeting between Deputy Secretary Wendy Sherman and representatives of two organizations representing families of kidnapes. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The U.S. and South Korean militaries will hold what will likely be the largest-ever joint live-fire exercises this month to celebrate 70 years of the alliance, Seoul's defense ministry announced Thursday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Joseph Choi, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517143306/https://mailchi.mp/ad7b6ae3ec9b/hrnk-news-items-north-koreas-day-of-the-sun-canceled-due-to-rain-us-working-with-s-korea-japan-to-address-n-koreas-human-rights-violations>

Friday, May 5, 2023

First Lady Kim Keon-hee had a face-to-face talk with North Korean defectors, Warmbier's mother, and more

Top News:

[First Lady Kim Keon-hee had a face-to-face talk with North Korean defectors, Warmbier's mother, and more](#) (Voice of America, 04/27/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom .

In North Korea:

[N. Korea intensifies criticism of S. Korea-U.S. deterrence plan](#) (Yonhap, 05/05/2023)

In South Korea:

[North Korea went 'too far' by burning Yoon Suk-yeol in effigy, Seoul says](#) (NK News, 05/05/2023)
[ROK court reverses ruling against activists over anti-North Korea leafleting](#) (NK News, 05/05/2023)

[Yoon's visit opens new chapter for S. Korea-U.S. alliance: Amb. Cho](#) (Yonhap, 05/05/2023)

International:

[Burkina Faso leader says country wants 'more weapons' from North Korea](#) (NK News, 05/05/2023)

Top News:

- First Lady Kim Keon-hee, the wife of South Korean President Yoon Seok-yeol met with young North Korean defectors and human rights activists during the state visit to the United States in Washington. Some participants said that it was a great encouragement. First Lady Kim, Keon-hee met with North Korean human rights officials at the Old Korean Legation in Washington D.C. on the afternoon of the 26th. Officials who met with Mrs. Kim told VOA that the closed meeting was held for about an hour with the host of the South Korean Ambassador to the United Nations, Hwang Joon-Guk, Deputy Assistant Secretary Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Jung H. Park; Executive Director of the US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea(HRNC), Greg Scarlatoiu; the Chairman of the North Korea Freedom Coalition(NKFC), Suzanne Scolte; and mother of Otto Warmbier, who died six days after being detained in North Korea. (Kim Young-Kwon, [Voice of America](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea's state media on Friday intensified Pyongyang's criticism of a recent summit agreement between South Korea and the United States on strengthening U.S. extended deterrence. ([Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea condemned North Korea for organizing a rally this week to burn President Yoon Suk-yeol in effigy, stating that Pyongyang went "too far" as it ratchets up internal anti-ROK and U.S. activities. State media also published dozens of photos Friday of anti-Yoon protests in Seoul as part of efforts to paint him as a "puppet" of Washington with no domestic support, while reporting on more domestic rallies calling for "exterminating" Americans and South Koreans. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- The South Korean government unjustly revoked the legal status of a North Korean defector activist group over its anti-regime leafleting, the Supreme Court has ruled, finding the government cannot prove that the group's activities caused a "grave danger" to the lives and safety of residents in the area. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol's recent visit to the United States has opened a new chapter for the 70-year-old alliance, Seoul's top envoy to the U.S. said Thursday. South Korea's ambassador to the U.S. Cho Hyun-dong also insisted that the countries have upgraded their mutual defense treaty signed in 1953. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The West African nation of Burkina Faso wants to import more weapons from North Korea following their revival of ties earlier this year, the country's leader said on Thursday. During an extensive interview on national television (RTB), Ibrahim Traoré said that North Korea, like Russia, can serve Burkina Faso's interests particularly in the fields of security and development. (Sophie Lamotte, [NK News](#))

[Translation] First Lady Kim Keon-hee had a face-to-face talk with North Korean defectors, Warmbier's mother, and more

First Lady Kim Keon-hee, the wife of South Korean President Yoon Seok-yeol met with young North Korean defectors and human rights activists during the state visit to the United States in Washington. Some participants said that it was a great encouragement. Kim Young- Kwon reporting.

First Lady Kim, Keon-hee met with North Korean human rights officials at the Old Korean Legation in Washinton D.C. on the afternoon of the 26th. Officials who met with Mrs. Kim told VOA that the closed meeting was held for about an hour with the host of the South Korean Ambassador to the United Nations, Hwang Joon-Guk. Deputy Assistant Secretary Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Jung H. Park; Executive Director of the US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea(HRNC), Greg Scarlatou; the Chairman of the North Korea Freedom Coalition(NKFC), Suzanne Scolte; and mother of Otto Warmbier, who died six days after being detained in North Korea.

Young North Korean defectors including Hyun-Seung Lee, a researcher at the Global Peace Foundation; Joseph Kim, a researcher at the Bush Institute; and Seo-hyun Lee, a graduate student at Columbia University, also presented. Participants said they cannot say what Mrs.Kim said, but the meeting was a great encouragement.

Hyun-Seung Lee said, "It was a great opportunity to affirm President Yoon, his wife, and the Korean government's willingness to improve human rights in North Korea." [Recording: Hyun-Seung Lee] We are grateful and encouraged that the first lady has prepared a meeting regarding human rights issues in North Korea." This never happened in the past, did it? I think it's very special to have such a meeting during a state visit to the United States."

Mr. Lee told Mrs.Kim, "We explained why we are talking about North Korean human rights, talked about the dignity and values of North Korean rights, and shared the necessity to cooperate together to protect those values." Seo-hyun Lee, who recently testified on North Korean human rights in fluent English at an unofficial meeting of the UN Security Council said, "It was a good opportunity to present and share a new approach to solving the North Korean problem"

[Recording: Seo-hyun Lee] "I think it is symbolic that the Korean First Lady prepared this event by inviting North Korean defectors and experts who have been working for human rights in North

Korea and Cindy Warmbier, the mother of Otto Warmbier, who lost her son unfairly. I could feel that the first lady is personally interested in human rights, and above all, it was a glimpse of the South Korean government's firm commitment and effort to solve the North Korean human rights issue, which is directly related to security."

During the meeting, Ms. Lee said there were many voices calling for a new approach to North Korea because human rights issues are directly related to security.

Otto Warmbier's mother, Cindy Warmbier told VOA that she truly believes that Mrs. Kim truly cared about what happened to her son.

[Recording: Cindy Warmbier] "I can tell you that I really liked her and I truly believe that she cared about what happened to Otto and I think she's going to make a huge difference in the future. I'm very confident that she is genuine and cares and wants to help stop the suffering in North Korea." She then said she thinks Mrs. Kim will make a big difference in the future.

Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu, who attended the meeting said Mrs. Kim listened to all participants' stories and recommendations. In addition, she said that she could feel Mrs. Kim and President Yoon's willingness to resolve the North Korean human rights issue, adding that this was very encouraging.

He added that Mrs. Kim stressed the necessity for the paradigm shift from North Korean policy to prioritizing their human rights.

Reported by Kim Young-Kwon from VOA News
Translated by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Yoshino Yamauchi, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:
<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517143530/https://mailchi.mp/087e6b7e8183/hrnk-news-items-first-lady-kim-keon-he-e-had-a-face-to-face-talk-with-north-korean-defectors-warmbiers-mother-and-more>

Saturday, May 6, 2023

Satellite imagery suggests new construction near N. Korea's satellite launch station

In North Korea:

[Satellite imagery suggests new construction near N. Korea's satellite launch station](#) (Yonhap, 05/06/2023)

International:

[Washington Declaration goes beyond 'nuclear sharing': U.S. official](#) (Yonhap, 05/06/2023)

In North Korea:

- Recent commercial satellite imagery indicates new construction is taking place at North Korea's major rocket launching site in a move likely aimed at modernizing the facility, according to a recent report from a U.S. think tank. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- The recent agreement reached by South Korea and the United States on enhancing U.S. extended deterrence is a historic step that goes beyond "nuclear-sharing," a U.S. administration official told Yonhap News Agency on Friday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ava Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517143542/https://mailchi.mp/53ec648c384f/hrnk-news-items-satellite-imagery-suggests-new-construction-near-n-koreas-satellite-launch-station>

Sunday, May 7, 2023

Yoon says 3-way cooperation more important than ever

International:

[Japan's PM tells South Koreans his 'heart hurts' over pain caused by occupation](#) (Reuters, 05/06/2023)

[Yoon says 3-way cooperation more important than ever](#) (Korea Herald, 05/06/2023)

International:

- The focus of the summit between the two U.S. allies revolved around security cooperation in the face of North Korea's nuclear threats, with a particular eye on American interests in the region, said Shin-wha Lee, a professor of international relations at Seoul-based Korea University. Kishida said they discussed bilateral ties as well as regional and global issues such as North Korea. He said he had agreed to allow South Korean experts to inspect the planned release of water from the crippled Fukushima nuclear power plant, which has been controversial with Japan's neighbours concerned about possible environmental effects. (Choonsik Yoo, Hyonhee Shin, Sakura Murakami, Reuters)
- President Yoon Suk Yeol on Sunday said South Korea is open to trilateral strategic and nuclear planning with the United States and Japan on how to respond in the event of a North Korea's nuclear attack. (Ji Da-gyum, Korea Herald)

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

Monday, May 8, 2023

Civic group sends anti-Pyongyang propaganda material to N. Korea via balloons; NK hasn't answered hotlines for a month

In South Korea:

[Civic group sends anti-Pyongyang propaganda material to N. Korea via balloons](#) (Yonhap, 05/08/2023)

[Defector-activist says he sent anti-Kim leaflets and medicine into North Korea](#) (NK News, 05/08/2023)

[Number of N. Korean defectors coming to S. Korea reaches 34 in Q1](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/08/2023)

[Seoul court again orders N. Korea to pay compensation to former POWs](#) (Yonhap, 05/08/2023)

[Seoul says Japan could be included in US-ROK nuclear planning, then backtracks](#) (NK News, 05/08/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[NK hasn't answered hotlines for a month](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/07/2023)

International:

[China building giant trade and tourism zone across from North Korean 'holy' city](#) (NK News, 05/08/2023)

[Yoon, Kishida Vow Better Seoul-Tokyo Ties Following Summit](#) (VOA, 05/08/2023)

In South Korea:

- A North Korean defectors' group said Monday it has flown giant balloons carrying medicine and anti-Pyongyang leaflets to North Korea across the western inter-Korean border last week. ([Yonhap](#))
- A high-profile human rights activist said he launched nearly two dozen balloons carrying medicine and anti-regime messages into North Korea late last week after South Korea's Supreme Court ruled in his favor in a case about his cross-border leafleting. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The number of North Korean defectors coming to South Korea reached 34 in the first quarter, government data showed. (Nam Kyung-don, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Former South Korean prisoners of war (POWs) have again won a damages suit filed against North Korea and its leader Kim Jong-un for their forced labor during captivity there. ([Yonhap](#))
- Yoon Suk-yeol on Sunday raised the possibility that Seoul and Washington could include Japan in nuclear planning efforts in order to strengthen deterrence against North Korea, only for his office to quickly walk back his comments. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea has refused to take regular phone calls from South Korea for a month, while stepping up criticism of the Yoon Suk Yeol government's policy of strengthening coordination with the United States in countering and deterring escalating North Korean threats. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- China is building a giant new tourism and economic zone in a remote area near North Korea's "holy" city of Samjiyon and Mount Paektu, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery and Chinese media. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol on Monday called for officials to map out specific steps to hasten security and economic cooperation with Japan following his weekend summit in Seoul with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. ([VOA](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517144221/https://mailchi.mp/dd5c43abeac7/hrnk-news-items-civic-group-sends-anti-pyongyang-propaganda-material-to-n-korea-via-balloons-nk-hasnt-answered-hotlines-for-a-month>

Tuesday, May 9, 2023

Korean and American experts advocate for 'human rights up front' approach to solve North Korean nuclear issue

Top News:

[Korean and American Experts Advocate for 'Human Rights Up Front' Approach to Solve North Korean Nuclear Issue](#) (News1, 05/04/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom.

In North Korea:

[N. Korean media calls for increased farming output amid food shortage crisis](#) (Yonhap, 05/09/2023)

[North Korea's Kim Jong Un says Russia will 'smash all challenges'](#) (UPI, 05/09/2023)

[North Korea's Kim says Russia 'will prevail' over hostile forces](#) (Reuters, 05/09/2023)

[N. Korean leader sends congratulatory message to Putin on Victory Day occasion](#) (Yonhap, 05/09/2023)

[What the official end of COVID emergency means for North Korea's border controls](#) (NK News, 05/09/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea apparently operating some 10 S. Korean-owned factories at Kaesong complex without authorization](#) (Yonhap, 05/09/2023)

[Seoul court orders North Korea to pay former ROK prisoners for forced labor](#) (NK News, 05/09/2023)

International:

[Korea, U.S. and Japan exploring expanded intel sharing](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/09/2023)

[Lawmakers weigh in on Korea-Japan summit](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/09/2023)

[N. Korean FM vows stronger ties with China in meeting with new envoy](#) (Yonhap, 05/09/2023)

[Seoul, Tokyo to connect radar systems to better track North Korean missiles](#) (NK News, 05/09/2023)

[Yoon builds on Japan relations, DP criticizes president's first year](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/09/2023)

[Yoon highlights Japan detente as he marks first year in office](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/09/2023)

Top News:

- Korean and American experts have suggested adopting an approach that prioritizes human rights in resolving the North Korean nuclear issue.

David Maxwell, the Deputy Director of the CAPS and a former US Army Special Forces Colonel, stated at the Korean Peninsula Peaceful Unification Forum held by Peaceful Unification Advisory Council in Washington DC on the 3rd (local time), "The Korea-US alliance should adapt an approach that prioritizes human rights" and he said that "human rights are not only a moral mandatory but also a matter of national security."

The Deputy Director Maxwell pointed out "Kim Jong-un, the General Secretary of the Korean Workers' Party, inevitably denies the human rights of North Korean citizens' to maintain power" and he highlighted that "the North Korean citizens are suffering as a result of Kim's policy which consciously prioritizes nuclear and missile development over the welfare of the people."

He argued that "the Korea-US alliance should develop and execute the comprehensive information and influence campaigns through which they should provide practical knowledge on how to mobilize collective action, the reality of North Korea, the truth about the outside world, and a universal understanding of humanity, ranging from entertainment to news, in order to drive change."

He particularly emphasized that "Korea and the United States should address human rights issues together every time they respond to provocations from North Korea" and he pointed out that "while discussing the nuclear program would only enhance the legitimacy of the Kim Jong-un regime, raising human rights violation as an issue would actually undermine the legitimacy of the regime."

Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), also stated that "human rights issues have been neglected and sacrificed for the over 30 years at negotiation tables discussing important issues such as North Korea policy and the nuclear and missile programs" and he argued that "It is now time to shift the paradigm to a human rights-centered policy towards North Korea."

Executive Director Scarlatoiu commented that "It is remarkable that the Yoon Suk Yeol government has regained leadership on North Korean human rights at the United Nations," and he advised that "the United States should once again demonstrate leadership and

reclaim the advantage they had on North Korean human rights at the UN.”

He further stated, “Stronger resolutions from the UN General Assembly and UN Human Rights Council are needed, and the issue of North Korean human rights should be brought back to the agenda of the UN Security Council.” He added that “the United States should take the lead in efforts to hold North Korea accountable through path other than the International Criminal Court (ICC). Mechanisms like an international special prosecutor would be ideal.”

He said, “Progress in human rights through multilateral and international diplomacy is the key to solving the conundrum of North Korea, applying a diplomatic, informational, military, and economic approach with a human rights priority.” ([News1](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea's state media called on farmers to prepare for the springtime rice-planting season in a "watertight" manner on Tuesday, in what appeared to be efforts aimed at increasing grain output to tackle the country's food shortages. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un sent a congratulatory message to Russian President Vladimir Putin for Moscow's Victory Day holiday and said that Russia would prevail over "hostile forces," state-run Korean Central News Agency reported Tuesday. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said Russia "will prevail" in its fight against what he described as "imperialists," state news agency KCNA said on Tuesday, in remarks seen to be aimed at Ukraine and its Western supporters, such as the United States. (Hyunsu Yim, [Reuters](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has sent a congratulatory message to Russian President Vladimir Putin over Moscow's celebration of its Victory Day holiday, Pyongyang's state media reported Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- Pyongyang has closely monitored news from WHO, suggesting that downgrading of pandemic could trigger policy changes. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea appears to be operating around 10 South Korean-owned factories at a now-shuttered joint industrial complex in the North without approval, Seoul's unification ministry said Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- A Seoul court has ordered North Korea to compensate three South Koreans taken prisoner during the Korean War for their forced labor while in captivity. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

International:

- The Defense Ministry said Tuesday that South Korea, the United States and Japan are exploring ways to strengthen joint information sharing capabilities regarding North Korean missile launches, but that the details of such an arrangement remain undetermined. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's formerly distant relationship with Japan under the preceding administration is getting back to normal with Yoon Suk Yeol in office, according to a former consul general to

Osaka and ruling People Power Party lawmaker Rep. Kim Seok-ki. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

- North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son-hui has met with China's new ambassador to Pyongyang and vowed a "steadfast" willingness to further develop friendly ties between their nations, state media said Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and Japan will connect their radar systems through the U.S. military to enhance their ability to track and share information on North Korean missiles. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol said Tuesday that if Korea and Japan build trust through cooperation and exchanges, while facing the past with sincerity, the two countries could open up a new future that surpasses even past peak bilateral relations. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Improving ties between South Korea and Japan will open the door to a new future where the two countries, along with the US, can bolster the current coalition working on North Korea's denuclearization, President Yoon said Tuesday, a day before his first anniversary of taking office. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

[Translation] Korean and American Experts Advocate for 'Human Rights Up Front' Approach to Solve North Korean Nuclear Issue.

Korean and American experts have suggested adopting an approach that prioritizes human rights in resolving the North Korean nuclear issue.

David Maxwell, the Deputy Director of the CAPS and a former US Army Special Forces Colonel, stated at the Korean Peninsula Peaceful Unification Forum held by Peaceful Unification Advisory Council in Washington DC on the 3rd (local time), "The Korea-US alliance should adapt an approach that prioritizes human rights" and he said that "human rights are not only a moral mandatory but also a matter of national security."

The Deputy Director Maxwell pointed out "Kim Jong-un, the General Secretary of the Korean Workers' Party, inevitably denies the human rights of North Korean citizens' to maintain power" and he highlighted that "the North Korean citizens are suffering as a result of Kim's policy which consciously prioritizes nuclear and missile development over the welfare of the people."

He argued that "the Korea-US alliance should develop and execute the comprehensive information and influence campaigns through which they should provide practical knowledge on how to mobilize collective action, the reality of North Korea, the truth about the outside world, and a universal understanding of humanity, ranging from entertainment to news, in order to drive change."

He particularly emphasized that "Korea and the United States should address human rights issues together every time they respond to provocations from North Korea" and he pointed out that "while discussing the nuclear program would only enhance the legitimacy of the Kim Jong-un regime, raising human rights violation as an issue would actually undermine the legitimacy of the regime."

Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), also stated that "human rights issues have been neglected and sacrificed for the over 30 years at negotiation tables discussing important issues such as North Korea policy and the nuclear and

missile programs” and he argued that “It is now time to shift the paradigm to a human rights-centered policy towards North Korea.”

Executive Director Scarlatoiu commented that “It is remarkable that the Yoon Suk Yeol government has regained leadership on North Korean human rights at the United Nations,” and he advised that “the United States should once again demonstrate leadership and reclaim the advantage they had on North Korean human rights at the UN.”

He further stated, “Stronger resolutions from the UN General Assembly and UN Human Rights Council are needed, and the issue of North Korean human rights should be brought back to the agenda of the UN Security Council.” He added that “the United States should take the lead in efforts to hold North Korea accountable through path other than the International Criminal Court (ICC). Mechanisms like an international special prosecutor would be ideal.”

He said, “Progress in human rights through multilateral and international diplomacy is the key to solving the conundrum of North Korea, applying a diplomatic, informational, military, and economic approach with a human rights priority.”

Cha Du-hyeon, Senior Research Fellow at the Asian Institute for Policy Studies, stated that ensuring the implementation of shared values such as human rights in inter-Korean relations is a key challenge for Korea-US cooperation. He pointed out that lukewarm attitudes toward human rights violations in North Korea are acts that sacrifice Korea’s identity, which has long pursued democracy and a thriving market economy.

Research fellow Cha stated, “We should raise further questions regarding human rights in North Korea.” He explained that while acknowledging the inevitable reality of different political and economic systems in South and North Korea is necessary for the development of inter-Korean relations, it should not be equated with accepting violations of universal values, such as human rights.

He emphasized, “The infringement and violation of human rights or international moral standards by North Korea should be timely pointed out, even during periods of smooth inter-Korean relations.” He added, “This is necessary not only as a means of exposing the propaganda efforts toward the North Korean regime but also to counter the temptation for North Korea to utilize provocations or criticism against South Korea for the sake of its internal political cohesion.”

In relation to this, Ambassador Cho Hyun-dong stated in his congratulatory speech delivered by Consul General Kwon Se-jung on this day, “The Yoon Suk Yeol government will present a future of freedom, peace, and prosperity in unification to our people and the world.” He emphasized, “Above all, it is important to accurately inform the reality of North Korea in order to achieve this.”

Ambassador Cho mentioned the recent release of the first-ever human rights report on North Korea by the Ministry of Unification, stating “This is not intended to shame or vilify North Korea, but rather to ensure that our North Korean compatriots, who are deprived of the freedoms they deserve and suffering from starvation, can enjoy their rights as universal human beings.”

He stated, “We hope to build a consensus on reunification and envision a future of reunification by fostering empathy among our people and the international community for the suffering of North

Korean residents and sharing awareness of the need for improvement in North Korean human rights.”

Ambassador Cho added, “As the Ambassador to the United States, I will diligently seek out the tasks I can undertake with a sense of duty towards the improvement of North Korean human rights.”

On the other hand, at the forum, while discussing strengthening the Korea-US alliance to address the North Korean nuclear threat, there were also arguments raised that North Korea should promptly respond to the “bold proposals” of the Yoon Suk Yeol government.

In his keynote speech, Seok Dong-hyun, the Secretary-General of the Peaceful Unification Advisory Council, stated, “The South Korean government will firmly confront the ongoing security threats posed by North Korea with a strong defense posture” and emphasized that “the robust Korea-US alliance and the deployment of the combined forces will be the most effective means to ‘restrain’ North Korea’s reckless provocations.”

Secretary-General Seok also mentioned, “In response to North Korea’s repeated provocations, the government aims to ‘restrain’ and ‘discourage’ such provocations and create a strategic environment in which North Korea can return to denuclearization negotiations based on ‘dialogue.’” He referred to the bold initiatives of the Yoon Suk Yeol administration.

He explained, “The core of the bold initiative is to alleviate North Korea’s security concerns through dialogue and achieve denuclearization by gradually promoting inter-Korean prosperity, thereby making North Korea no longer feel the necessity of nuclear possession and use.”

However, he emphasized, “Just because North Korea’s denuclearization is essential does not mean that we impose unilateral sacrifices and demands on North Korea. We do not seek a forced change through coercion.” He further stated, “The government will uphold the firm principle of North Korea’s complete denuclearization but will continue to pursue diverse practical approaches without distinguishing between preconditions and post-conditions in order to create a cycle of momentum for achieving it.”

The Secretary-General Seok also expressed the expectation that the North Korean government would cease further provocations and respond positively to such bold proposals.

Ambassador Cho also urged North Korea to immediately cease provocations and respond earnestly to the bold initiatives. He highlighted that the leaders of South Korea and the United States reaffirmed their commitment to pursuing dialogue and exchanges with North Korea without preconditions as a means to advance the shared goal of achieving complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, as stated in the Washington Declaration.

Translated by Nathan Choe, HRNK Intern

Prepared by Dan McDowall, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517144604/https://mailchi.mp/ef01b40f892f/hrnk-news-items-korean-and-american-experts-advocate-for-human-rights-up-front-approach-to-solve-north-korean-nuclear-issue>

Wednesday, May 10, 2023

Sometimes less is more: The most important 26 words of ROK-US summit

Top News:

[Sometimes less is more: The most important 26 words of ROK-US summit](#) (The Korea Times, 05/08/2023)

[Rights advocates welcome top court ruling on anti-Pyongyang leaflets](#) (The Korea Times, 05/09/2023)

[Biden and South Korea's Yoon announce agreement to deter North Korea, including deploying nuclear-armed submarine](#) (CNN, 04/26/2023)

In North Korea:

[A North Korean school asks students, 'Do you wanna build a snowman?'](#) (NK News, 05/10/2023)

[N. Korea slams S. Korea-Japan summit as leading to 'military collusion'](#) (Yonhap, 05/10/2023)

In South Korea:

[Defector-lawmaker Tae Yong-ho resigns from key party post over mounting scandals](#) (NK News, 05/10/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[North Korea blamed for hacking Seoul National University Hospital](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/10/2023)

[North Korean hackers stole 830K people's data in attack on Seoul hospital: ROK](#) (NK News, 05/10/23)

International:

[Joint military drills of U.S., S. Korea are defensive in nature: Pentagon spokesperson](#) (Yonhap, 05/10/2023)

[Seoul seeks to join US-led cyber drills to counter North Korean hackers](#) (NK News, 05/10/23)

Top News:

- By all measures the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the United States (ROK-U.S.) summit and state visit by President Yoon Suk Yeol was a resounding success. It celebrated the 70-year blood friendship kindled in the heat of battle from 1950-53. It advanced mutual security and mutual prosperity and established a sound foundation for the further evolution of the alliance as a Global Comprehensive Strategic Alliance in the 21st century. (David Maxwell, [The Korea Times](#))
- Sending balloons filled with anti-regime leaflets into North Korea is nothing new. Activists had done that for decades despite constant complaints and even threats from Pyongyang.

According to Suzanne Scholte, chairwoman of the North Korea Freedom Coalition, thanks to the information carried by such balloons, many ordinary North Koreans have learned about the outside world as well as inside — the truth North Korea's propaganda machines would never tell. "The people of North Korea learned about Kim Jong-un's murder of his half-brother, his regime's torture of Otto Warmbier that led to his death, and the election of Yoon Suk Yeol because of Park and the Fighters for Free North Korea's balloon launches. This was further affirmed by North Koreans we hosted in March who were recent escapees, they mentioned over and over again the value of the leaflets in imparting information," she said. "The people of North Korea are starving not just from lack of food, they are also starving for information — and Kim [Jong-un] fears the power of the truth." (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

- "The South Koreans don't have experience in using nuclear weapons. This is why we need to do tabletop exercises with them. The Koreans need to be educated in what it means to use nuclear weapons, the targeting, and the effects," said David Maxwell of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, adding that there will be no change to the US having control on the targeting. "The hope is that this will satisfy them and improve readiness." (Betsy Klein, Kylie Atwood, Sam Fossum, [CNN](#))

In North Korea:

- State TV shows elite middle school using Disney film 'Frozen' to teach English, despite crackdowns on foreign media. (Seung-Yeon Chung, [NK News](#))
- North Korea condemned this week's summit between President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida through its propaganda outlet Wednesday, saying it has paved the way for a "military collusion" between the two countries. ([Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- Tae Yong-ho, a former North Korean diplomat turned South Korean lawmaker, resigned from his seat on the ruling party's senior advisory body on Wednesday, after a series of controversies put the high-level defector's political career in question. Tae announced the decision to voluntarily step down from the People Power Party's five-member Supreme Council ahead of a meeting of the party's ethics committee, which was set to discuss his case the same day. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korean hackers were behind the 2021 cyberattacks on Seoul National University Hospital, South Korea's police concluded Wednesday. Officers from the Korean National Police Agency's Cyber Investigation Bureau told local media that a group of North Korean agents were to blame for the personal information theft of some 830,000 people at the hospital from May to June 2021. (Lee Sung-Eun, Kim Min-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Police attribute attack to DPRK two years after breach, warning threat actors continue to target health care systems. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

International:

- Any joint military exercises of South Korea and the United States are defensive in nature, a Pentagon spokesperson said Tuesday, insisting that there is no reason for North Korea to have any objections to such exercises. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- Washington to review South Korea's proposal to participate in multinational exercises 'positively,' ROK says. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517144617/https://mailchi.mp/1e6b18b94eb8/hrnk-news-items-sometimes-less-is-more-the-most-important-26-words-of-rok-us-summit>

Thursday, May 11, 2023

7 in 10 S. Koreans support gov't efforts to raise awareness on N.K. human rights; North Korea sanctions panel avoids extended disruption

In North Korea:

[Cybercrime funds half of North Korea's missile program, US official says](#) (NK Pro, 05/11/2023)

[North Korea's Energy Sector: Solar in Agriculture](#) (38 North, 05/10/2023)

In South Korea:

[Rocked by scandals, defector-turned-lawmaker quits party leadership post](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/11/2023)

[ROK union leaders charged with spying for North Korea in 'movie-like' scheme](#) (NK News, 05/11/2023)

[Yoon calls for 'massive' military upgrades at defense committee launch](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/11/2023)

[7 in 10 S. Koreans support gov't efforts to raise awareness on N.K. human rights: poll](#) (Yonhap, 05/11/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[South Korea will be vulnerable to North's drones for years, leak warns](#) (Washington Post, 05/10/2023)

International:

[In DMZ, US army chief touts peace through strength in alliance](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/11/2023)

[North Korea sanctions panel avoids extended disruption after 11th-hour agreement](#) (NK News, 05/11/2023)

[North Korea warns Japan not to join S.Korea-US nuclear consulting group](#) (Reuters, 05/10/2023)
[South Korea-Japan Deal Helps Counter Pyongyang, Adviser Says](#) (Bloomberg, 05/10/2023)

[What the Washington Declaration means](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/11/2023)

[Yet another North Korea-China border opening report](#) (North Korean Economy Watch, 05/11/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea's illicit cyber activities finance half of its missile development, a senior U.S. cybersecurity official said Wednesday, up from last year's estimate of one-third. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK Pro](#))
- Based on open sources, including satellite imagery and North Korean media, it appears that solar energy has become a common feature at larger farms, particularly livestock farms. (Martyn Williams, [38 North](#))

In South Korea:

- Rep. Tae Yong-ho stepped down Wednesday from his leadership position in the ruling People Power Party amid political scandals involving one of his staffers and a senior presidential secretary. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korean prosecutors unveiled full charges against trade union leaders accused of spying for North Korea on Thursday, describing a "movie-like" scheme that allegedly featured secretive meetings with DPRK operatives abroad and encrypted communications in YouTube comments sections. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol ordered a "large-scale change" in military hardware and software to create a "strong combat-type army" in the inaugural Defense Innovation Committee Thursday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Seven in 10 South Koreans support the Yoon Suk Yeol government's efforts to shed light on North Korea's dire human rights situation, a poll showed Thursday. ([Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- An incursion of South Korean airspace by North Korean drones exposed Seoul's lack of preparedness in defending against such threats, and it will likely take years for the military to correct its shortcomings, according to a classified U.S. intelligence assessment of the December incident. (Alex Horton, Min Joo Kim, Michelle Ye Hee Lee, [Washington Post](#))

International:

- Achieving peace on the Korean Peninsula amid North Korea's persistent nuclear saber-rattling requires strength, but such strength is derived from the formidable alliance and deepening defense integration between the treaty allies, said Gen. James McConville, chief of staff of the United States Army. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The U.N. Panel of Experts tasked with monitoring North Korea sanctions has narrowly avoided a disruption to its operations, after an 11th-hour compromise that will force the U.K. coordinator to step down, multiple sources familiar with deliberations told NK News on condition of anonymity. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's foreign ministry has warned Japan not join the newly announced Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG) between South Korea and the U.S. and said doing so would make the Northeast Asian region unstable. (Hyunsu Lim, [Reuters](#))
- A deal between South Korea and Japan to remedy a long-running impasse can help work with their US ally to share intelligence on North Korea and boost their economic leverage with China, according to a top architect of the pact. (Jeong-Ho Lee, Emily Yamamoto, [Bloomberg](#))

- The Washington Declaration between President Yoon Suk Yeol and U.S. President Joe Biden in April has made the U.S. commitment to extended nuclear deterrence more palpable than before. (Wi Sung-lac, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- A recent story by SCMP claims both truck trade and tourism from China to North Korea will start in one month. (Benjamin Katzeff Silberstein, [North Korean Economy Watch](#))

Prepared by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517144920/https://mailchi.mp/5232bbb6c009/7-in-10-s-koreans-support-govt-efforts-to-raise-awareness-on-nk-human-rights-north-korea-sanctions-panel-avoids-extended-disruption>

Friday, May 12, 2023

S. Korea Air Force begins regular large-scale exercise

In North Korea:

[How North Korea wielded the law against violators of pandemic controls](#) (NK News, 05/12/2023)

[North Korea rails against markets. But its policies show it can live with them.](#) (NK News, 05/12/2023)

In South Korea:

[Air Force begins regular large-scale exercise](#) (Yonhap, 05/12/2023)

[NGO says it sent bottles filled with rice and flash drives into North Korea](#) (NK News, 05/12/2023)

[ROK kicks off large-scale air drills against North Korean 'provocations'](#) (NK News, 05/12/2023)

[S. Korea, Japan hold working-level meeting on Seoul's Fukushima inspection](#) (Yonhap, 05/12/2023)

[S. Korea says not considering conscripting women amid ongoing debate](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/12/2023)

[South Korea tests precision missile aimed at countering North Korean artillery](#) (NK News, 05/12/2023)

[Yoon hires hawkish ex-defense minister whom North Korea wanted killed](#) (NK News, 05/12/2023)

International:

[Blinken says retiring deputy secretary Sherman helped deepen U.S. relations with key allies, including Korea](#) (Yonhap, 05/12/2023)

['Patience, diplomatic skill' necessary in Korea-Japan talks about Fukushima visit: U.S. amb.](#) (Yonhap, 05/12/2023)

[S. Korea, Britain sign letter of intent to establish strategic development partnership](#) (Yonhap, 05/12/2023)

[S. Korea, EU to hold summit in Seoul on May 22](#) (Yonhap, 05/12/2023)

In North Korea:

- South Korea's National Intelligence Service recently released a large volume of North Korean legislation that provides new details into how the DPRK legally responded to the COVID-19

pandemic, beginning from early 2020 up to the country's first official outbreak revealed exactly one year ago. (Martin Weiser, [NK News](#))

- The North Korean government has grappled for years with how to address the de facto privatization across many sectors of its economy. The spread of private ownership in the “socialist paradise” is ideologically unwelcome, generating potential instability for the Kim leadership. But Pyongyang also recognizes that private entrepreneurs generate much-needed hard currency and other resources that the state cannot. (Andrei Lankov, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- The Air Force said Friday it kicked off a regular large-scale exercise to bolster its combat capabilities and ensure the country's defense posture. The eight-day Soaring Eagle exercise began at an air base in Cheongju, 112 kilometers south of Seoul, amid tensions on the Korean Peninsula in the wake of North Korea's firing of a purported solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile last month. ([Yonhap](#))
- A South Korean nongovernmental organization (NGO) has announced that it sent bottles filled with rice and USB flash drives into North Korea recently, the first time it has publicized such activity since the outbreak of COVID-19. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea kicked off a regular large-scale aerial exercise on Friday to strengthen combat capabilities and enhance the country's defense posture against North Korean missile launches and other military activities. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The director-general-level meeting was held at Seoul's foreign ministry, with the South Korean side headed by Yun Hyun-soo, head of the ministry's bureau for climate change, energy, environment and scientific affairs, and the Japanese side led by Atsushi Kaifu, director-general of the Japanese foreign ministry's disarmament, non-proliferation and science department. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's Defense Ministry said Friday that it is neither considering expanding military conscription to female citizens nor extending the period of mandatory military service for eligible male citizens as ways to address personnel challenges in the military, amid the ongoing controversy surrounding the current military service system. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea has conducted a live-fire test of a homegrown tactical guided missile designed to counter artillery threats from enemies such as North Korea, according to the ROK military, paving the way for the weapon to enter full-scale mass production later this year. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol established a new committee on Thursday charged with guaranteeing “overwhelming” military power for countering North Korean missile and nuclear threats, stating that Seoul must deter the DPRK's “provocative mentality in advance.” (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- The top U.S. diplomat expressed his gratitude to outgoing Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman on Friday, also praising the first female deputy secretary of state for having deepened U.S. relations with key allies including South Korea and Japan. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

- South Korea and Japan should exercise "patience and diplomatic skill" during talks about details of a planned inspection visit by South Korean experts to Japan's crippled Fukushima nuclear power plant, U.S. Ambassador Philip Goldberg said Friday. (Kim Hyun-soo, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and Britain on Friday signed a letter of intent (LOI) to establish a bilateral strategic development partnership, Seoul's foreign ministry said. ([Yonhap](#))
- European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Charles Michel will visit Seoul on May 22 after attending the Group of Seven (G-7) summit in the Japanese city of Hiroshima, a spokeswoman for the European Commission, Dana Spinant, told a regular press briefing. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Tessa Aguilar, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517144922/https://mailchi.mp/88442e8797ae/7-in-10-s-koreans-support-govt-efforts-to-raise-awareness-on-nk-human-rights-north-korea-sanctions-panel-avoids-extended-disruption-1191582>

Sunday, May 14, 2023

S. Korea-US-Japan to hold summit in Hiroshima without joint statement

In North Korea:

[Rewards for quality information suggest rise in defection by elite N. Koreans](#) (Yonhap, 05/14/2023)

In South Korea:

[When it comes to hosting APEC, Jeju can't be beat says governor](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/14/2023)

International:

[S. Korea-US-Japan to hold summit in Hiroshima without joint statement](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/14/2023)

In North Korea:

- A record 64 North Korean defectors received financial rewards last year in exchange for providing valuable information about their former homeland, data from the unification ministry showed Sunday. ([Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- What goes into hosting a major international conference? Certainly more than an airport and convention center, said Jeju Gov. Oh Young-hun. (Lee Sung-eun, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- President Yoon Suk Yeol will hold a meeting with US President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on the sidelines of the upcoming Group of Seven summit to be held in Hiroshima, Japan, to discuss ways to cooperate on North Korea's nuclear and missile threats, according to the presidential office on Sunday. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517145226/https://mailchi.mp/7371d67ca3e5/hrnk-news-items-s-korea-us-japan-to-hold-summit-in-hiroshima-without-joint-statement>

Monday, May 15, 2023

Activity at NK's satellite launch facility resumes; Russia sent over 1K tons of wheat flour to NK

In North Korea:

[Activity at North's satellite launch facility resumes](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/15/2023)

[North Korea appears to start major training for next military parade: Imagery](#) (NK Pro, 05/15/2023)

[North Korean hackers stole \\$721 million in cryptocurrency from Japan - Nikkei](#) (Reuters, 05/15/2023)

[N. Korea slams U.S. for being behind Japan's military 'collusion' with NATO](#) (Yonhap, 05/15/2023)

In South Korea:

[Gov't conducts radiation tests on North Korean defectors with contamination risks](#) (The Korea Times, 05/15/2023)

[S. Korea's envoy calls N. Korea's move to win int'l recognition with nuclear threats 'empty dream'](#) (Yonhap, 05/15/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[\[ANALYSIS\] What North Korea's recent silence means for South Korea, US](#) (The Korea Times, 05/15/2023)

International:

[Kishida wants to open 'new era of friendship' with Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/15/2023)

[Russia sent over 1K tons of wheat flour to North Korea, state agency says](#) (NK News, 05/15/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. conduct joint analysis on possible Korean War remains](#) (Yonhap, 05/15/2023)

[US looks to expand missile defenses in Guam to counter North Korean advances](#) (NK News, 05/15/2023)

In North Korea:

- Activity at North Korea's Sohae satellite launching pad area in Tongchang-ri, North Pyongan Province, has resumed after nearly a half-year hiatus, according to latest satellite imagery. Materials on the launch pad have been removed and a new, taller tower crane has been assembled next to the gantry tower within the past two weeks, according to recent commercial satellite imagery released by Washington-based Pyongyang analysis website 38 North Sunday. It noted that the efforts are likely linked with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's "modernization goals to boost space launch capabilities" as was announced in March 2022 and in support of a new generation of larger satellite launch vehicles. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korean soldiers appear to be gathering at a key base in Pyongyang to begin large-scale training for an upcoming military parade, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery. The apparent preparations come as leader Kim Jong Un earlier called for holding major celebrations around the 70th anniversary of the end of the Korean War on July 27. Pyongyang previously held military parades on the 60th war anniversary in 2013 and the 40th in 1993. (Colin Zwirko, [NK Pro](#))
- Hacker groups affiliated with North Korea have stolen \$721 million worth of cryptocurrency assets from Japan since 2017, the Nikkei business daily reported on Monday, citing a study by U.K. blockchain analysis provider Elliptic. The amount is equal to 30% of the total of such losses globally, the Nikkei reported. (Satoshi Sugiyam, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea said Monday the United States is behind Japan's move to seek military "collusion" with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), denouncing Washington for aiming to build a military bloc in the Asia-Pacific region. In an article carried by the North's Korean Central News Agency, Kim listed examples of Japan's military "collusion" with NATO, such as Japan's plan to open a NATO liaison office in Tokyo for the first time in Asia. ([Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- Seoul has started conducting voluntary radiation exposure tests on North Korean defectors who hailed from areas adjacent to the regime's Punggye-ri nuclear test site, as concerns grow over risks to their health as well as the possibility of food products smuggled in from the North being contaminated. Speaking to The Korea Times Tuesday, an official at the Ministry of Unification said it started radiation testing on 89 individuals who used to live near the facility, in which all of North Korea's six nuclear weapons tests in the past were carried out. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea's top nuclear envoy denounced North Korea on Monday for harboring an "empty dream" in using nuclear threats as the means to be recognized as a nuclear state from the international community, Seoul's foreign ministry said. South Korea's top nuclear negotiator, Kim Gunn, made the remarks Monday during a discussion session on nuclear anxieties in the Indo-Pacific region, as he attended the Munich Leaders Meeting in Tokyo, according to the ministry. Kim criticized the North for seeking to be recognized from the international community with nuclear threats, and establishing relations with nations in the region to "suit its taste," the ministry added. ([Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea seems to be caught in a dilemma on how to respond to a landmark nuclear deal between the United States and South Korea signed recently, which could be a reason why the reclusive regime has refrained from military provocations in the last few weeks,

according to analysts. However, the experts viewed that the North is likely to break its silence and stage a major show of force later this month, targeting the largest-ever joint live-fire drills between Seoul and Washington slated for May 25 to June 15. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said he wants to "open a new era of friendship and trust" with Korea in an exclusive interview with the JoongAng Ilbo ahead of the Group of 7 (G7) summit in Hiroshima, which Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol is expected to attend. In response to a question about Japan's ability to strike back in the event of a conflict, Kishida noted the importance of "strengthening the joint deterrence and responsive capabilities of South Korea, the United States and Japan," especially against the rising military threat from North Korea. ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Russia sent over a thousand tons of wheat flour to North Korea in April, according to the Russian government, the latest in a series of publicized grain shipments since earlier this year. In a press release, Russia's federal veterinary customs agency said on Friday that the Siberian region of Kuzbass exported 1,280 tons of wheat flour to the DPRK out of a total of 19,918 tons of grain products sent to seven Asian and eastern European countries. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea and the United States began joint regular identification work Monday on possible remains of American soldiers killed during the 1950-53 Korean War, Seoul's defense ministry said. The two-day examinations on the remains suspected to be those of four U.S. soldiers got under way between officials from the ministry's war remains excavation team and the U.S. Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) at the team's office in southern Seoul. ([Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. seeks to bolster missile defenses in the Pacific territory of Guam as part of Washington's "comprehensive missile defeat strategy" against North Korea, senior defense officials have told Congress, amid concerns about the U.S. ability to counter advancing DPRK capabilities. Addressing the Senate Armed Services Committee's subcommittee on strategic forces on Tuesday, Missile Defense Agency director Vice Adm. Jon Hill stated that the Pentagon is improving the territory's capabilities and capacity to defend against "diverse missile threats." (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517145350/https://mailchi.mp/404cb5c158a0/hrnk-news-items-activity-at-nks-satellite-launch-facility-resumes-russia-sent-over-1k-tons-of-wheat-flour-to-nk>

Tuesday, May 16, 2023

North Korea hides its war capabilities from the world; North still executes, tortures people for religious activities

Top News:

[North Korea hides its war capabilities from the world](#) (*The Washington Times*, 05/11/2023)

In North Korea:

[Images suggest North preparing for military parade](#) (*Korea JoongAng Daily*, 05/16/2023)

[N. Korea's denial of religious freedom remains 'absolute' in 2022: State Dept.](#) (*Yonhap*, 05/16/2023)

[North still executes, tortures people for religious activities, report says](#) (*Korea JoongAng Daily*, 05/16/2023)

In South Korea:

[Prosecution pushes for retrials for 100 fishermen imprisoned upon return from captivity in North](#) (*Yonhap*, 05/16/2023)

[S. Korea kicks off radiation tests on N. Korean defectors this week](#) (*Yonhap*, 05/16/2023)

[7 in 10 S. Koreans support govt. efforts to raise awareness on NK human rights: poll](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 05/16/2023)

International:

[Canada's Trudeau to visit South Korea: focus on minerals, security](#) (*Reuters*, 05/16/2023)

[G7 to show unity on China approach while recognizing individual ties: US officials](#) (*Reuters*, 05/16/2023)

[Korea, Canada hold inaugural high-level talks on security, economy](#) (*Yonhap*, 05/16/2023)

[North Korean policy for reunification and future of the regime](#) (*The Korea Times*, 05/16/2023)

[UN committee questions China about forced deportation of North Korean women](#) (*NK News*, 05/16/2023)

[US will hold to account any country violating UN sanctions on N. Korea: State Dept.](#) (*Yonhap*, 05/16/2023)

[Zelenska asks Yoon to provide non-lethal military aid to Ukraine](#) (*The Korea Times*, 05/16/2023)

Top News:

- War-gaming a theoretical clash with North Korea is no easy task. The regime has sealed itself off from outside penetration so successfully that even the top uniformed U.S. commanders acknowledge that they have major knowledge gaps about Pyongyang's capabilities, its battlefield doctrines and its soldiers' willingness to fight. David Maxwell, a senior fellow at the think tank Foundation for Defense of Democracies, said the North Korean armed forces emphasize loyalty to Mr. Kim above all else, including traditional command-and-control structures or empowering leaders at lower levels. "While we believe this is a recipe for failure in any military, we just can't know for sure how the troops will perform when North Korea launches an attack," he said. "And we have to be careful of mirror imaging or projecting our knowledge and beliefs on the enemy. I personally do believe that the North Korean system is doomed to failure, but I am not willing to bet on it. And I agree with the idea that we must prepare for the worst case." "We need to be cautious and properly prepare our military. Arrogance kills," Mr. Maxwell said. "I would rather assume a relatively

capable [North Korean military] and be proved wrong rather than assuming an easy war that could lead to catastrophic results.” (Ben Wolfgang, [The Washington Times](#))

In North Korea:

- Satellite images appear to show North Korea preparing to hold a military parade, according to an analysis by Voice of America (VOA) released on Tuesday. ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea continued to execute, torture and physically abuse its own people for their religious activities in 2022, the U.S. State Department said in an annual report on international religious freedom, citing an earlier report by a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that said the country's denial of religious freedom remains "absolute." ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea continued to execute and torture its people for engaging in religious activities in 2022, the U.S. State Department said in an annual report on international religious freedom. (Kim Jee-yun, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- The prosecution will pursue retrials for 100 fishermen who were wrongfully imprisoned after their release from captivity in North Korea five decades ago, officials said Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea kicked off radiation exposure tests this week on North Korean defectors who hailed from areas near the North's Punggye-ri nuclear testing site, an official at Seoul's unification ministry said Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- Seven in 10 South Koreans support the Yoon Suk Yeol government's efforts to shed light on North Korea's dire human rights situation, a poll showed. (Nam Kyung-don, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will arrive in South Korea on Tuesday for a summit with President Yoon Suk Yeol as the two countries seek to boost cooperation on security and critical minerals used in batteries. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- The G7 summit U.S. President Joe Biden attends in Japan this week will show leaders unified behind a common approach to dealing with China based on shared values, even while recognizing each country will manage its own relationship with Beijing, a senior U.S. administration official said on Monday. ([Reuters](#))
- Korea and Canada held an inaugural high-level economic security dialogue Tuesday, with the two nations expected to discuss ways to strengthen their partnership in key minerals and other areas, Seoul's foreign ministry said. ([Yonhap](#))
- The reunification of North and South Korea is a longstanding issue that has been the subject of international debate and negotiation. This essay will analyze North Korea's policy for reunification and the potential implications for the future of the governments of both countries. (Simon Hutagalung, [The Korea Times](#))
- Advocate says inquiry is sign of UN efforts to hold Beijing accountable for human rights violations against defectors (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The United States possesses various means to hold to account any country that violates United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions on North Korea, a state department spokesperson said Monday, amid reports that trade between North Korea and China may have returned to pre-pandemic levels. ([Yonhap](#))

- Ukraine's first lady Olena Zelenska asked President Yoon Suk Yeol to expand South Korea's aid to the war-torn country during a meeting in Seoul, Tuesday, according to the presidential office. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517145520/https://mailchi.mp/cfbccad5f5bc/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-hides-its-war-capabilities-from-the-world-north-still-executes-tortures-people-for-religious-activities>

Wednesday, May 17, 2023

**Kim Jong Un approves launch plans for North Korea's first military spy satellite,
Trudeau still has faith in North Korea diplomacy**

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un approves launch plans for North Korea's first military spy satellite](#) (NK News, 05/17/2023)

[N. Korean leader inspects military spy satellite facility: state media](#) (Yonhap, 05/17/2023)

[N. Korea's 1st military spy satellite launch likely be timed with key July anniversary](#) (Yonhap, 05/17/2023)

[North Korea shows Kim Jong Un examining a military spy satellite that may be launched soon](#) (AP News, 05/17/2023)

[North Korea's Kim Jong Un says spy satellite ready for launch](#) (UPI, 05/17/2023)

In South Korea:

[Fishermen convicted of crimes after detainment in North Korea to receive retrial](#) (NK News, 05/17/2023)

[South Korea holds nationwide evacuation drills in case of North Korean attack](#) (NK News, 05/17/2023)

International:

[Canada's Trudeau calls for green partnership with Korea at National Assembly](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/17/2023)

[G-7 Leaders Likely to Focus on Ukraine, Tensions in Asia at Summit in Hiroshima](#) (VOA, 05/17/2023)

[North Korea and Russia, notorious for hacking, team up on cybersecurity proposal](#) (NK News, 05/17/2023)

[North Korean 'provocations' contribute to global instability, Canadian PM says](#) (NK News, 05/17/2023)

[Trudeau still has faith in North Korea diplomacy](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/17/2023)

[Washington Declaration' a huge but not last step in deterring N. Korean provocation](#) (Yonhap, 05/17/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited the country's space agency on Tuesday to review preparations for a military reconnaissance satellite, framing the capability as necessary to defend against U.S.-ROK forces and approving plans for a launch. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un inspected the country's first military reconnaissance satellite and gave the green light for its next action plan, Pyongyang's state media said Wednesday, adding that the satellite is "ready for loading" on a rocket. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has announced the completion of preparations to mount its first military spy satellite on a rocket, but some experts predicted the North may launch it around a key anniversary in July to flex its military muscle with success. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un examined a finished military spy satellite, which his country is expected to launch soon, during a visit to an aerospace facility where he described space-based reconnaissance as crucial for countering the U.S. and South Korea. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un inspected the secretive regime's first completed military reconnaissance satellite and "approved the future action plan" for its launch, state-run media reported Wednesday. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))

In South Korea:

- A hundred South Korean fishermen charged with illegally crossing the inter-Korean maritime border and other crimes after being detained in North Korea will receive retrials, prosecutors announced Tuesday, over 50 years after their original convictions. In a press release, the Supreme Prosecutors Office stated that the fishermen may have been wrongly accused of violating the National Security Act (NSA) due in part to strong anti-communist sentiment, framing the retrials as a chance for the men to finally clear their names. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea held civilian air raid defense drills across the country on Tuesday to practice emergency measures in case of a North Korean attack, marking the first such drills in six years, according to the presidential office. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stressed that his country is ready to work with Korea on critical minerals and a green partnership, along with regional security and North Korea issues, in an address to Korea's National Assembly Wednesday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida also hopes to highlight the risks of nuclear proliferation during the G-7 meeting in Hiroshima, the site of the world's first atomic bombing. The prospect of another nuclear attack has been crystalized by nearby North Korea's nuclear program and spate of recent missile tests, and Russia's threats to use nuclear weapons in its war in Ukraine. China, meanwhile, is rapidly expanding its nuclear arsenal. ([VOA](#))
- North Korea has thrown its weight behind a Russian effort to shore up global cyber "stability and security," Moscow announced Tuesday, forming an unlikely coalition of states better known for instigating cyberattacks than stopping them. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau voiced concerns about rising instability on the Korean Peninsula and around the world due to North Korea's continued "military provocations" on Wednesday, delivering an address to South Korea's parliament. Trudeau's

speech came ahead of a summit meeting with President Yoon Suk-yeol in the afternoon, where the two leaders reportedly discussed expanding security cooperation, sanctions monitoring, and the DPRK's human rights violations, among other issues. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

- Justin Trudeau, the prime minister of Canada, stressed Ottawa's commitment to back Seoul's efforts to bring Pyongyang back to the table for peace discussions in an address to the South Korean National Assembly on Wednesday. He said that Canada was also intent on cooperating more closely with the South Korean government to improve the human rights situation in North Korea. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The recent agreement reached between South Korea and the United States on strengthening U.S. extended deterrence is a significant step in dealing with North Korea's evolving nuclear threat but possibly not the last step to be taken by the allies, U.S. experts said Tuesday. (Byun Duk-Kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517145947/https://mailchi.mp/81c994108f0c/hrnk-news-items-kim-jong-un-approves-launch-plans-for-north-koreas-first-military-spy-satellite-trudeau-still-has-faith-in-north-korea-diplomacy>

Thursday, May 18, 2023

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom recommends designating North Korea as a “Country of Particular Concern”

Top News:

[The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom \(USCIRF\) recommends re-designating North Korea as a “Country of Particular Concern” \(CPC\) for religious freedom](#) (VOA, 05/02/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom.

In North Korea

[Group of North Koreans crossed maritime border earlier this month](#) (Yonhap, 05/18/2023)

[State media review: ‘Little Boy’ spooks North Korea ahead of warm weather season](#) (NK News, 05/18/2023)

[Two North Korean families defect across the NLL by boat](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/18/2023)

In South Korea

[N. Koreans held after sea border crossing](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/18/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship

[South and North to face off in Paris Olympics women's football qualifiers](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/18/2023)

International

[Mongolia detains 4 North Koreans who illegally crossed into country from China](#) (NK News, 05/18/2023)

[N. Korean human rights envoy nominee says human rights violations pose threat to int'l security](#) (Yonhap, 05/18/2023)

[N. Korean premier meets new Chinese ambassador](#) (Yonhap, 05/18/2023)

[N. Korean satellite launch violates U.N. sanctions, will face consequences: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 05/18/2023)

[White House says trilateral summit at G7 still possible](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/18/2023)

Top News:

- The U.S. International Religious Freedom Commission has recommended that North Korea be designated as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) for its severe violations of religious freedom, specifically highlighting the perpetration of crimes against humanity targeting religious individuals in North Korean detention facilities. An independent U.S. agency under the government, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), has recommended to the Department of State that North Korea be once again designated as a CPC in its annual report released on the 1st. The report stated that North Korea classifies its residents based on their loyalty to the state, and religious believers are categorized as hostile elements, subjecting them to discrimination, punishment, isolation, and even execution. Citing the 2022 reports of the International Bar Association and the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), the report highlighted that human rights abuses, including violations of religious freedom, in North Korean detention facilities amount to crimes against humanity. (Jo Eun-Jung, [VOA](#))

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom.

In North Korea:

- A group of North Koreans crossed the de facto inter-Korean sea border aboard a fishing boat earlier this month and are currently undergoing questioning by South Korean authorities, sources said Thursday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's most "tense" challenge at the moment is the possibility of an El Nino weather front hitting the country, state media warned this week, explaining that extreme weather could ruin agriculture this year and that farmers must take preemptive measures. (Seung-Yeon Chung, [NK News](#))
- Two North Korean families that included children entered the South by sailing across the de facto inter-Korean maritime boundary in the Yellow Sea earlier this month, South Korean military authorities revealed Thursday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korean authorities have detained a group of North Koreans that crossed the maritime border in the West Sea on a fishing boat two weeks ago for questioning, a senior official in Seoul said Thursday. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea will face North Korea in the second round of Asian qualifiers for the women's football tournaments at the 2024 Paris Olympics. (Jim Bulley, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- Mongolia detained four North Koreans this month for illegally entering the country, immigration authorities announced Wednesday, in a rare press release from a country that usually helps defectors by allowing them to travel elsewhere once they cross the border. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's disregard for the basic rights of its own people directly affects international security, the nominee for U.S. special envoy for North Korean human rights insisted Wednesday. (Byun Duk-Kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean Premier Kim Tok-hun has met with China's new ambassador to Pyongyang, the North's state media said Thursday. Kim met Ambassador Wang Yajun, who paid a courtesy call, at the Mansudae Assembly Hall the previous day. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's anticipated launch of a claimed satellite would violate multiple international sanctions that prohibit the use of any ballistic missile technology by the recalcitrant country, a state department spokesperson said Wednesday. (Byun Duk-Kun, [Yonhap](#))
- U.S. President Joe Biden is still trying to hold a trilateral summit with Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida during the Group of 7 (G7) Summit in Hiroshima later this week, said a top White House official. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

[Translation] The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) Recommends re-designating North Korea as a "Country of Particular Concern" (CPC) for Religious Freedom.

The U.S. International Religious Freedom Commission has recommended that North Korea be designated as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) for its severe violations of religious freedom, specifically highlighting the perpetration of crimes against humanity targeting religious individuals in North Korean detention facilities. Journalist Jo Eun-jung reports:

An independent U.S. agency under the government, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), has recommended to the Department of State that North Korea be once again designated as a CPC in its annual report released on the 1st.

A Country of Particular Concern refers to a nation where the government seriously infringes upon or persecutes religious freedom of its citizens. The USCIRF has recommended designating North Korea as a CPC since 2001.

In this report, the commission identified a total of 17 countries, including Afghanistan, Myanmar, China, Cuba, Eritrea, India, Iran, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Vietnam, as countries for potential CPC designation.

In a virtual conference held after the publication of the report, USCIRF Chair Nury Turkel stated, "CPCs are countries whose government engages or tolerates systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious faith."

The report pointed out that in 2022, the religious freedom situation in North Korea remained one of the worst in the world. The governance ideology of North Korea, known as Kim Il-sungism and Kim Jong-ilism, prohibits competing ideologies, including religion, and considers religion as an "existential threat."

Furthermore, the report stated that North Korea classifies its residents based on their loyalty to the state, and religious believers are categorized as hostile elements, subjecting them to discrimination, punishment, isolation, and even execution.

Citing the 2022 reports of the International Bar Association and the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), the report highlighted that human rights abuses, including violations of religious freedom, in North Korean detention facilities amount to crimes against humanity.

The report stated that "Protestant Christians are particularly vulnerable to persecution" and revealed that many Christians are imprisoned in detention facilities.

North Korean authorities consider religious practices as "political crimes" and impose severe punishments, including torture and execution, on religious prisoners. Based on testimonies from individuals who escaped from Onsong Detention Center in Onsong County, Hamgyongbuk-do Province, which is located in the North Korea-China border region, the report estimated that 50% to 60% of detainees are Christians or have had contact with Christianity. The report also pointed to the "secret police organization" known as the State Security Department as the main perpetrator of Christian persecution.

Additionally, the report revealed that North Korean laws prohibit indigenous beliefs and the Ministry of State Security violates the human rights of those engaged in superstitious activities. The report recommended that the U.S. government integrate security and human rights as "complementary goals" in its broad North Korea policy and bilateral negotiations. It also advised imposing "targeted sanctions" and "broad sanctions" on North Korea, including coordinated multilateral sanctions

related to religious freedom abuses within the country. The report further suggested considering the possibility of lifting specific sanctions if there are concrete improvements regarding religious freedom.

Regarding these recommendations, USCIRF Vice-Chair Abraham Cooper explained, "Key recommendations to the U.S. government may sound to you as counterintuitive, but actually the kinds of moves that have made a difference in the former Soviet Union and in other situations in dealing with authoritarian regimes." According to the International Religious Freedom Act enacted by the U.S. in 1998, countries that systematically suppress or violate religious freedom are designated as Countries of Particular Concern.

Countries designated as Countries of Particular Concern (CPC) are subject to sanctions in various fields, including trade, in accordance with relevant laws. The U.S. Department of State has designated North Korea as a CPC for religious freedom since 2001.

This is VOA News, reporting by Jo Eun-Jung.

Translated by Haeun Moon, HRNK Intern

Prepared by Dan McDowall, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517150129/https://mailchi.mp/6d16ec1710dc/hrnk-news-items-the-us-commission-on-international-religious-freedom-recommends-designating-north-korea-as-a-country-of-particular-concern>

Friday, May 19, 2023

North Koreans cite South Korean talk show as motive for escape; N. Korea bristles at planned S. Korea-U.S. live-fire drills

In North Korea:

[North Korea prepares to launch new spy satellite, state media reports](#) (Radio Free Asia, 05/19/2023)

[North Korean student beaten to death for trying to steal gasoline](#) (Radio Free Asia, 05/18/2023)

In South Korea:

[ROK navy christens new Cheonan frigate 13 years after North Korean attack](#) (NK News, 05/19/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N.Korea defectors prompted to flee by strict COVID-19 controls -S.Korea spy agency](#) (Reuters, 05/19/2023)

[N. Korean family decided to cross border amid tightened COVID-19 control: spy agency](#) (Yonhap, 05/19/2023)

[North Koreans cite South Korean talk show as motive for escape](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/19/2023)

[North Koreans who fled south in boat 'disillusioned' by Kim Jong Un regime: NIS](#) (NK News, 05/19/2023)

International:

[N. Korea bristles at planned S. Korea-U.S. live-fire drills](#) (Yonhap, 05/19/2023)

[North Korea-China trade continues steady rise as DPRK exports hit five-year high](#) (NK News, 05/19/2023)

[WHO plans to send oxygen treatment units to North Korea to treat 'severe' COVID](#) (NK News, 05/19/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea is preparing to launch a spy satellite that it claims will bolster its defensive capabilities, state media reported, boasting that its launch would be “a clear stride forward” in military science and technological development. (Jung Min Noh, Jaewoo Park, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- North Korean soldiers beat a middle school student to death for trying to steal gasoline from a military truck, apparently because he was hoping to sell the gasoline to pay for an arbitrary school fee, residents in the country told Radio Free Asia. (Sung Hui Moon, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In South Korea:

- The South Korean Navy has announced the return of ROKS Cheonan, a corvette sunk by a North Korean submarine torpedo in 2010, now reincarnated as a new, bigger frigate patrolling the Yellow Sea under the same name. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Defectors who fled North Korea early this month decided to do so because of the country's strict COVID-19 controls, South Korea's spy agency said on Friday. (Hyunsu Yim, [Reuters](#))
- A group of North Koreans who crossed the de facto inter-Korean sea border aboard a fishing boat earlier this month fled the North to escape Pyongyang's rigid COVID-19 restrictions, they were quoted as saying by Seoul's spy agency Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- A popular South Korean talk show featuring North Korea escapees motivated a group of North Koreans to flee their repressive home country earlier this month, they were quoted as telling Seoul officials in a screening interview. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Several North Koreans who defected by boat earlier this month decided to escape because they were “disillusioned” with the regime and its strict COVID-19 regulations, Seoul's intelligence agency told NK News on Friday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- North Korea on Friday condemned South Korea and the United States for planning to kick off their major joint live-fire drills next week, describing the drills as a "war exercise" against Pyongyang. (*Yonhap*)
- North Korean exports to China reached their highest levels in over five years last month, customs data shows, the latest sign that border controls may be rolling back after over three years of pandemic-related restrictions. (Shreyas Reddy, *NK News*)
- The World Health Organization (WHO) plans to send hundreds of oxygen treatment units to North Korea, a sign that suggests severe COVID-19 cases may be rising in the country, according to an expert. (Ifang Bremer, *NK News*)

Prepared by Myriam Aribaud, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240517150548/https://mailchi.mp/0f2d54a783fe/hrnk-news-items-north-koreans-cite-south-korean-talk-show-as-motive-for-escape-n-korea-bristles-at-planned-s-korea-us-live-fire-drills>

Saturday, May 20, 2023

Sohae Satellite Launching Station: Site Expansion and Modernization Efforts Make Significant Strides

In North Korea:

[Sohae Satellite Launching Station: Site Expansion and Modernization Efforts Make Significant Strides](#) (38 North, 05/19/2023)

International:

[China's exports to North Korea surge in April](#) (Reuters, 05/20/2023)

In North Korea:

- The pace and extent of construction at North Korea's Sohae Satellite Launching Station to substantially increase its capabilities underscore the high priority assigned to this project by Kim Jong Un (as outlined in March 2022). While the key components of the original launch station have been undergoing modernization, the addition of a Horizontal Engine Test Stand (HETS), the construction of a combined road tunnel and underground facility, a new probable receipt and assembly facility, and most recently, a new coastal rocket launch pad and probable observation site will allow for future testing of both liquid- and solid-fueled

satellite launch vehicles (SLVs) with heavier payloads. (Peter Makowsky, Jack Liu, Olli Heinonen, Samantha J. Pitz, [38 North](#))

International:

- China's exports to North Korea soared in April from a year earlier, with wigs and fertiliser among major shipments, Chinese customs data showed on Saturday. ([Reuters](#))

Prepared by Amanda Leckner, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240711002949/https://mailchi.mp/e982b23fc859/hrnk-news-items-sohae-satellite-launching-station-site-expansion-and-modernization-efforts-make-significant-strides>

Sunday, May 21, 2023

South Korean, German leaders agree to cooperate on supply chains, North Korea

In North Korea:

[In North Korea, 'Judas' is nickname for informer and betrayer](#) (Radio Free Asia, 05/21/2023)

[Memorial Events Held to Mark Death of Marshal Hyon Chol Hae](#) (North Korea Leadership Watch, 05/21/2023)

International:

[Biden Meets Yoon, Kishida to Counter North Korea, China](#) (VOA, 05/21/2023)

[South Korean, German leaders agree to cooperate on supply chains, North Korea](#) (AP News, 05/21/2023)

In North Korea:

- 'Judas' has become a scornful nickname for informers in North Korea. For example, when a girl confided in her friend during the COVID-19 pandemic that she planned to escape North Korea once the border with China reopened, she was brought before authorities and punished. Residents began calling the friend who sold her out "a modern-day Judas," a woman from Kimjongsuk county, in the northern province of Ryanggang, told Radio Free Asia on condition of anonymity for security reasons. "After this incident, whenever the informant passes by, other people in the neighborhood turn their backs on him and curse him as Judas," the woman said. "Authorities who encourage the informants are called Judas as well." (Hyemin Son, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- DPRK elites marked the one-year anniversary of the death of KPA Marshal Hyon Chol Hae (Hyo'n Ch'o'l-hae) on 19 May (Friday). Kim Jong Un (Kim Cho'ng-u'n; KJU) and Minister of National Defense Gen. Kang Sun Nam (Kang Sun-nam) went to Patriotic Martyrs' Cemetery to visit Hyon's grave. In placing a flower at the grave he recalled "the sincere and resolute appearance and praiseworthy life of the revolutionary soldier who remained boundlessly

loyal to the cause of the Party with his genuine revolutionary traits and noble humanity and devoted himself to the country, the revolution and people without any slight affectations and selfishness.” KJU and Gen. Kang “paid a silent tribute to the memory of Hyon Chol Hae, son of the great DPRK and distinguished elder loyalist produced by the Chuch’e revolution.” ([North Korea Leadership Watch](#))

International:

- In a sign of warming relations between America’s two closest allies in Asia, U.S. President Joe Biden met Sunday with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, in a trilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Group of Seven advanced democracies’ summit in Hiroshima, Japan ... Topping the meeting’s agenda was the growing nuclear and missile threat from North Korea and China’s rising assertiveness, two regional threats that have aligned the three countries more closely. (Patsy Widakuswara, [VOA](#))
- The leaders of South Korea and Germany on Sunday pledged more cooperation in building stable industrial supply chains and addressing the challenges posed by nuclear-armed North Korea as they met in Seoul after flying in from the Group of Seven meetings in Japan. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526093845/https://mailchi.mp/9551596ec6f9/hrnk-news-items-south-korean-german-leaders-agree-to-cooperate-on-supply-chains-north-korea>

Monday, May 22, 2023

North Korea promotes Pyongyang tours to locals as it mulls border reopening

In North Korea:

[N. Korea celebrates completion of building more new homes in Pyongyang](#) (Yonhap, 05/22/2023)

[North Korea promotes Pyongyang tours to locals as it mulls border reopening](#) (The Korea Times, 05/22/2023)

[Why Kim Jong Un is paying unprecedented tribute to a late military official](#) (NK News, 05/22/2023)

In South Korea:

[Bill preventing forced repatriation of defectors proposed](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/22/2023)

[Ruling party threatens to restrict umbrella union rallies](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/22/2023)

[Soldier shot dead during drill](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/22/2023)

[Tesla scraps plan for plant in India, raising hopes in Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/22/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Unification minister urges N. Korean leader to return to dialogue](#) (Yonhap, 05/22/2023)

International:

[In Hiroshima, G7 leaders reaffirm commitment to North Korea's denuclearization](#) (NK News, 05/22/2023)

[Korea, EU strengthen green, digital and health partnerships](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/22/2023)

[North Korea exported record amount of fake hair to China in April, data shows](#) (NK News, 05/22/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has held a ceremony to mark the completion of building another housing district in Pyongyang as part of the country's project to construct 50,000 units of new homes in the capital by 2025, state media reported Monday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea is promoting one-day tours to Pyongyang to its own people as the reclusive regime mulls whether to reopen its borders to tourists following a three-year closure due to the coronavirus pandemic, a North Korean expert said, Sunday. (Lee Hae-rin, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea held a large-scale commemorative event for late military official Hyon Chol Hae on Friday. The spectacle presented in state media was nothing short of astounding. (Fyodor Tertitskiy, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- The Yoon Suk Yeol administration proposed a legislative reform that would prevent the forced repatriation of North Korean defectors that is currently under review by the National Assembly. The reform includes a measure to require the South Korean government to ask if a North Korean defector wants protection. (Chung Yeong-Gyo, Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The ruling People Power Party said Monday it may consider taking legislative action against the country's main umbrella labor union, with four of its leaders recently indicted for alleged anti-government activities in collusion with North Korea. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- A soldier in his 20s was shot dead during a regular shooting exercise at an Army base in Yangju, Gyeonggi Province, the Army said Monday, calling the incident an accident. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Expectations of Korea attracting a Tesla "gigafactory" are rising after the electric vehicle (EV) maker's initial plan to build a plant in India has been scrapped after a year-long incentive conflict with the local government. (Sarah Chea, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea's unification minister called on North Korean leader Kim Jong-un to cease the country's provocative acts and return to the dialogue table, stressing that Seoul has no "hostile" intentions against Pyongyang. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korea will never be a nuclear power and international sanctions must be fully implemented as long as its nuclear and ballistic missile programs exist, the world's most powerful democracies have pledged in a new statement on nuclear disarmament. (Arius Derr, [NK News](#))

- The leaders of Korea and the European Union (EU) agreed to strengthen partnerships to tackle challenges related to green transition, to better respond to global health crises and to advance digital cooperation in a bilateral summit on Monday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea's wig exports reached an all-time high in April, crushing quarterly records in a single month, recently released trade data shows. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Dan McDowall, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here

<https://wayback-api.archive.org/web/20240526094153/https://mailchi.mp/634a44964be7/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-promotes-pyongyang-tours-to-locals-as-it-mulls-border-reopening>

Tuesday, May 23, 2023

'If left divided, Korean Peninsula will never be at peace'

Top News:

['If left divided, Korean Peninsula will never be at peace'](#) (The Korea Times, 05/23/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. hold consultations on N. Korean WMD, human rights](#) (Yonhap, 05/22/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea could launch spy satellite 'in near future': nat'l security adviser](#) (Yonhap, 05/23/2023)

[North Korean hackers target defectors and journalists with new recon malware](#) (NK News, 05/23/2023)

In South Korea:

[Middleman sentenced for illegal money transfer to North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/23/2023)

[Yoon Suk Yeol blasts 'illegal' rallies by labor unions](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/23/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[North Korean vessel issued warning to ROK cargo ship sailing in East Sea: Seoul](#) (NK News, 05/23/2023)

International:

[By linking radars, ROK and Japan reduce blind spots around North Korean missiles](#) (NK News, 05/23/2023)

[EU leaders join Seoul in condemning North Korean nuclear and missile development](#) (NK News, 05/23/2023)

[Foreign minister calls for 'healthy, mature' ties with China](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/23/2023)

[Pro-N. Korea newspaper slams S. Korea, U.S., Japan for seeking to conspire trilateral military alliance](#) (Yonhap, 05/23/2023)

[US expert calls for radical shift in strategy to rid Pyongyang of nuclear arms](#) (*The Korea Times*, 05/23/2023)

[US issues fresh North Korea sanctions targeting cyber](#) (Reuters, 05/23/2023)

Top News:

- While denuclearization and security issues are dominating the news about North Korea, the vision for peaceful unification of the Korean Peninsula now appears out of date. Politicians barely talk about it as a serious possibility and when they do, no one seems to listen. "It sounds nice. However, that (coexistence idea) is based on the assumption that the North wants to peacefully coexist. As long as North Korea has nuclear weapons and given what we know, its constitution, party charter and history, they are going to seek domination of the peninsula," retired Col. David Maxwell, vice president of the Center for Asia Pacific Strategy, a think tank, said during an interview. "So I think peaceful coexistence is really a fantasy ... I understand why people say that should be pursued, but North Korea under the Kim family will always be a threat and, as long as they exist, South Korea will never be at peace." (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- Senior diplomats of South Korea and the United States held consultations on North Korea's WMD development and the country's human rights conditions, Seoul's foreign ministry said Monday. Chun also held separate meetings with David Maxwell, vice president of the Center for Asia Pacific Strategy, and Greg Scarlatoiu, executive director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, in Washington. ([Yonhap](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea could launch its first military spy satellite "in the near future," National Security Adviser Cho Tae-yong said Tuesday, as speculation has grown over the timing of the launch. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean hackers are using a new malware variant to attack human rights activists, defector organizations and journalists, according to an NK Pro investigation with cybersecurity researchers at SentinelLabs. (Nils Weisensee, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Ahn Bu-soo, the former chairman of the Asia-Pacific Exchange Association, was sentenced to three years and six months in prison for violating the foreign exchange transaction act and embezzlement. Ahn is the first figure to be convicted over the illegal wiring of money to North Korea for the political purpose of getting Pyongyang to send an invitation to Democratic Party leader Lee Jae-myung when he was Gyeonggi governor. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol lambasted a labor union's large-scale rally last week for disrupting public order and violating people's rights in a Cabinet meeting on Tuesday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- A North Korean vessel instructed a South Korean cargo ship sailing in the East Sea to move farther into international waters earlier this month, Seoul has confirmed, the latest encounter between the two Koreas near their contested maritime border. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

International:

- South Korea and Japan have pushed to repair ties since Yoon Suk-yeol took office, and those efforts are beginning to show concrete results: The two sides will link their radar systems via the U.S. to share real-time data on North Korean missiles, and they are also reportedly working with Washington to establish a trilateral missile warning consultation group. (Ryo Hinata-Yamaguchi, [NK News](#))
- European Union and South Korean leaders denounced North Korea's nuclear weapons program and continued ballistic missile launches in a joint statement on Monday, with the European Council president stressing that Pyongyang's "back door" nuclear armament will not be accepted. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Foreign Minister Park Jin said Tuesday that Korea seeks a "healthy and mature" relationship with China that is based on "mutual respect," suggesting that the two countries could still find common ground despite deepening tensions between Seoul's main ally Washington and Beijing over various regional issues. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- A pro-North Korea newspaper in Japan on Tuesday condemned the latest summit of leaders from South Korea, the United States and Japan as an attempt to plot a trilateral military alliance, claiming the move is "maximizing" the risk of war on the Korean Peninsula. ([Yonhap](#))
- This worrisome state of affairs points to a need for a fundamental shift in policy. According to an expert who has been working in nuclear deterrence and nuclear arms control for the past 26 years, the first necessary step for that shift is to recognize that any negotiations or even successful treaties with North Korea will not lead to its denuclearization. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- The United States on Tuesday issued new North Korea-related sanctions against four organizations and one individual involved in hiding funds and malicious cyber activities, the Treasury Department said. (Doina Chiacu, Paul Grant, [Reuters](#))

Prepared by Abbigail Thacker, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526094344/https://mailchi.mp/cb6b2c1fb540/hrnk-news-items-if-left-divided-korean-peninsula-will-never-be-at-peace>

Wednesday, May 24, 2023

'North Korean Hackers: Weapons and Victims of the North Korean Regime'

Top News:

[North Korean Hackers: Weapons and Victims of the North Korean Regime](#) (HRNK YPWP, 05/23/2023)

[The Threat of China is Making Friends of Traditional Foes](#) (Newsweek, 05/19/2023)

[U.S. Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights Nominee Turner "We will hold the North Korean leadership accountable for human rights violations"](#) (News Rebeat, 05/18/2023)

In North Korea:

[A Flurry of Aircraft Maintenance Activity at Pyongyang Airport](#) (38 North, 05/23/2023)

[Modern slavery most common in North Korea, Eritrea, report says](#) (Al Jazeera, 05/24/2023)

In South Korea:

[South Korea cancels third launch of homegrown rocket due to technical problems](#) (Reuters, 05/24/2023)

[S. Korea monitoring N. Korea's possible participation in Asian Games: ministry](#) (Yonhap, 05/24/2023)

[Korea eyes clampdown on protests by criminal offenders](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/24/2023)

[Korea to host anti-proliferation maritime exercise next week](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/24/2023)

International:

[Nuclear envoys of S. Korea, U.S. hold meetings over N.K. spy satellite, provocations](#) (Yonhap, 05/24/2023)

Top News:

- North Korean hackers have gained an infamous reputation over the last few years, especially with the number of hacking attacks that have specifically targeted cryptocurrency. While most observers only view North Korean hackers as weapons of a totalitarian state, these hackers are also victims of the North Korean regime's policy of human rights denial. (Joseph Choi, [HRNK YPWP](#))
- Japan and South Korea have agreed to link radar systems to share real-time data on North Korea's missile launches. Senior representatives from the two countries and the United States plan to finalize an agreement at the IISS Shangri-La Dialogue, Asia's premier security conference. "The recent improvement in Republic of Korea-Japan relations is an important step toward enhancing the national security and national prosperity of both nations and the United States," David Maxwell of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies told Newsweek. "In particular, the increasing military cooperation among the three countries in terms of air-power integration, maritime activities, cyber coordination, and missile defense is focusing them toward an integrated missile defense system and establishing the foundation for a possible future trilateral alliance." (Gordon G. Chang, [Newsweek](#))
- Julie Turner, the U.S. special envoy for North Korean human rights nominee, announced on the 17th (local time), "We will coordinate with the governments of each country to hold those who perpetrated human rights violations in North Korea accountable." The U.S. special envoy for North Korean human rights is an ambassador-level position that is involved in overall North Korean human rights policy. However, it has been vacant for the last six years, with the retirement of special envoy Robert King in 2017. (Mark Jones, [News Rebeat](#))

In North Korea:

- Increased commercial activity at Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport appears to suggest that passenger air service will resume in the near future. (Martyn Williams, [38 North](#))
- North Korea, Eritrea and Mauritania have the highest prevalence of modern slavery in the world, according to the 2023 Global Slavery Index, which notes a “worsening” situation globally since its last survey five years earlier. ([Al Jazeera](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea cancelled the third flight of its homegrown space rocket on Wednesday because of technical problems hours before a launch that was meant to mark a significant step in its burgeoning space program. (Ju-min Park, [Reuters](#))
- South Korea's unification ministry said Wednesday it is closely monitoring the possibility of North Korea taking part in the Hangzhou Asian Games and other sports events in the second half amid abating concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic. ([Yonhap](#))
- The Yoon Suk Yeol administration and the ruling People Power Party are mulling steps to restrict groups with a criminal background from staging protests, in an apparent aim at a labor union at the center of a spiraling North Korea spying scandal. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Korea will host a high-level forum and multinational maritime exercise aimed at stopping transfers of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) next week, the Foreign Ministry said Wednesday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- South Korea's deputy nuclear envoy Lee Joon-il met his U.S. counterpart to discuss ways to counter North Korea's evolving military threats, including the North's plan to launch a military spy satellite, the foreign ministry said Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Nate Bent, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526094624/https://mailchi.mp/eac98ec54714/hrnk-news-items-north-korean-hackers-weapons-and-victims-of-the-north-korean-regime>

Thursday, May 25, 2023

'Fever' cases spread in North Korea, but hard to say if it's COVID

Top News:

['Fever' cases spread in North Korea, but hard to say if it's COVID](#) (Radio Free Asia, 05/24/2023)

In North Korea:

[NK constructing satellite launch pad with 'new urgency': report](#) (Reuters, 05/25/2023)

In South Korea:

[South Korea says homegrown space rocket put satellites into orbit](#) (Reuters, 05/25/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[State media review: North Korea provides a front-row seat to anti-Yoon protests](#) (NK News, 05/25/2023)

International:

[N. Korea vows to expand relations with African nations](#) (Yonhap, 05/25/2023)

[Pyongyang denounces sharing of N. Korea's missile data among S. Korea, U.S., Japan](#) (Yonhap, 05/25/2023)

[Pyongyang slams EU for 'inciting hostility' on Korean Peninsula](#) (Yonhap, 05/25/2023)

[Senate Committee Hearing on North Korean Human Rights Envoy Julie Turner: Confirmation Appears Imminent](#) (Korea Economic Institute, 05/24/2023)

[South Korea, U.S. conduct large-scale artillery exercise](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/25/2023)

[South Korean ammunition heading to Ukraine via U.S.](#) (Reuters, 05/24/2023)

[Why the North Korea-China trade increase could be an illusion](#) (North Korean Economy Watch, 05/24/2023)

Top News:

- A recent resurgence of COVID-19 in China could easily spread to North Korea, said Greg Scarlatoiu, executive director at the Washington-based Committee for Human Rights in North Korea. "Most of North Korea's border is with China," said Scarlatoiu. "Exchanges are at a level lower than before COVID, but the danger of contamination is there and is a possibility, a probability that Covid may resurge in North Korea as well." (Jieun Kim, Jamin Anderson, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In North Korea:

- Construction at North Korea's satellite launching station has hit a "new level of urgency," most likely in preparation for a launch, a U.S.-based think tank said in a report citing commercial satellite imagery. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's domestically made space rocket delivered a commercial grade satellite into orbit for the first time on Thursday, the country's science minister said, a breakthrough in its ambitions to compete in a space race with its Asian neighbors. (Hyonhee Shin, Soo-Hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea's most important propaganda mouthpiece continued to prominently report on public protests in South Korea against President Yoon Suk-yeol this week, as state media seeks to paint the ROK leader as a leader who has lost the people's support. (Seung-Yeon Chung, [NK News](#))

International:

- North Korea on Thursday highlighted its past relations with African nations and vowed to expand their relations of "friendship and cooperation." ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Thursday criticized a recent agreement by the leaders of South Korea, the United States and Japan to share real-time data on the North's missile launches, saying it will only expose them to a "security crisis." ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Thursday denounced the European Union (EU) for "inciting confrontation and hostility" on the Korean Peninsula, in response to a recent South Korea-EU summit, during which the leaders condemned Pyongyang's nuclear and missile provocations. ([Yonhap](#))
- On May 17, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a confirmation hearing for five individuals nominated by President Joe Biden to be ambassadorial representatives of the United States. One of the nominees whose confirmation was under consideration was Julie Turner who was nominated by the President on January 23 of this year to be the U.S. Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights. Her confirmation appears imminent. (Robert King, [Korea Economic Institute](#))
- South Korean and U.S. armed forces conducted their largest joint live-fire artillery exercise in six years in Pocheon, Gyeonggi, on Thursday in what the Defense Ministry characterized as an exercise in deterrence against North Korean aggression. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Hundreds of thousands of South Korean artillery rounds are on their way to Ukraine via the United States, after Seoul's initial resistance toward arming Ukraine. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- Although trade has been growing in recently between China and North Korea, it is still far from the pre-COVID normal. (Benjamin Katzeff Silberstein, [North Korean Economic Watch](#))

Prepared by Nate Bent, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526095211/https://mailchi.mp/871dd563ff0e/fever-cases-spread-in-north-korea-but-hard-to-say-if-its-covid>

Friday, May 26, 2023

U.S. has credible deterrence against N. Korea, seeks to institutionalize trilateral cooperation with S. Korea, Japan: officials

In North Korea:

[Kim's daughter seen in public may be his 1st child: head of state-run think tank](#) ([Yonhap](#), 05/26/2023)

[‘Oppa Ganbu Style’: Why growth medications are popular among North Korean elites](#) ([NK News](#), 05/26/2023)

[North Korean hackers hit Microsoft servers with ‘reconnaissance’ malware: Report](#) ([NK News](#), 05/26/2023)

In South Korea:

[Unification ministry's NK report disclaimer creates controversy](#) (*The Korea Times*, 05/26/2023)

International:

[U.S. has credible deterrence against N. Korea, seeks to institutionalize trilateral cooperation with S. Korea, Japan: officials](#) (*Yonhap*, 05/26/2023)

[North Korea slams US-ROK-Japan radar link plan as step toward nuclear 'alliance'](#) (*NK News*, 05/26/2023)

[Russian envoy to North Korea says diplomats preparing to leave, cites shortages](#) (*NK News*, 05/26/2023)

[US, South Korea Hold Biggest 'Annihilation' Drills](#) (*VOA*, 05/26/2023)

In North Korea:

- The daughter of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un who has been seen in public may be his first child and she may be one of the "candidates" who could inherit his power, the head of a state-run think tank specialized in North Korea said Friday. (*Yonhap*)
- After an outbreak of COVID-19 last spring, North Korean state media reported that pharmacies struggled to provide medicine for treating infections, an issue that was apparently serious enough to require Kim Jong Un to intervene directly. (Jeongmin Kim, Yeji Chung, *NK News*)
- North Korean hackers targeted vulnerable Microsoft web infrastructure with malicious software using a similar technique attackers used to gain access to cryptocurrency firms, a South Korean security firm says in a new report (Anton Sokolin, *NK News*)

In South Korea:

- The Ministry of Unification's report on North Korean human rights is stirring controversy, as its English version included a disclaimer noting the ministry does not guarantee the government-published report's accuracy, triggering doubts over its credibility. (Nam Hyun-woo, *The Korea Times*)

International:

- The United States maintains ready and capable deterrence against North Korea's evolving threats together with its key allies South Korea and Japan, ranking U.S. officials said Thursday (Byun Duk-kun, *Yonhap*)
- The U.S., South Korea and Japan are creating a nuclear "alliance" aimed at North Korea, state media claimed Thursday, calling an agreement between the three to share radar information another step toward an "Asian version of NATO." (Jeongmin Kim, *NK News*)
- Another group of Russian diplomats are preparing to leave the country and there is no information about when the border will reopen for diplomatic staff rotations, Russian Ambassador to North Korea Alexander Matsegora told Novosti. (Chad O'Carroll, *NK News*)
- The United States and South Korea are kicking off three weeks of massive military drills. The move is part of a show of force against North Korea, which has accelerated its own missile

launches. More from VOA's Bill Gallo, who reports from Pocheon, South Korea, near the demilitarized zone. (William Gallo, [VOA](#))

Prepared by Narae Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://mailchi.mp/d5f919e6c306/hrnk-news-items-us-has-credible-deterrence-against-n-korea-seeks-to-institutionalize-trilateral-cooperation-with-s-korea-japan-officials>

Saturday, May 27, 2023

Dead body of suspected N. Korean found on western island coast

In North Korea:

[1 in 6 N. Korean children under 5 suffer from stunted growth](#) (Yonhap, 05/27/2023)

International:

[Dead body of suspected N. Korean found on western island coast](#) (Yonhap, 05/27/2023)

[U.S. military discloses recent joint intel training with S. Korea for readiness amid N.K. threats](#) (Yonhap, 05/27/2023)

In North Korea:

- Around one in six North Korean children under the age of 5 suffer from stunted growth due to malnutrition, an international report showed Saturday. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- Military officials discovered the dead body of a suspected North Korean man in a coastal area of a western island last week, intelligence officials said Saturday. ([Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. military has revealed it conducted combined intelligence training with South Korea in a southern city last week to enhance readiness, as the allies are striving to sharpen deterrence against persistent North Korean threats. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ava Kim, HRNK Research Intern

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526100359/https://mailchi.mp/e871c6f55324/hrnk-news-items-dead-body-of-suspected-n-korean-found-on-western-island-coast>

Sunday, May 28, 2023

North Korea arrests 5 Christians during underground church service

In North Korea:

[North Korea arrests 5 Christians during underground church service](#) (RFA, 05/28/2023)

In North Korea:

- Just as they had every Sunday at 5 a.m., the five Christians gathered at the farmhouse for prayer and Bible study. But this time the police were waiting for them. (Son Hyemin, [RFA](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526100522/https://mailchi.mp/911e0b40221d/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-arrests-5-christians-during-underground-church-service>

Monday, May 29, 2023

North Korea prepares to launch a satellite within the next two weeks

In North Korea:

[285K North Korean children suffer stunted growth due to malnutrition](#) (NK News, 05/29/2023)

[N. Korea to hold plenary meeting of ruling party in early June](#) (Yonhap, 05/29/2023)

[New report details North Korea's tactics to illegally sell firearms abroad](#) (NK News, 05/29/2023)

[One in five North Korean children suffer from malnutrition](#) (The Korea Times, 05/29/2023)

In South Korea:

[Inside South Korea's race to become one of the world's biggest arms dealers](#) (Reuters, 05/29/2023)

[Teachers lose control of classrooms as students, parents weaponize abuse laws](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/29/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea slams N. Korea's planned satellite launch, warns of consequences](#) (Yonhap, 05/29/2023)

[S. Korea voices 'deep regrets' over N. Korea's election to WHO executive board](#) (Yonhap, 05/29/2023)

[South warns North against conducting satellite launch](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/29/2023)

International:

[Chinese battery makers threaten Korean lead in EU](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/29/2023)

[N. Korea open to high-level talks with Japan if Tokyo unshackled by past](#) (Yonhap, 05/29/2023)

[Japanese warship arrives in S. Korea for multinational WMD-interception naval drill](#) (Yonhap, 05/29/2023)

[Japan threatens to destroy any North Korean missile that enters its territory](#) (CNN, 05/29/2023)
[N. Korea notifies Japan of plan to launch satellite between May 31-June 11](#) (Yonhap, 05/29/2023)

In North Korea:

- Hundreds of thousands of North Korean children are too short for their age because they don't have enough food to eat, the U.N. has assessed in a new report. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has decided to convene a plenary meeting of the ruling Korean Workers' Party in early June to discuss economic projects implemented in the first half and other policy issues, state media reported Monday. ([Yonhap](#))
- A Swiss nongovernmental organization has published a new guide on how to recognize North Korean firearms, an effort aimed at helping sanctions monitors identify illegal arms shipments. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Nearly one out of five North Korean children under the age of five suffer from malnutrition, according to a recent international health study. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea is using a \$13.7 billion arms deal with Poland - Seoul's biggest ever - to lay the groundwork for a military-industrial juggernaut that the two nations' defence companies hope will feed Europe's hunger for weapons far into the future. (Joyce Lee, Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- A teacher on trial for scolding rowdy students who were disrupting her class has been acquitted. The Ulsan District Court on May 21 concluded that the teacher did not commit child abuse. (Lee Ho-jeong, Won Dong-wook, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea on Monday "strongly warned" against North Korea's plan to launch a satellite in the coming weeks, vowing to make Pyongyang pay "due prices" if it goes ahead with the launch. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea expressed "deep regrets and concerns" over North Korea's recent election as a member of the World Health Organization (WHO)'s executive board, Seoul's foreign and health ministries said Monday. ([Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean government sternly warned North Korea against launching a military reconnaissance satellite. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- Korean battery makers are losing ground in Europe to Chinese competitors who are hot on their heels as they aggressively expand their capacity in the world's second-largest electric vehicle (EV) market. (Sarah Chea, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea's vice foreign minister said Pyongyang is willing to hold high-level talks with Tokyo if Japan shows a change of stance on pending issues, such as the abduction of Japanese citizens by the North, the country's state media reported Monday. ([Yonhap](#))

- A Japanese warship arrived in South Korea on Monday to participate in a multinational naval drill this week aimed at preventing the trafficking of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), according to officials. ([Yonhap](#))
- Japan's Defense Ministry warned on Monday it would destroy any North Korean missile that enters its territory after Pyongyang notified the country of plans to launch a satellite between May 31 and June 11. (Emiko Jozuka, [CNN](#))
- North Korea has notified Japan of its plan to launch a satellite between May 31 and June 11, a Japanese media report said Monday, as the secretive regime is preparing to put its first military spy satellite into orbit. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Dan McDowall, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526100647/https://mailchi.mp/f4clad1067ec/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-prepares-to-launch-a-satellite-within-the-next-two-weeks>

Tuesday, May 30, 2023

#NorthKorea: "Judas" Greg Scarlatoiu, director of The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea

Top News:

[#NorthKorea: "Judas" Greg Scarlatoiu, director of The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea: @GordonGChang, Gatestone, Newsweek, The Hill](#) (The John Batchelor Show, 05/25/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korean satellite launch would violate U.N. sanctions: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 05/30/2023)

[N. Korea plans satellite launch as S. Korea aims for deterrence](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/30/2023)

[N. Korea says it will launch spy satellite in June](#) (Yonhap, 05/30/2023)

[North Korea informs IMO of satellite launch between May 31 and June 11](#) (Reuters, 05/30/2023)

[North Korea says it will launch first military spy satellite in June](#) (NK News, 05/30/2023)

[North Korea to launch satellite 'to spy on US military'](#) (The Telegraph, 05/30/2023)

[North Korea to launch first military spy satellite in June](#) (Reuters, 05/30/2023)

[North says satellite launch coming within two weeks](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/30/2023)

[Presumed North Korean man carrying drugs found dead near border, Seoul says](#) (NK News, 05/30/2023)

[Pyongyang may have delayed spy satellite launch due to technical issues](#) (The Korea Times, 05/30/2023)

[See the images of North Korea's launch pad activity as it prepares its first spy satellite](#) (AP News, 05/30/2023)

In South Korea:

[NEC to conduct comprehensive investigation into alleged nepotism](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/30/2023)

[Yoon Suk-yeol calls on nonproliferation group to tackle North Korean nuke threat](#) (NK News, 05/30/2023)

[Yoon urges closer cooperation to block North's illegal funding](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/30/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Seoul voices 'deep regret' over North Korea's election to WHO executive board](#) (NK News, 05/30/2023)

International:

[Japan warns it will destroy any North Korean missile that enters its territory after Pyongyang signals satellite launch imminent](#) (CNN, 05/30/2023)

Top News:

- HRNK Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu discusses reports that the word "Judas" is being used in North Korea, as well as recent developments on the Korean Peninsula. ([The John Batchelor Show](#), 05/24/2023)

In North Korea:

- Any satellite launch by North Korea would violate United Nations Security Council resolutions that prohibit long-range missile tests by Pyongyang, a state department spokesperson said Monday in a rebuttal of the North's planned satellite launch. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said Tuesday its military would launch its first-ever reconnaissance satellite in June to monitor in real time "hostile military activities" led by the US, amid a doubling down on joint military drills by South Korea and the US. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea plans to launch its first military spy satellite in June, and the planned launch is aimed at monitoring U.S. military activity in real time, a ranking official in charge of military affairs said Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea informed the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on Tuesday of a satellite launch slated to take place between May 31 and June 11, the organization said. ([Reuters](#))
- A top North Korean military official has announced that the country will launch its first military spy satellite in June, calling the asset necessary to monitor the "dangerous military acts" of U.S. and South Korea. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- North Korea will launch its first military reconnaissance satellite in June to spy on the US military, state media reported on Tuesday. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- North Korea will launch its first military reconnaissance satellite in June for monitoring U.S. activities, state media KCNA reported on Tuesday, drawing criticism over its potential use of banned missile technology. (Soo-Hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea plans to launch its first military reconnaissance satellite within two weeks to monitor "dangerous" military activity by the United States and South Korea, state media said Tuesday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- ROK authorities found a presumed North Korean man carrying drugs dead near the inter-Korean border earlier this month, NK News has confirmed. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

- Pyongyang said on Tuesday that it will launch its first military reconnaissance satellite in two weeks to keep track of the U.S.' "reckless" military activities. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea said Tuesday it would launch its first military spy satellite in June and described space-based reconnaissance as crucial for monitoring U.S. "reckless" military exercises with South Korea. (Kim Tong-Hyung, Jon Gambrell, [AP News](#))

In South Korea:

- Rho Tae-ak, head of the National Election Commission (NEC), said the election oversight agency will conduct a comprehensive investigation into the alleged preferential hiring of children of high-ranking officials. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol called on a global nonproliferation body to strengthen efforts to tackle North Korea's nuclear program on Tuesday, stating that Pyongyang poses a growing security threat. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol urged the international community to strengthen cooperation to choke off illegal funding of North Korea's nuclear and missile programs in his remarks to the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) forum Tuesday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea has expressed "deep regret" over North Korea's election to serve on the executive board of the World Health Organization (WHO), citing Pyongyang's flouting of global norms. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

International:

- Japan's Defense Ministry warned on Monday it would destroy any North Korean missile that enters its territory after Pyongyang notified the country of plans to launch a "satellite" between May 31 and June 11. (Emiko Jozuka, [CNN](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526100856/https://mailchi.mp/30f0269572fb/hrnk-news-items-northkorea-judas-greg-scarlatoiu-director-of-the-committee-for-human-rights-in-north-korea>

Wednesday, May 31, 2023

HRNK Mourns the Passing of Claudia Rosett

HRNK Mourns the Passing of Claudia Rosett

HRNK mourns the loss of Claudia Rosett, American author and journalist. She passed away on Saturday, May 27 at the age of 67.

Claudia was the only print journalist to witness and report on [the Tiananmen Square Massacre](#) in June 1989. In 2004 and 2005, her reporting for *The Wall Street Journal* exposed the corruption behind the UN's Oil-for-Food program.

A great friend of HRNK and a staunch supporter of our mission, Claudia was deeply passionate about bringing human rights and freedom to the people of North Korea. In 1994, writing for *The Wall Street Journal*, she broke [the story of North Korean loggers](#) officially dispatched to labor camps in the Russian Far East, reporting from the camps.

Claudia will be dearly missed, and her legacy never forgotten.

Greg Scarlatoiu
Executive Director, HRNK

HRNK Mourns the Passing of Claudia Rosett

HRNK mourns the loss of Claudia Rosett, American author and journalist. She passed away on Saturday, May 27 at the age of 67.

Claudia was the only print journalist to witness and report on [the Tiananmen Square Massacre](#) in June 1989. In 2004 and 2005, her reporting for *The Wall Street Journal* exposed the corruption behind the UN's Oil-for-Food program.

A great friend of HRNK and a staunch supporter of our mission, Claudia was deeply passionate about bringing human rights and freedom to the people of North Korea. In 1994, writing for *The Wall Street Journal*, she broke [the story of North Korean loggers](#) officially dispatched to labor camps in the Russian Far East, reporting from the camps.

Claudia will be dearly missed, and her legacy never forgotten.

Greg Scarlatoiu

Executive Director, HRNK

In North Korea:

[Chronology of major events leading to N. Korea's 1st spy satellite launch attempt](#) (The Korea Times, 05/31/2023)

[Failed N.K. space rocket launch shows both technological challenges, growing space ambitions](#) (Yonhap, 05/31/2023)

[N. Korea's attempt to launch 1st spy satellite fails after 'abnormal' flight: S. Korean military](#) (Yonhap, 05/31/2023)

[N.K.'s space vehicle possibly had technical glitch from 'excessive route change': S. Korean spy agency](#) (Yonhap, 05/31/2023)

[North Korea primed for quick rebound after satellite launch failure: Analysis](#) (NK News, 05/31/2023)

[North Korea says spy satellite launch fails](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/31/2023)

[North's satellite launch sets off alarms, but ends in failure](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/31/2023)

[Spy agency says hard living is taking a toll on North Korean leader's health](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/31/2023)

[What to make of conflicting signs about a North Korean border reopening](#) (NK News, 05/31/2023)

In South Korea:

['I held my husband and cried': Wartime alerts fuel panic and confusion in Seoul](#) (NK News, 05/31/2023)

[Police issue 1st order to disperse downtown KCTU rally](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/31/2023)

[Seoul mayor says sorry, but not sorry for alert message](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 05/31/2023)

[Sirens, alerts unsettle foreign residents in chaotic Seoul morning](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/31/2023)

[Yoon briefed immediately after N.K. rocket launch](#) (Yonhap, 05/31/2023)

[Yoon's office says Seoul city 'overreacted' to NK launch](#) (The Korea Herald, 05/31/2023)

International:

[NSC condemns N.K. rocket launch as grave violation of U.N. resolutions](#) (Yonhap, 05/31/2023)

[U.S. 'strongly condemns' N. Korea's space launch: White House](#) (Yonhap, 05/31/2023)

[UN puts North Korea on hunger watchlist over food insecurity concerns](#) (NK News, 05/31/2023)

[Yoon meets with ex-Japanese PM Suga](#) (Yonhap, 05/31/2023)

In North Korea:

- Chronology of major events leading to North Korea's first attempt to put into orbit what it called its first military spy satellite. ([The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea's botched launch of a "space launch vehicle" underlined both its technological difficulties and rising space ambitions in the face of the superior military intelligence capabilities of South Korea and the United States, analysts said Wednesday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea fired what it claims to be a "space launch vehicle" southward Wednesday, but it fell into the Yellow Sea after an "abnormal" flight, the South Korean military said, in a botched launch that defied international criticism and warnings. (Song Sang-ho, Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's launch of a "space launch vehicle" may have failed due to a technical problem caused by "excessive change of the projectile's route," South Korea's spy agency said Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's launch of its first military spy satellite ended in failure on Wednesday morning, but experts say the loss of the asset was far from catastrophic and that Pyongyang could soon be back on track to realizing its vision of a network of reconnaissance satellites. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's projectile launch Wednesday morning ended in failure after the rocket crashed into the sea, according to its state media. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea's first reconnaissance satellite crashed into the sea early Wednesday morning after the space launch vehicle's (SLV) second-stage separation failed, according to Pyongyang's state media. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's National Intelligence Service (NIS) told a parliamentary committee that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un suffers from multiple health problems tied to his hard drinking and smoking habits, a People Power Party (PPP) lawmaker told reporters Wednesday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Anticipation has been growing that North Korea may be preparing to ease its pandemic border controls after a Chinese delegation entered the country and the World Health Organization downgraded its emergency classification of COVID-19. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Air raid sirens and evacuation orders left many fearing North Korean attack, though others greeted alerts with shrug. (Ifang Bremer, Jeongmin Kim, Yeji Chung, [NK News](#))
- Police on Wednesday exercised the first order to disperse a massive downtown rally led by the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, one of the biggest umbrella labor unions in South Korea, taking a hard-line stance as instructed by President Yoon Suk Yeol. (Lee Jung-youn, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Seoul Mayor Oh Se-hoon on Wednesday apologized for "causing confusion" with an early morning evacuation warning sent to residents by the city government in response to a North Korean projectile launch but said the alert was not a mistake. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Foreign residents of Seoul were startled and confused as they woke up to emergency sirens and an alert sent out by the city government early Wednesday morning, just after North Korea launched what it says was a space satellite. (Kim So-hyun, [The Korea Herald](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol was briefed immediately after North Korea's launch of what it claimed was a space rocket and continues to be updated in real time, his office said Wednesday. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- The presidential office said Seoul City "overreacted" when it sent an emergency text alert advising people to prepare to evacuate after an attempted satellite launch by North Korea. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- The National Security Council (NSC) on Wednesday condemned North Korea's rocket launch as a grave violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions and a serious provocation threatening peace on the Korean Peninsula and beyond, the presidential office said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States "strongly condemns" North Korea's attempt to launch a spy satellite into space, the White House said, calling it a "brazen violation" of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions. ([Yonhap](#))
- Forecast warns extreme weather may have impacted farming, but does not name DPRK as global 'hunger hotspot. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol met with former Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga on Wednesday and discussed the recent improvement in the bilateral relationship, his office said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Dan McDowall, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526101825/https://mailchi.mp/276b47913041/hrnk-news-items-hrnk-mourns-the-passing-of-claudia-rosett>

6. JUNE

Thursday, June 1, 2023

Claudia Rosett, who reported from Tiananmen Square, dies at 67

HRNK Mourns the Passing of Claudia Rosett

HRNK mourns the loss of Claudia Rosett, American author and journalist. She passed away on Saturday, May 27 at the age of 67.

Claudia was one of the relatively few reporters who remained inside Tiananmen Square through the night of the crackdown. In 2004 and 2005, her reporting for *The Wall Street Journal* exposed the corruption behind the UN's Oil-for-Food program.

A great friend of HRNK and a staunch supporter of our mission, Claudia was deeply passionate about bringing human rights and freedom to the people of North Korea. In 1994, writing for *The Wall Street Journal*, she broke [the story of North Korean loggers](#) officially dispatched to labor camps in the Russian Far East, reporting from the camps.

Claudia will be dearly missed, and her legacy never forgotten.

Greg Scarlatoiu
Executive Director, HRNK

Top News:

[Claudia Rosett, who reported from Tiananmen Square, dies at 67](#) (The Washington Post, 05/30/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong-un gains weight again by 'gorging on foreign snacks and alcohol](#) (The Telegraph, 06/01/2023)

[Kim's sister says N. Korea will 'correctly' place spy satellite into orbit soon after failed launch](#) (Yonhap, 06/01/2023)

[Kim Yo Jong denounces US over criticism of North Korea's failed satellite launch](#) (NK News, 06/01/2023)

[North Korea rushed satellite launch after seeing ROK rocket success, Seoul says](#) (NK News, 06/01/2023)

[North Korea slams US-led maritime drills as effort to impose 'hostile blockade'](#) (NK News, 06/01/2023)

[N. Korea adopts law on inspecting goods amid border opening speculation](#) (Yonhap, 06/01/2023)

[N. Korea releases rare photos of botched spy satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 06/01/2023)

[N. Korea slams anti-proliferation drills in S. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 06/01/2023)

[Photos show new North Korean space rocket likely used ballistic missile engine](#) (NK News, 06/01/2023)

[Pyongyang seeks to portray rocket as science effort by admitting failure: experts](#) (The Korea Times, 06/01/2023)

[Sister of North's leader vows successful launch 'soon'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/01/2023)

In South Korea:

[Military identifies NK projectile fuselage, salvage underway](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/01/2023)

[South Korea successfully tests interceptor for countering North Korean missiles](#) (NK News, 06/01/2023)

[South Korea to hold first military parade in downtown Seoul in 10 years](#) (NK News, 06/01/2023)

[S. Korea's L-SAM: vanguard of multilayered missile shield](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/01/2023)

International:

[Ban Ki-moon points to China's key role on North Korea after failed space launch](#) (NK News, 06/01/2023)

[IMO condemns North Korean missile launches as 'serious threat' to ship traffic](#) (NK News, 06/01/2023)

[NATO's Stoltenberg condemns North Korea's satellite launch](#) (Reuters, 06/01/2023)

[N. Korea must be held accountable despite failure to launch spy satellite: Kirby](#) (Yonhap, 06/01/2023)

[N. Korea will pay due price for violating UNSC resolutions: S. Korean envoy](#) (Yonhap, 06/01/2023)

[S. Korean, Japanese defense chiefs to hold first talks in 4 years in Singapore](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/01/2023)

Top News:

- Claudia Rosett, a former Wall Street Journal reporter and editorial board member who chronicled Russia's first brutal war against the Chechens, exposed corruption within the U.N. oil-for-food program in Iraq and dodged tanks and gunfire while covering the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing, died May 27 at her home in the Finger Lakes region of New York. She was 67. (Harrison Smith, [The Washington Post](#))

In North Korea:

- Kim Jong-un has piled on weight after gorging himself on foreign snacks and drinking to excess, South Korean spies believe. (Verity Bowman, [The Telegraph](#))
- The influential sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has vowed that Pyongyang will "correctly" place a military reconnaissance satellite into orbit soon, state media reported Thursday, a day after the North's attempt to launch a spy satellite failed. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- The North Korean leader's sister Kim Yo Jong has defended her nation's efforts to launch a military spy satellite, denouncing the U.S. on Thursday for criticizing the DPRK's space program but not those of other countries. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's satellite launch on Wednesday failed because it rushed preparations in response to South Korea's successful rocket launch last week, according to South Korea's intelligence agency. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

- North Korea has condemned WMD interdiction drills being held off the coast of South Korea's Jeju Island, calling it a U.S.-led attempt to impose a "hostile blockade" against the DPRK and a "declaration of war." (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has adopted a law designed to beef up inspections of export and import goods, state media reported Thursday, amid speculation the secretive regime may soon reopen its border with China following years of COVID-19 restrictions. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Thursday released rare photos of its failed attempt to launch its first military spy satellite in an apparent bid to show that it was not a test of a weapons system. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea condemned anti-proliferation drills in South Korea on Thursday, saying it will regard any attempt by Washington and Seoul to impose a "hostile blockade" on it as a declaration of war against Pyongyang. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has released two images of its failed attempt to put a military reconnaissance satellite into orbit on Wednesday, revealing that the new "Chollima-1" rocket was fitted with what appears to be an engine type also used in the country's long-range missiles. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's unusually prompt admission of the failure of its purported reconnaissance satellite launch shows the regime's effort to characterize the project as a scientific endeavor and not part of its missile program as suspected by Seoul, Washington, Japan and many other governments, according to experts, Thursday. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- Kim Yo-jong, the powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, said Pyongyang would soon succeed in launching a working military reconnaissance satellite into orbit even as she admitted that the previous day's attempt had failed, state media reported Thursday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- The South Korean defense minister said Thursday that the military was conducting a salvage operation for a segment of a North Korean space launch vehicle believed to be from the second stage of propulsion, and was tracing remaining debris from the projectile a day after the launch ended in failure. (Shin Ji-hye, Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea successfully tested an indigenous defense system for intercepting ballistic missiles this week, the defense ministry said Thursday, calling it a "significant" step towards countering North Korea's "increasingly sophisticated" nuclear and missile threats. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- South Korea will hold its first military parade in 10 years in downtown Seoul this September, as North Korea continues preparations for its own military parade likely set for late July. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- South Korea has made remarkable strides in enhancing its independent capabilities to effectively thwart escalating missile threats from North Korea. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- Former U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged China to take a more active role in resolving the North Korean nuclear issue this week, highlighting the importance of enforcing U.N. sanctions and lamenting the failure of diplomacy. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))

- The International Maritime Organization (IMO) condemned North Korean missile launches as a "serious threat" to maritime traffic on Wednesday, hours after debris from a failed DPRK satellite launch fell into the Yellow Sea. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- NATO's secretary-general Jens Stoltenberg on Thursday said he condemned North Korea's failed satellite launch, adding he called upon the country to "cease these provocative actions". ([Reuters](#))
- North Korea must be held accountable for its failed attempt to launch a military spy satellite, a spokesperson for the U.S. National Security Council (NSC) said Wednesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's failed launch of a spy satellite has violated United Nations Security Council resolutions and the country will face corresponding consequences, South Korea's ambassador to the United States said Wednesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean and Japanese defense chiefs are scheduled to hold a one-on-one meeting Sunday, marking the first such meeting since 2019, on the sidelines of the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526103438/https://mailchi.mp/3d52353dc6b8/hrnk-news-items-claudia-rosett-who-reported-from-tiananmen-square-dies-at-67>

Friday, June 2, 2023

1 in 6 N. North Children Suffer from Stunted Growth

HRNK Mourns the Passing of Claudia Rosett

HRNK mourns the loss of Claudia Rosett, American author and journalist. She passed away on Saturday, May 27 at the age of 67.

Claudia was one of the relatively few reporters who remained inside Tiananmen Square through the night of the crackdown. In 2004 and 2005, her reporting for *The Wall Street Journal* exposed the corruption behind the UN's Oil-for-Food program.

A great friend of HRNK and a staunch supporter of our mission, Claudia was deeply passionate about bringing human rights and freedom to the people of North Korea. In 1994, writing for *The Wall Street Journal*, she broke [the story of North Korean loggers](#) officially dispatched to labor camps in the Russian Far East, reporting from the camps.

Claudia will be dearly missed, and her legacy never forgotten.

Greg Scarlatoiu
Executive Director, HRNK

Top News:

[Report: 1 in 6 N. Korean Children Suffer from Stunted Growth](#) (KBS World, 05/27/2023)
[World Help sends Bibles to North Koreans persecuted by Kim regime](#) (The Christian Post, 05/25/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea bristles at U.N., NATO criticism of its spy satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 06/02/2023)
[North Korea decries criticism of its space launch by UN and NATO chiefs](#) (NK News, 06/02/2023)
[North Korea imports new Chinese electric vehicles for self-branded showroom](#) (NK News, 06/02/2023)
[North Korea says 'no reason' it can't meet with Japan](#) (NK News, 06/01/2023)
[Why North Korea's Latest Nuclear Claims Are Raising Alarms](#) (The New York Times, 06/02/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea slaps sanctions on N.K. hacking group after Pyongyang's space launch](#) (Yonhap, 06/02/2023)
[S. Korea, U.S. craft 1st cybersecurity guidance](#) (Yonhap, 06/02/2023)
[S. Korea, US issue warning about N. Korea hacking group](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/02/2023)
[S. Korea's defense chief arrives in Singapore for security forum](#) (Yonhap, 06/02/2023)
[S. Korea wraps up drills to defend western border islands](#) (Yonhap, 06/02/2023)
[Seoul sanctions North Korea's Kimsuky hackers over failed satellite launch](#) (NK News, 06/02/2023)
[Yoon meets with East Timor president](#) (Yonhap, 06/02/2023)

International:

[China signals hardened stance amid "Four Nos" policy speculations](#) (NK News, 06/02/2023)

[Diplomacy 'only viable way' to achieve safe, stable Korean Peninsula: U.S. envoy](#) (Yonhap, 06/01/2023)

[Ex-Mongolian leader says he asked to see North Korean prison camps during visit](#) (NK News, 06/02/2023)

[NATO chief says S. Korea will attend upcoming summit](#) (Yonhap, 06/01/2023)

[Top U.S., Japanese officials discuss ways to expand cooperation with S. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 06/01/2023)

[U.S. deepening trilateral cooperation with S. Korea, Japan against N. Korean threats: Biden](#) (Yonhap, 06/02/2023)

Top News:

- Experts in the U.S. say the situation is worsening amid prolonged border closure caused by strict pandemic restrictions. Greg Scarlatou, executive director of the Washington-based Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, told Radio Free Asia on Friday [May 26] that the humanitarian situation in the North is very serious due to government controls. ([KBS World](#))
- Open Doors, a watchdog group that monitors the persecution of Christians worldwide, characterizes North Korea as a “brutally hostile place for Christians to live.” The watchdog organization cited a 2022 report by The International Bar Association and The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, documenting how Christians are often detained for long periods and tortured. (Samantha Kamman, [The Christian Post](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea on Friday slammed the chiefs of the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), painting their criticism of the North's spy satellite launch as interference in internal affairs. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has protested against criticism of its latest satellite launch by the U.N. and NATO chiefs, calling its military reconnaissance program a legitimate “self-defense” measure against threats from the U.S. and its allies. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- A North Korean state-run company is displaying and possibly selling brand new Chinese electric cars at a self-branded showroom that recently opened on a new skyscraper street in Pyongyang. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea insisted that it would be a “waste of time” to hold talks with Japan on the abduction issue this week, while stating there’s “no reason” the two sides can’t meet if Tokyo isn’t “shackled by the past.” (Seung-Yeon Chung, [NK News](#))
- North Korea’s new wave of propaganda suggests that it has succeeded in miniaturizing its nuclear warheads and made its missiles easier to launch and harder to intercept. The claims — not fully corroborated — show the country is on a path that is worrying to its neighbors, and to the United States. (Pablo Robles and Choe Sang-Hun, [The New York Times](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea on Friday imposed unilateral sanctions on a North Korean hacking group known as Kimsuky, Seoul's foreign ministry said, in response to Pyongyang's botched rocket launch aimed at putting a military spy satellite into space. ([Yonhap](#))

- South Korea and the United States signed an arrangement Friday on the creation of their first joint cybersecurity guidance aimed at ensuring smooth combined military operations, Seoul's defense ministry said. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the US issued a warning about a state-backed North Korean hacking group in a joint statement Friday, with Seoul slapping a ban on the group -- the first time for any single country to do so. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea's Defense Minister Lee Jong-sup arrived in Singapore on Friday to attend an annual security forum, where North Korea's evolving military threats, the war in Ukraine and an intensifying Sino-U.S. rivalry are expected to feature prominently. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean military has concluded three-day drills for the defense of western border islands, the Marine Corps said Friday, amid tensions caused by North Korea's botched launch of a space rocket earlier this week. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea debuted new sanctions against North Korean hacking syndicate Kimsuky on Friday, identifying the measures as retaliation against the DPRK's failed satellite launch this week. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol met with East Timorese President Jose Ramos-Horta on Friday and discussed bilateral relations, cooperation on the international stage and North Korea's nuclear threat, his office said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- During a press briefing on Wednesday, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning was questioned regarding the so-called "Four Nos" policy that Liu Jinsong, an official from China's foreign ministry, may have presented during his visit to Seoul. Mao neither confirmed nor denied the event, instead referring to her previous statement from May 23. She reiterated that Liu Jinsong had "explicitly stated China's serious position on its core concerns and exchanged views with the ROK side on other issues." ([NK News](#))
- The top U.S. envoy to South Korea on Thursday stressed the importance of diplomacy in resolving heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula, highlighted by Pyongyang's failed yet defiant launch of a space rocket this week. ([Yonhap](#))
- Former Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj requested to inspect North Korea's infamous prison camps and nuclear facilities ahead of his high-profile trip to Pyongyang while in office, a visit originally scheduled to include a meeting with leader Kim Jong Un, he told NK News this week. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- For the second straight year, South Korea will participate in the meeting of heads of state for North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members, its chief said Thursday. ([Yonhap](#))
- U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin discussed ways to expand trilateral cooperation between the United States, South Korea and Japan while meeting with top Japanese officials Thursday, according to the U.S. Department of Defense. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States is strengthening its cooperation with South Korea and Japan to deter evolving threats posed by North Korea, President Joe Biden said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Tessa Aguilar, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526103612/https://mailchi.mp/f179f9845b56/hrnk-news-items-claudia-rosett-who-reported-from-tiananmen-square-dies-at-11191730>

Saturday, June 3, 2023

S. Korea, US, Japan to begin information sharing on NK missiles; Military continues salvage operation for North Korean rocket debris

In North Korea:

[Fed up with corruption, North Koreans are attacking police, secret document shows](#) (Radio Free Asia, 06/02/2023)

[North Korean leader's sister says US hypocritical for criticizing failed satellite launch](#) (AP News, 06/02/2023)

In South Korea:

[Military continues salvage operation for North Korean rocket debris](#) (Yonhap, 06/03/2023)

[Remains of launch vehicle may shed light on North's new technology](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/02/2023)

[South Korea says some countries ignore North Korea's unlawful behaviour](#) (Reuters, 06/03/2023)

[S. Korea's chief nuclear envoy calls for collective condemnation of NK satellite launch](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/02/2023)

[Seoul imposes sanctions on North Korean hacking group for role in space launch](#) (The Korea Times, 06/02/2023)

[S. Korean nuke envoy urges efforts to cut off illicit funds to N. Korean weapons program](#) (Yonhap, 06/02/2023)

International:

[China and Russia oppose UN Security Council action after DPRK satellite launch](#) (NK News, 06/03/2023)

[North Korean leader 'terrorized' by South Korea's closer ties with US, Japan](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/03/2023)

[S. Korean defense chief criticizes China, Russia for neglecting illegal NK actions](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/03/2023)

[S. Korea, US, Japan to begin real-time information sharing on NK missiles from this year](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/03/2023)

[UN official calls out Security Council for inaction on N. Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 06/02/2023)

[US, allies clash with Russia, China over North Korea's failed military spy satellite launch](#) (AP News, 06/03/2023)

[U.S., South Korea issue warning about North Korean hacker group linked to satellite launch](#) (UPI, 06/02/2023)

[Yet another violation of UN resolutions](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/02/2023)

In North Korea:

- Disgruntled North Koreans are lashing out against police corruption by openly protesting against them and in some cases beating officers, according to a local government official who saw a secret document detailing the cases. (Ahn Chang Gyu, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on Thursday accused the United States of “gangster-like” hypocrisy for criticizing her country’s failed launch of a military spy satellite and insisted a successful launch will be made soon. (Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))

In South Korea:

- The South Korean military continued its operation Saturday to search and salvage the wreckage of a North Korean rocket that crashed into the Yellow Sea earlier this week. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korean military forces are working to salvage the remains of the North Korean satellite launch vehicle that crashed into the sea shortly after launch in the hopes of gaining insight into the North's ballistic missile and satellite reconnaissance technology. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's defence minister said on Saturday that some countries were "ignoring North Korea's unlawful behaviour", which he said threatens to weaken U.N. sanctions against its missile and nuclear programmes. (Kanupriya Kapoor, Ju-min Park, [Reuters](#))
- South Korea's top nuclear envoy on Friday called for the international community to collectively condemn North Korea's recent abortive attempt to launch a spy satellite during the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Kimsuky uses 'tailored' methods to target gov't officials, scholars, journalists: police (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea's top nuclear negotiator on Friday called for efforts to cut off illicit funds flowing into North Korea's nuclear and missile programs as he attended an annual security forum in Singapore, Seoul's foreign ministry said. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- A U.N. Security Council (UNSC) meeting on North Korea’s attempted spy satellite launch ended without a consensus on Friday, as China and Russia once again opposed U.S.-led calls for action against the DPRK. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un is unstable and intimidated by deepening trilateral security ties between Seoul, Tokyo and Washington under Yoon Suk Yeol administration, South Korea’s National Intelligence Service believes. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korean defense minister denounced China and Russia for neglecting their responsibility to hold North Korea accountable for its ongoing illegal actions, including ballistic missile launches. (Ji Dagyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The defense chiefs of South Korea, the United States, and Japan reached an agreement Saturday to establish and operate a real-time information sharing system concerning North Korea's missile launches within this year. (Ji Dagyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- A senior United Nations official took the Security Council to task Friday over its failure to hold North Korea to account for multiple sanctions-busting missile tests, saying such inaction allowed Pyongyang to remain "unconstrained." ([The Korea Times](#))
- The United States and its allies clashed with Russia and China on Friday over North Korea's failed launch of a military spy satellite this week in violation of multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions, which Moscow and Beijing refused to condemn. (Edith M. Lederer, [AP News](#))

- The United States and South Korea issued a joint cybersecurity advisory Friday about a North Korean hacker group that Seoul claims stole technology used in the North's failed satellite launch attempt this week. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- North Korea's attempt to put the country's first spy satellite dubbed Malligyong-1 into space via its newly developed Chollima-1 rocket failed after a blast-off from its long-range missile launch base in Tongchang-ri, North Pyongan, early Wednesday. ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here

:<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526103916/https://mailchi.mp/6cc70ea13107/hrnk-news-items-s-korea-us-japan-to-begin-information-sharing-on-nk-missiles-military-continues-salvage-operation-for-north-korean-rocket-debris>

Sunday, June 4, 2023

S. Korea eyes UN seat as NK rebukes UN body; N. Korean leader's sister slams UNSC meeting on space rocket launch

In South Korea:

[Ruling party ups call for election body probe](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 06/04/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea eyes UN seat as NK rebukes UN body](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 06/04/2023)

[S. Korean military continues operation to salvage N. Korean rocket debris](#) (*Yonhap*, 06/04/2023)

International:

[EU's top diplomat corrects he 'explains' Ukraine's needs for ammunition to S.Korea](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 06/04/2023)

[N. Korean leader's sister slams UNSC meeting on space rocket launch](#) (*Yonhap*, 06/04/2023)

[North Korea denounces UN over satellite, 'gangster-like' US demand](#) (*Reuters*, 06/04/2023)

[S. Korea, Japan agree to bury hatchet on radar dispute, boost data sharing](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 06/04/2023)

[Top U.S. nuclear envoy warns N. Korea will pay 'consequences' for escalating tensions](#) (*Yonhap*, 06/04/2023)

In South Korea:

- South Korea's central election body is resisting mounting calls to face investigation even as the allegations of nepotistic hiring practices and negligent cyber security continue to grow. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea is preparing to play a bigger role on the international stage as it aims to secure a seat on the United Nations Security Council at an election Tuesday, an opportunity for Seoul to serve as a two-year term member on the UN's most powerful body. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The South Korean military continued its work Sunday to search and salvage the wreckage of a North Korean rocket that crashed into the Yellow Sea earlier this week but wrapped up the day's operations due to unfavorable conditions. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- The European Union's top diplomat, Josep Borrell, clarified Sunday that he "explained Ukraine's needs for ammunition" to the South Korean defense minister, correcting his statement on the bilateral talks. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un on Sunday lambasted last week's meeting of the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) on the country's recent failed space rocket launch as "the most unfair and biased act of interfering in internal affairs." ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea denounced on Sunday the U.N. Security Council for discussing its recent satellite launch in response to a "gangster-like U.S. request", and it vowed to reject sanctions and take action to defend itself. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- The defense leaders of South Korea and Japan have agreed to clear a key obstacle that has hindered their bilateral defense cooperation and exchanges since 2018 and to prioritize their efforts to prevent the recurrence of similar military disputes to foster "future-oriented security cooperation." (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The top U.S. nuclear envoy has stressed the need to make North Korea realize its escalation of tensions will have "consequences," while warning any nuclear attack against South Korea will be met with a "swift, overwhelming and decisive" response. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526104100/https://mailchi.mp/60e6c72b4970/hrnk-news-items-s-korea-eyes-un-seat-as-nk-rebukes-un-body-n-korean-leaders-sister-slams-unsc-meeting-on-space-rocket-launch>

Monday, June 5, 2023

N.K. demolishes homes around suspected nuclear site; S.K., U.S. veterans of Korean War to reunite in Seoul ahead of 73rd war anniv.

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong-un's new border wall could be a sign that his grip on North Korea is slipping](#) (*The Guardian*, 06/05/2023)

[North Korea demolishes homes around suspected nuclear site: Imagery](#) (NK Pro, 06/05/2023)

[North Korea turns to smaller vessels to obscure possible ship-to-ship transfers](#) (NK Pro, 06/05/2023)

In South Korea:

[Head of opposition party reform resigns over pro-North remarks](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/05/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea voices regret over N. Korea's threat to forgo prior notice for future satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 06/05/2023)

International:

[More Russian diplomats leave North Korea as country maintains COVID controls](#) (NK News, 06/05/2023)

[S. Korea's defense chief wraps up Singapore trip highlighting efforts to curb N.K. threats](#) (Yonhap, 06/05/2023)

[S. Korean, U.S. veterans of Korean War to reunite in Seoul ahead of 73rd war anniv.](#) (Yonhap, 06/05/2023)

[Trump's praise for Kim Jong Un draws fire from his Republican competitors](#) (NK News, 06/05/2023)

[US, ROK, Japan look to share real-time North Korean missile data by year's end](#) (NK News, 06/05/2023)

In North Korea:

- Many people suggest that Kim's border clampdown may be a mark of fragility – born out of alarm, or an attempt to balance power blocs, or a need to safeguard his position. Choking the black market is a sharp blow to those making a living from it, and they are more visible and more powerful than you might think. (Timothy Cho, [The Guardian](#))
- Dozens of homes surrounding a suspected uranium enrichment facility on the outskirts of Pyongyang were recently demolished, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery, likely as part of a nationwide rural development project. The demolition activity just meters from the outer walls of the Kangson facility is likely to raise questions among close observers of the site, though there is no evidence yet to suggest it is related to any nuclear expansion plans. (Colin Zwirko, [NK Pro](#))
- A Chinese support vessel rendezvoused with a North Korean high-speed boat and cargo ships in the Yellow Sea on two occasions last month, NK Pro analysis shows, in what experts said may be an attempt to conduct illicit ship-to-ship transfers with smaller vessels that are harder to track. Both incidents involving the China-flagged Sulianhuo1188 tender took place in North Korea's exclusive economic zone southwest of Cho Island, an area that U.N. sanctions monitors recently identified as a hotspot for such transfers that are a key part of Pyongyang's sanctions-evasion strategy. (Anton Sokolin, [NK Pro](#))

In South Korea:

- Lee Rae-kyung, the honorary chair of the progressive grassroots advocacy group The Tomorrow, offered to resign from his role to lead the reform of the main opposition Democratic Party of Korea, about 10 hours after his nomination Monday. Lee's decision comes following controversy in political circles over past pro-North Korea remarks, which surfaced immediately after the news of his nomination. Lee in February described the United States as "the culprit behind the impediment to the detente between North Korea and South Korea by manipulating facts about the sinking of Cheonan" on a social media post, as he

claimed the United States had exaggerated the role of Chinese high-altitude balloons that were shot down by US forces as "national threats." (Son Ji-hyoung, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea on Monday expressed regret over the North's threat to forgo prior notice to an international maritime safety agency when launching its purported military spy satellite in the future. Following a botched attempt to launch what the North claims to be a satellite-carrying rocket last week, the country condemned the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on Sunday for adopting a resolution denouncing its rocket launch and hinted that it may not notify the organization for future launches. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- More personnel at the Russian Embassy in North Korea have left the country, the embassy announced on Friday, a sign that a return to border normalization could still be a long way off. A video posted on the embassy's Facebook page showed Russian Ambassador Alexander Matsegora bidding farewell to staff at the Pyongyang train station, with at least nine people on the train when it left for Russia. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- South Korea's Defense Minister Lee Jong-sup on Monday concluded a four-day visit to Singapore for an annual forum, where he focused on firming up international cooperation against North Korea's evolving nuclear and missile threats. ([Yonhap](#))
- Around 160 South Korean and U.S. veterans of the 1950-53 Korean War will reunite in Seoul this month, ahead of the war's 73rd anniversary, organizers said Monday. A total of six veterans who will fly in from the United States and 150 South Korean veterans will attend a set of commemorative events to be hosted by the Saeeden Church in Yongin, 40 kilometers south of Seoul, from June 17-22 in Seoul and various other cities. (Kim Hyun-soo, [Yonhap](#))
- Republican presidential candidates are attacking frontrunner Donald Trump over his affinity for Kim Jong Un, highlighting a major faultline in the party over U.S. policy toward the DPRK. Following North Korea's recent election to the World Health Organization's (WHO) executive board, Trump on Friday congratulated Kim personally in a post on Truth Social, the former president's social media platform. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, former U.S. ambassador to the U.N. Nikki Haley and former Vice President Mike Pence — all running or expected to run for president in next year's election — quickly jumped at the opportunity to criticize their primary challenger for the nomination. (James Fretwell, [NK News](#))
- The U.S., South Korea and Japan announced plans on Saturday to start sharing real-time data about North Korean missile launches before the end of the year, with one expert noting that successful implementation requires a system that is not vulnerable to the ups and downs of South Korea-Japan relations. Pentagon chief Lloyd Austin and his South Korean and Japanese counterparts Lee Jong-sup and Yasukazu Hamada made the announcement following a trilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, the U.S. Department of Defense stated in a press release. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526104214/https://mailchi.mp/98b45b4eff50/hrnk-news-items-nk-demolishes-homes-around-suspected-nuclear-site-sk-us-veterans-of-korean-war-to-reunite-in-seoul-ahead-of-73rd-war-anniv>

Tuesday, June 6, 2023

Abraham Cooper Elected as Chair of U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, NK propagandists amplify anti-Yoon protests

Top News:

[Abraham Cooper Elected as Chair of Bipartisan U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, Frederick A. Davie as Vice Chair](#) (U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, 06/05/2023)
["North Korea's Crimes Against Humanity Still Persist", NGO Executive Director Says: On U.S. and South Korean Responsibility for Stalling Improvements](#) (The Asahi Shimbun, 05/16/2023)

*This article has been translated from Japanese. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[North Korea has started testing new military drone, satellite imagery suggests](#) (NK Pro, 06/06/2023)

[N. Korean leader's public military activities spike upward this year](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/06/2023)

In South Korea:

[South Korean support for nukes drops as public debate ramps up: Survey](#) (NK News, 06/06/2023)

[Yoon boasts US and South Korea have upgraded to 'nuclear-based' alliance](#) (NK News, 06/06/2023)

[Yoon says alliance with U.S. upgraded to 'nuclear-based alliance'](#) (Yonhap, 06/06/2023)

[Yoon stresses 'nuclear' alliance with U.S. on Memorial Day](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/06/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[North Korean propagandists amplify anti-Yoon protests in South](#) (NK News, 06/06/2023)

International:

[Extended deterrence group expected to meet next month](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/06/2023)

[Financial Institutions in US, East Asia Spoofed by Suspected North Korean Hackers](#) (VOA, 06/06/2023)

[IMO may adopt resolution again if NK launches satellite without notice](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/06/2023)

[Singaporean gets 6-month sentence for covering up oil transfers to North Korea](#) (NK News, 06/06/2023)

Top News:

- Rabbi Abraham Cooper, a longtime advocate for North Korean human rights as a founding member and Vice Chair of the North Korea Freedom Coalition and as a member of the Board of Directors of Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, has been elected chair of the

US Commission on International Religious Freedom. ([U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom](#))

- Over the past decade, the overall human rights situation in North Korea has not improved and crimes against humanity continue. Conditions in political prison camps are appalling, especially in the newfound context of COVID-19. North Korean authorities have banned movement and clamped down on information and market activities from the outside world (Yoshihiro Makino, [The Asahi Shimbun](#))

*See full translated interview with Executive Director Scarlatoiu at the bottom of the email

In North Korea:

- A modern North Korean aircraft resembling an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) appeared on a runway at a major air base this month, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery, the first visual evidence of active drone testing in support of one of Kim Jong Un's key military development goals. (Colin Zwirko, [NK Pro](#))
- The frequency of publicly reported military activities by North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has been on a notable rise since the beginning of this year compared to the past few years. This marks an almost twofold increase in the frequency of publicly reported military activities within just five months of this year compared to 2021 and 2022. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korean support for acquiring nuclear weapons has declined in recent years even as discussion about going nuclear has ramped up, a new nationwide survey suggests, concluding that domestic politicization of the issue shaped public opinion more than perceptions of North Korean threats. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol reiterated that the U.S. and South Korea have upgraded their security partnership to a "nuclear-based alliance" in a Memorial Day speech on Tuesday, commemorating soldiers who helped to repel North Korean communists during the Korean War. Yoon's remark is his latest invocation of a phrase that Seoul officials have used several times since the U.S.-ROK summit in April, when Yoon and President Joe Biden agreed to establish a Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG) for joint planning on the use of U.S. nuclear assets. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol said Tuesday the alliance with the United States has been upgraded to a "nuclear-based alliance" under his agreement with U.S. President Joe Biden to strengthen Washington's nuclear commitment to South Korea. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol underscored that South Korea-U.S. ties have been upgraded to a "nuclear-based alliance" amid escalating threats from the North in a Memorial Day address Tuesday. "North Korea is advancing its nuclear and missile capabilities and has legislated the use of nuclear weapons," Yoon said in a morning ceremony at the Seoul National Cemetery in Dongjak-dong, Seoul. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korean propagandists are continuing to amplify protests against Yoon Suk-yeol in South Korea, publishing photos of demonstrations in the country's most widely read newspaper on Tuesday. The collage of 12 images from protests in Seoul on Saturday appears

on page six of the *Rodong Sinmun*, alongside an article that seeks to paint the South Korean president as illegitimate and deeply unpopular. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))

International:

- The first meeting of a joint South Korean-U.S. nuclear deterrence and strategic planning group is expected to take place next month. The Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG), which was first announced during President Yoon Suk Yeol's state visit to Washington in April, is a planned working group of officials from both countries designed to strengthen extended deterrence against threats from North Korea through enhanced dialogue and information sharing on nuclear strategy. (Park Hyun-ju, Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- There are renewed concerns North Korea's army of hackers is targeting financial institutions to prop up the regime in Pyongyang and possibly fund its weapons programs. North Korean aligned actors have been spoofing well-known financial firms in Japan, Vietnam and the United States, sending out emails and documents that, if opened, could grant the hackers access to critical systems. (Jeff Seldin, [VOA](#))
- The International Maritime Organization has hinted at adopting another resolution if North Korea launches a second spy satellite without notice. As an IMO member, North Korea has an obligation to provide prior notification to the organization and relevant countries before launching missiles or satellites that could potentially impact the navigation of ships from other member nations. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- A state court in Singapore handed down a criminal sentence to one of three men implicated in covering up illicit transfers of oil to North Korea last year. He was sentenced to six months in jail on two charges of "obstructing, preventing, perverting or defeating the course of justice." (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

[Translation] "North Korea's Crimes Against Humanity Still Persist", NGO Executive Director Says: On U.S. and South Korean Responsibility for Stalling Improvements

In March, the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea (UN COI) marked its 10-year anniversary since its establishment. In its final report released in 2014, the COI identified human rights violations by North Korea as "Crimes Against Humanity" and designated Kim Jong-un and other high-ranking North Koreans as criminally responsible. However, "Human rights violations by North Korea continue to this day," noted Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, a United States based NGO.

What does this entail?

We asked Mr. Scarlatoiu for comment.

(Yoshihiro Makino reporting from Washington, D.C.)

Greg Scarlatoiu:

Executive Director, The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea. Born in Romania, Mr. Scarlatoiu holds a Master's degree in Diplomacy and Literature from The Fletcher School at Tufts

University. Prior to assuming his current position, Mr. Scarlatoiu worked at the Korea Economic Institute (KEI) in Washington, D.C.

Has there been progress on the issue of human rights in North Korea over the past decade?

As a result of the recommendations of the COI report, the Seoul office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights was established. In addition, North Korea also joined the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. However, it is notable that UN officials on the rights of persons with disabilities were afforded very limited access upon visiting the country. North Korea has also refused to accept the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in North Korea.

Over the past decade, the overall human rights situation in North Korea has not improved and crimes against humanity continue. Conditions in political prison camps are appalling, especially in the newfound context of COVID-19. North Korean authorities have banned movement and clamped down on information and market activities from the outside world - they are even cracking down on street vendors.

The COI report helped build momentum for human rights issues in North Korea, but it has stalled. I think there are two main reasons:

The first is the U.S.-North Korea summit diplomacy by former U.S. President Trump - human rights issues were not addressed in the U.S.-North Korea negotiations. I do not intend to criticize President Trump's new attempt at summit diplomacy, but I think it is a mistake to sacrifice human rights issues in the negotiations.

Second, the former Moon Jae-in administration in South Korea is responsible for attempting an appeasement policy towards North Korea. At the time of the Moon administration, South Korea was not a co-sponsor of the UN human rights resolution on North Korea. Efforts to address the issue of human rights in North Korea should continue consistently, regardless of whether the administration is liberal or conservative.

Many of the recommendations made by the COI report have not been implemented; the COI recommended that the UN Security Council refer North Korean human rights issues to the International Criminal Court (ICC). There is also the approach of a special tribunal, established previously in the Rwandan and Yugoslavian cases, but both require a Security Council resolution. We have also asked China to stop the deportation of defectors, but China's attitude has not changed. I believe action is lacking to implement the recommendations.

What do you think about Kim Jong-un's responsibility?

Kim Jong-un is responsible for all that is happening in North Korea.

He is at the top of the system. He is surely culpable.

He, his father, and his grandfather were not democratically elected. Kim Jong-un is in power because he is his father's son and his grandfather's grandson. The ultimate strategic goal of the Royal Family and the Workers' Party of Korea is the survival of the regime.

To this end, they are developing nuclear weapons and missiles one after another. They oppress and exploit their own people at home and abroad. Kim Jong-un is the ultimate beneficiary of this kleptocratic police state. He is definitely responsible.

Some hoped he would reform the North Korean political system, since he studied in Switzerland. He knows the outside world. But knowing the outside world does not mean he likes the people in the outside world. Pol Pot, the mastermind of the Cambodian genocide, studied in France.

Kim Jong-un was not chosen because he was likely to be a reformer. He was chosen because he was the one son his father trusted the most. Many were purged, arrested, tortured, and killed, along with their families and associates, in order to build a support base as quickly as possible.

A notable recent development is that Kim Jong-un's daughter, Kim Ju-ae, has appeared on the scene.

According to South Korean intelligence, there is evidence to suggest that Kim Jong-un has another child in addition to his son and daughter, Kim Ju-ae. Kim Ju-ae may not even be her real name, but I believe that Kim Jong-un is demonstrating a public image of a strong royal family and declaring his succession to the next generation.

It is notable that Kim Jong-un also had to inherit the country at the age of 27; he had only three years to prepare for his succession to power. I believe Kim Jong-un intends to prepare early on because he wants to make sure the same thing does not happen to his children.

Have you heard anything about the recent situation in North Korea?

Many diplomats and international organization officials have left North Korea due to COVID-19. We have a much more limited access to information than before. The few sources that still remain note that the situation is "dire". They are subjected to indoctrination, repression, coercion, control, surveillance, and punishment. Regime change from the bottom up is impossible.

North Korean citizens do not know how the governing system works. It does not concern people outside Pyongyang. I do not believe there is any tension between the military and the Party. The

military belongs to the Party. It is the Party's army. It is very likely that several military uprisings have been attempted in the past, but they have failed.

Power and privileges are concentrated in the capital, Pyongyang. The very tight surveillance makes it very difficult for people to organize or even think about political change in North Korea. There is regime surveillance and, under the dire economic and humanitarian conditions, one can only think about survival for one's self and one's family, not revolution.

Ten years ago, the number of people in political prison camps was estimated to be at about 120,000. However, political repression has intensified and now the figure is closer to 200,000.

Is there a possibility that U.S.-North Korea dialogue will be initiated?

The Biden administration has sent the message that diplomatic opportunities are always open. Whether or not diplomacy will proceed is now up to North Korea.

Regardless of U.S.-North Korea dialogue, North Korea will continue its nuclear and missile development. If there is no dialogue, North Korea will do so openly. During the dialogue phase, it may somewhat hide the development, but it will continue.

The obvious reason for North Korea's continued missile testing is the need to test its development program. COVID-19 has put the North Korean economy in a difficult situation. Meanwhile, North Korea has a client for weapons in Iran and elsewhere. They may want to conduct missile tests to show their customers that North Korea is alive and well and able to supply goods.

In addition, North Korea also wishes to strain South Korea and the United States. They may want to put pressure not only on the U.S.-South Korea alliance, but also on the U.S.-Japan alliance.

I believe that Kim Jong-un made a huge mistake at the February 2019 U.S.-North Korea summit. I was told that his aides were held responsible for that and that on the way back to Pyongyang from Hanoi, the attendants were forced to kneel down and raise their hands to the wall and were asked to apologize to Kim Jong-un. That is how intense the experience was for Kim Jong-un. I believe that Kim Jong-un is very reluctant to consider meeting with another head-of-state other than the United States.

We are not in a situation where an agreement is possible. What we want is Complete, Verifiable, Irreversible Denuclearization (CVID).

What North Korea wants is recognition as a nuclear power. Kim Jong-un has nuclear weapons in his hands. Now North Korea wants to be recognized by the U.S., have diplomatic relations, and become

a nuclear power. Negotiations will not be easy as both the U.S. and North Korea have very different claims.

Yoshihiro Makino

Diplomatic Correspondent, Asahi Shimbun; Visiting Professor, Hiroshima University.

After working for Osaka Chosen Mitsui O.S.K. Lines (now Mitsui O.S.K. Lines), he joined the Asahi Shimbun in 1991. After working in the Political Affairs Department, as a visiting fellow at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), as Seoul Bureau Chief, and as a member of the editorial board, he assumed his current position in April 2021. He is the author of "Hopeless Korea" (Bunshun Shinsho), "The Day Kim Jong-un's Nuclear Weapons Destroy North Korea" (Kodansha +α Shinsho), "Report: Kim Jong-un and Trump" (Asahi Shimbun Publications), "Report: Rupture between Japan and Korea" (Asahi Shinsho), "Okinawan Conflict: Ukraine, Taiwan, and Japan - World in War Reading the Map" (Bungeishunju), etc. Before becoming a reporter, Makino used to work for an ocean shipping company in the days of telexes, when there was no email. After becoming a reporter, he is happy to have a career that still allows him to look outwards towards global society.

Translated by Yoshino Yamauchi, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526104551/https://mailchi.mp/42b6e2fdc8d8/hrnk-news-items-abraham-cooper-elected-as-chair-of-us-commission-on-international-religious-freedom-nk-propagandists-amplify-anti-yoon-protests>

Wednesday, June 7, 2023

Empowering N. Korean people best path for real change in Pyongyang, top human-rights activist says

Top News:

[Empowering N. Korean people best path for real change in Pyongyang, top human-rights activist says](#) (The Washington Times, 06/06/2023)

In North Korea:

[IT workers making big money for North through crime, freelance work](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/07/2023)

[Kim Jong-un's food politics: How food insecurity is leveraged to maintain regime stability](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/07/2023)

[N. Korean youth group donates multiple rocket launchers to military](#) (Yonhap, 06/07/2023)

[North Korea demands youth loyalty through lengthy march, 'Kid' rocket donation](#) (NK News, 06/07/2023)

[North Korean youth group donates rocket launchers to military](#) (Reuters, 06/07/2023)

[North Korea's most dangerous woman: Meet Kim Jong-un's sister Yo-jong](#) (The Telegraph, 06/07/2023)

In South Korea:

[Yoon's new security strategy identifies NK as most pressing threats](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/07/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N.K. hacking group monitored ex-ministers' emails for months: police](#) (Yonhap, 06/07/2023)

[North Korean hackers target some 150 experts in phishing campaign: ROK police](#) (NK News, 06/07/2023)

International:

[Disappearance of two North Koreans sets off manhunt in Russian Far East](#) (NK News, 06/07/2023)

[Family of North Korean envoy in Russia missing: news reports](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/07/2023)

[Korea elected to UNSC, pledges to cooperate with China, Russia](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/07/2023)

[N. Korean premier sends condolence message to India's prime minister over rail disaster](#) (Yonhap, 06/07/2023)

[North Korea's Lazarus Group steals \\$35M in latest cryptocurrency heist](#) (NK Pro, 06/07/2023)

[S. Korea eyes bigger initiative as it returns to UN Security Council](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/07/2023)

[S. Korea wins seat on U.N. Security Council for 2024-25](#) (Yonhap, 06/07/2023)

[South Korea wins Security Council seat, pledging to address North Korean weapons](#) (NK News, 06/07/2023)

[US nonproliferation official clarifies remarks on arms control with North Korea](#) (NK News, 06/07/2023)

[Yoon hails S. Korea's election as UNSC member as 'victory of global diplomacy'](#) (Yonhap, 06/07/2023)

Top News:

- America's decades-long effort to halt North Korea's nuclear program has failed and the U.S. needs a new approach if it wants to see real change in Pyongyang, a leading human-rights activist and foreign policy scholar said Tuesday. (Ben Wolfgang, [The Washington Times](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean IT workers working for Pyongyang collectively made between \$600 million and \$1 billion in the past year through both cybercrime and foreign employment contracts, according to the U.S. State Department. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The leadership's focus on food security reflects its recognition of its crucial role in regime stability, experts on North Korean agriculture and economy said. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- A major North Korean youth organization has donated multiple rocket launchers to the country's military on the occasion of the 77th anniversary of its founding, state media reported Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))

- North Korea has turned up efforts in recent weeks to ensure the younger generation remains obedient to leader Kim Jong Un, holding a cross-country loyalty march and a ceremony at which youth presented “Kid” rocket launchers to the military to celebrate the anniversary of the Korean Children’s Union (KCU). (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- A North Korean youth group has donated rocket launchers to the military in a show of “fervent patriotism”, state media KCNA reported on Wednesday, as the isolated state confronts what it sees as growing foreign threats. (Hyunsu Yim, [Reuters](#))
- Under a foggy February sky, a plane made its descent towards Incheon International Airport in South Korea. Inside sat 23 passengers – five officials, three reporters and the rest bodyguards. But one mattered above all. (Sung-Yoon Lee, [The Telegraph](#))

In South Korea:

- The Yoon Suk Yeol administration on Wednesday released its first top security guidelines, the National Security Strategy, identifying North Korea’s advancing nuclear development as the most pressing threat. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- A North Korean hacking group has secretly monitored emails of former South Korean Cabinet minister-level officials for months over the past year and stolen their personal information, police said Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- A prominent North Korean threat group targeted former South Korean high-level officials and over 100 other security experts, police announced Wednesday, as Pyongyang increases efforts to steal sensitive information from experts and journalists. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

International:

- Russian authorities are searching for a North Korean woman and her son who disappeared from the Far East city of Vladivostok earlier this week, NK News has confirmed, in what local media have reported as a possible defection attempt. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Authorities in Vladivostok, in the far east of Russia, are searching for the missing family of a North Korean consul general, according to Russian news outlets on Tuesday. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korean Ambassador to the United Nations Hwang Joon-kook said his country will be working closely not only with the United States and Japan but also with Russia and China on the UN Security Council to tackle the North Korean nuclear threats. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea’s Premier Kim Tok-hun has sent a message of condolence to India’s prime minister over last week’s deadly train crash in the country, state media reported Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean hackers are likely behind a new multi-million dollar cryptocurrency heist, the first virtual theft linked to state-backed attackers since they netted over half-a-billion dollars for the regime in 2022. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK Pro](#))
- South Korea is stepping up efforts to lead global peace initiatives, emboldened by winning a two-year term on the United Nations Security Council at an election Tuesday, as it doubles down on fighting security challenges -- the biggest of which is North Korea. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

- South Korea was elected Tuesday as a nonpermanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for a two-year term, expanding its foothold in the U.N. body to better address the North Korean issue and other global security challenges. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea will join the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) as a rotating member next year, a position that Seoul says will enable it to play a leading role in efforts to address North Korean nuclear weapons. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The U.S. still wants denuclearization of North Korea, Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Bonnie Jenkins said on Tuesday, appearing to backtrack on remarks last October that implied Washington would instead be willing to discuss arms control. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol on Wednesday hailed South Korea's election as a nonpermanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) as a "victory of global diplomacy," his spokesperson said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Myriam Aribaud, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526104728/https://mailchi.mp/4e6df41f5b0f/hrnk-news-items-empowering-n-korean-people-best-path-for-real-change-in-pyongyang-top-human-rights-activist-says>

Thursday, June 8, 2023

ROK-US alliance's strategy for building free, unified Korea

Top News:

[North Korea sentences a family, including a 2-year-old boy, to life in prison for having a Bible](#) (Alaska Commons, 06/02/2023)

[ROK-US alliance's strategy for building free, unified Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 06/06/2023)

In North Korea:

[First Flight of North Korea's "Chollima-1" SLV Fails, but More Launches and More New SLVs Are Likely](#) (38 North, 06/07/2023)

[What you need to know about Nuri and the North's response](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/08/2023)

In South Korea:

[In a Jeju diner, a North Korean escapee serves up memories of home](#) (NK News, 06/07/2023)

[Seoul's new National Security Strategy spotlights 'main enemy' North Korea](#) (NK News, 06/08/2023)

International:

[N. Korea says it 'never recognizes' IMO resolution condemning its missile launches](#) (Yonhap, 06/08/2023)

[North Korean diplomat's wife and son go missing in Russian far east](#) (Radio Free Asia, 06/07/2023)

[North Korean diplomat's wife, son disappear in Russia](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/08/2023)

[North rejects IMO resolution against its missile launches](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/08/2023)

Top News:

- A two year old and his family have been sentenced to life imprisonment in North Korea after several officials from the communist country led by Kim Jong-un found a Bible in his house, according to the International Religious Freedom Report 2022 produced by the United States Department of State, which documents the repression against people with religious beliefs. (Ingrid Taylor, [Alaska Commons](#)).
- Strategic cooperation between the U.S. and China would successfully enable the two Koreas to build a unified Korea, and this unified Korea would then in turn transform the hegemony rivalry between the great powers into co-evolutionary relations. It would liberate North Korean people from poverty and human rights violations. It would also send a strong signal to other failed states affected by civil conflict and authoritarian regimes. (Chung Kyung-young, [The Korea Times](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea's initial launch on May 31 of the new "Chollima-1" space launch vehicle (SLV), carrying the new "Malligyong-1" military reconnaissance satellite, was unsuccessful; the second stage booster apparently failed to ignite. (Vann H. Van Diepen, [38 North](#))
- The string of events over the past weeks following the Nuri rocket's liftoff triggered a number of questions: How is the Nuri rocket launch related to, and different from North Korea's attempted satellite launch? Can we call the latest Nuri space mission a success when two of the eight satellites are missing? If so, how much of a success was it? (Shin Ha-Nee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- After fleeing the country and undergoing a difficult adjustment to life in South Korea, Heo has turned the tables on her past and now serves her hometown food at her own restaurant on Jeju Island, aiming to bridge the gap between the two Koreas one dish at a time. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The Yoon Suk-yeol administration released its official National Security Strategy on Wednesday, identifying North Korean nuclear threats as the top security challenge while jettisoning the goal of officially ending the Korean War. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- North Korea said Thursday it "rejects and never recognizes" the latest resolution adopted by an international maritime safety agency denouncing the North's missile launches following its attempt to launch a spy satellite. ([Yonhap](#))
- Russian authorities have issued a missing persons alert for the family of a North Korean diplomat, in what local and international media reports said could be an attempted defection. (Kim Jieun, Park Jaewoo, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- Family members of a North Korean diplomat have reportedly gone missing in Russia. (Chung Yeong-Gyo, Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- North Korea said Thursday it "rejects and never recognizes" the International Maritime Organization's recent resolution that denounced the North's missile launches following its satellite launch failure. (Sohn Dong-Joo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Myriam Aribaud, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526105100/https://mailchi.mp/e36f728390b6/hrnk-news-items-rok-us-alliances-strategy-for-building-free-unified-korea>

Friday, June 9, 2023

"North Korea & Russia: A Relationship Built to Last?"

Top News:

[North Korea & Russia: A Relationship Built to Last?](#) (HRNK YPWP, 06/08/2023)

In North Korea:

['Dollarization' of North Korean economy, once vital, now potential threat to Kim's rule](#) (AP News, 06/09/2023)

In South Korea:

[Rep. Kim Ga-ram elected to PPP's supreme council](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/09/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea may see rise in NK defectors as Pyongyang mulls reopening borders](#) (The Korea Times, 06/09/2023)

[S. Korea offers to return body of presumed N. Korean man found near western island](#) (Yonhap, 06/09/2023)

[Seoul calls on North Korea to accept body of man found dead near border](#) (NK News, 06/09/2023)

International:

[China and ROK competing to recover North Korean rocket debris, data suggests](#) (NK News, 06/09/2023)

[China ties will be on equal footing: Yoon's adviser](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/09/2023)

[China-North Korea trade picks up at two key border crossings](#) (NK News, 06/09/2023)

[Danish firm insured N. Korean trade fleet for years](#) (The Korea Times, 06/09/2023)

[N. Korea claims dam collapse in Ukraine occurred with Washington, Kyiv in 'cahoots'](#) (Yonhap, 06/09/2023)

[N. Korea skips int'l weightlifting competition in Cuba despite registration](#) (Yonhap, 06/09/2023)

[North Korea points finger at Zelenskyy after Kakhovka dam collapse](#) (NK News, 06/09/2023)

[S. Korea, US nuclear envoys to discuss NK](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/09/2023)

[UNSC virtually 'paralyzed' in dealing with N.K. provocations: S. Korea to urge China, Russia to play constructive role](#) (Yonhap, 06/09/2023)

Top News:

- What does the Kim regime stand to gain from its relationship with Russia, and what repercussions may result from the continued growth of this relationship? This article examines prospects for Russo-North Korean relations, particularly in light of Moscow's recent decision to suspend the New START treaty. (Maria Del Carmen Corte, Ava Jane Moorlach, Kathy Yu, [HRNK YPWP](#))

In North Korea:

- Before fleeing North Korea in 2014, Jeon Jae-hyun kept U.S. dollars as a store of value and used Chinese yuan to make everyday purchases at markets, restaurants and other places. He used the domestic currency, the won, only occasionally. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP News](#))

In South Korea:

- The conservative People Power Party (PPP) announced Friday that the party's youth spokesperson Kim Ga-ram had been elected to its supreme council, replacing Rep. Tae Yong-ho. Tae, who served as North Korea's deputy ambassador to Britain prior to his defection to the South in 2016, resigned from his seat on the council after he was referred to the party's ethics committee over controversial remarks regarding the 1948-49 Jeju Uprising and a phone conversation with a presidential secretary. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea could experience a significant increase in defectors from North Korea in the coming months, according to analysts, as the reclusive regime is considering whether to reopen its borders following three years of closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which might pave the way for more defections. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea's unification ministry said Friday it plans to send back the body of a presumed North Korean man found near a western island in May. The body was discovered in waters off Ganghwa Island in the Yellow Sea on May 19 and the man, believed to be in his 20s or 30s, seems to be a North Korean, given his belongings, according to the ministry. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea has declared its intention to hand over the body of a man found dead off the west coast to North Korea, calling on Pyongyang to accept the remains found near the inter-Korean border. Announcing the results of an autopsy, ROK authorities said the man was carrying a DPRK train ticket, the unification ministry's press office confirmed. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- Chinese vessels have intensified patrols in the Yellow Sea near where debris from North Korea's failed satellite launch fell last week, according to an analysis of maritime data, in what one source identified as a possible effort to recover the rocket debris before South Korea. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- South Korea will manage relations with China to foster a "healthy relationship," President Yoon Suk Yeol's national security adviser said, suggesting Seoul would not give in to Beijing's demands as easily as the previous administration. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

- North Korea appears to have increased imports from China at two key border crossings in the last month, according an analysis of satellite imagery, following construction of a likely new disinfection facility at one crossing and a pause in activity at the other. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- A Denmark-based company run by a British national fraudulently insured dozens of North Korean ships for years in violation of U.N. sanctions, keeping Pyongyang's foreign trade afloat, a Danish daily revealed Thursday. ([The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea claimed Friday the latest collapse of a dam in Ukraine was the result of a scheme cooked up by Washington and Kyiv in "cahoots" to shift responsibility for the humanitarian disaster to Russia amid Moscow's war with Ukraine. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has not sent its athletes to an international weightlifting competition being held in Cuba despite registering its weightlifters for the event, according to the weightlifting governing body Friday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean state media took another shot at Ukraine on Friday, insinuating that President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is responsible for destroying the Kakhovka dam and imperilling food supplies in the region. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- South Korea's chief nuclear envoy, Kim Gunn, and his US counterpart, Sung Kim, will meet in Washington on Monday to review joint work on disarming North Korea, the Foreign Ministry in Seoul said in a statement Friday, amid heightened inter-Korean tensions. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea's top diplomat has said the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) remains essentially paralyzed in terms of dealing with illegal provocations by North Korea, and stressed Seoul's intention to urge China and Russia to play a constructive role within the system. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Dan McDowall, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526105335/https://mailchi.mp/848125dca231/hrnk-news-items-rok-us-alliances-strategy-for-building-free-unified-korea-11191786>

Saturday, June 10, 2023

US journalist Claudia Rosett and the 1989 Tiananmen Square Protests

Top News:

[[Scarlatou](#)] [US journalist Claudia Rosett and the 1989 Tiananmen Square Protests](#) (Radio Free Asia, 06/06/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[A former North Korean operative gives his first interview since defecting](#) (NPR, 06/09/2023)
[Kim Jong Un orders North Koreans to stop killing themselves after number of suicides skyrocketed](#) (Business Insider, 06/09/2023)
[North Korea Says Students Donated Multiple Rocket Launchers To Kim Jong Un's Army: 'Patriotism And...Hatred Toward Enemy'](#) (Benzinga, 06/10/2023)
[The Sister by Sung-Yoon Lee review – North Korea's propaganda queen](#) (The Guardian, 06/10/2023)

International:

[British insurance salesman 'kept North Korea's fleet afloat'](#) (Financial Times, 06/08/2023)
[Int'l Red Cross 'ready to reengage' with N. Korea as soon as access granted: official](#) (Yonhap, 06/10/2023)
[Kishida hopes for change in North Korea's stance toward dialogue](#) (The Japan Times, 06/10/2023)
[Solving North Korea abductions is 'race against time': Japan ex-PM Suga](#) (Nikkei Asia, 06/10/2023)

Top News:

- Claudia Rosett, a prominent American journalist, passed away at 67. Throughout her career, she reported on significant events such as the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989, and human rights abuses in North Korea, particularly the forced labor endured by dispatched workers overseas. The North Korean regime must accept political, economic, and social reforms and openness, or it will meet a fate similar to those of past Eastern European dictatorships. (Park Jeong-woo, Lee Kyung-ha, [Radio Free Asia](#))

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

- Kim Hyun-woo used to work for North Korea's top intelligence agency. He defected to South Korea in 2014 and is now on his first-ever visit to the United States. In an interview with NPR, he shared his insights into why he fled the country, possible succession scenarios in the regime, and diplomacy with the U.S. amid mounting tension over North Korea's nuclear capabilities. (Se Eun Gong, Mary Louise Kelly, [NPR](#))
- Kim Jong Un has issued a secret order to local authorities that would ban suicides after data showed numbers skyrocketing. The South Korean National Intelligence Service estimated in May that suicides had increased by about 40% from the previous year, per WION. (Joshua Zitser, [Business Insider](#))
- North Korean state-owned media on Friday said school children donated multiple rocket launchers to Kim Jong Un's army, a symbol of their "warm patriotism and surging hatred toward the enemy." The state media said a ceremony for presenting the "Sonyon" (child) multiple rocket launchers took place in the courtyard of the Mangyongdae Schoolchildren's Palace on Tuesday to mark the 77th birthday of the Korean Children's Union (KCU). (Yadav Navdeep, [Benzinga](#))
- The Sister, a detailed, insightful study by the US-based scholar Sung-Yoon Lee uses the rise of the newest star in the Kim family business – the current supreme leader Kim Jong-un's younger sister, Kim Yo-jong – has become second only to her brother in terms of power and influence, and – controversially in a rigidly patriarchal society – his possible successor. As the head of the regime's propaganda arm and a highly visible lead on its foreign policy, the

“princess” has inevitably been portrayed with sexist overtones as somewhere between a charming, charismatic pop star and a sadistic power behind the throne. (Rachel Aspden, [The Guardian](#))

International:

- David Skinner, who died in 2016, ran a company called DGS Marine which issued fraudulent insurance certificates for at least 29 North Korean ships in the five years preceding his death, even after the UK was made aware of his activities. “It is no exaggeration to say that for years, David Skinner kept North Korea’s foreign trade fleet afloat,” said Hugh Griffiths, a former co-ordinator of the UN panel that monitors North Korea sanctions. (Christian Davies, [Financial Times](#))
- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) remains ready to provide humanitarian assistance to North Korea and resume projects suspended during the coronavirus pandemic whenever the reclusive country reaches out for aid, an official at the organization has said. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Prime Minister Fumio Kishida is hoping for a change in North Korea’s stance as he looks to resume dialogue between Tokyo and Pyongyang. Kishida reiterated his determination Thursday to resume talks with North Korea to resolve Pyongyang’s abductions of Japanese citizens decades ago. ([The Japan Times](#))
- Japan and South Korea should cooperate more closely on bringing closure to past abductions by North Korea, former Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said in an interview. South Korea has its own unresolved abductions blamed on Pyongyang, and Tokyo and Seoul can share information, Suga argued. The families are aging, and “it’s a race against time,” said Suga, a lower house member and now head of the Japan-Korea Parliamentarians’ Union. (Hiroshi Minegishi, Shunsuke Sigeta, [Nikkei Asia](#))

[Translation] [Scarlatoiu] US journalist Claudia Rosett and the 1989 Tiananmen Square Protests

On Saturday, May 27, the world-renowned American newspaper reporter Claudia Rosett passed away at the age of 67. Rosett reported that she risked her life on June 4, 1989, in Tiananmen Square, where a massive number of young people sacrificed and lost their lives to bullets fired by Chinese soldiers during a demonstration for democracy. In 1994, Rosett reported on North Korean dispatched lumberjacks while investigating a concentration camp in a forest in Russia. Her report portrayed the deeply concerning human rights of North Korean dispatched workers overseas who were subjected to forced labor for nearly 30 years.

Rosett was a journalist who was at the forefront of the fight for human rights and democracy during a period of an anti-communist, anti-dictatorship revolution. Only North Koreans who were completely isolated from the outside world were not dreaming of freedom yet, but the winds of freedom started blowing even to China. On April 14, 1989, 34 years ago, intellectual Chinese people and university students led a demonstration in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square demanding freedom, openness, and democracy. The Tiananmen Square protest began after the formal communist party General Secretary Hu Yaobang’s death. The former General Secretary Hu advocated reform and openness but was forced to step down from his position due to opposition faced by the conservative communist party. After former General Secretary Hu died in April 1989, the Chinese people gathered

in Tiananmen Square to mourn him, and it was there that the protest started for freedom, reform, and openness.

On June 4, 1989, many of the young people gathered in Tiananmen Square were injured and killed because of the Chinese government's armed suppression. Claudia Rosett and other foreign correspondents reported on the massacre carried out by Chinese authorities that night. The Chinese government officially announced that more than 240 civilians were killed and 7,000 were injured in the Tiananmen Square massacre. However, Rosett and foreign correspondents reported that the number of civilians killed and wounded was much higher. 34 years later, China began pushing for economic reform and formally addressing the massacre, but it has rejected several political and social reforms, particularly in COVID-19 prevention. In contrast, in 1989, when the Soviet Union disintegrated, Eastern Europeans started on the road to freedom.

In 1989, young East and West Germans took hammers and demolished the Berlin Wall, which symbolized the division between East and West Germany. There were peaceful changes in Cesko Slovensko, and in the case of Romania, the bloody revolution overthrew dictator Nicolae Ceausescu's communist regime which cost thousands of lives. I was a freshman in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Bucharest during the bloody anti-communist revolution in December 1989. During the protest, Chinese language students graffitied the words "Don't forget Tiananmen" on the University wall. Moreover, Romanian students, workers, and soldiers took lessons from the Tiananmen Square Democracy Demonstration and overthrew the communist dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu. Many Eastern European countries underwent a difficult transition in the 1990s. Eventually, Magyar, Polska, Hrvatska, Cesko, Slovensko, Slovenia, Litva, Latvia, Estonia, Romania, and Bulgaria had some success in their reform policies toward liberal democracy and the free market after joining the European Union. 34 years after the Tiananmen Square Democratization movement and the collapse of communist dictatorship in Eastern Europe, North Korea is the only remaining country that has not evolved since the post-Cold War era and does not accept political, social, and economic reforms.

The ultimate goal of the Kim family, whose power has been passed down twice thus far, is to maintain and protect the regime. North Korea wastes many of its scarce resources in developing nuclear weapons and missiles while putting citizens at risk of starvation, inhibiting industrial and economic growth, and suppressing human rights, all in the name of the regime. The Kim family, who has been pursuing a post-communist, post-industrial society and chasing dynastic politics, will one day meet a fate similar to those of past Eastern European dictatorships unless it accepts political, economic, and social reforms and openness.

Editor Park Jeong-woo, Web Team Lee Kyung-ha

Translated by Narae Kim, HRNK Intern

Prepared by Kathy Yu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526105647/https://mailchi.mp/c118caca6071/hrnk-news-items-rok-us-alliances-strategy-for-building-free-unified-korea-11191794>

Sunday, June 11, 2023

US journalist Claudia Rosett and the 1989 Tiananmen Square Protests

Top News:

[\[Scarlatou\] US journalist Claudia Rosett and the 1989 Tiananmen Square Protests](#) (*Radio Free Asia*, 06/06/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. It was sent out yesterday and a few errors have been corrected. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[North Korea set for another plenary meeting on economy](#) (*Korea Herald*, 06/11/2023)

[Sinpho South Shipyard: The SINPO-Class Submarine Moved to Drydock](#) (38 North, 06/10/2023)

[Sohae Satellite Launching Station: New Activity at the Vertical Engine Test Stand](#) (38 North, 06/10/2023)

In South Korea:

[Estimated 16,000 died while awaiting reunions with separated families in 5 yrs: data](#) (*Yonhap*, 06/11/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N.K. launch window expires, but S. Korea not letting guard down](#) (*Yonhap*, 06/11/2023)

Top News:

- On Saturday, May 27, the world-renowned American newspaper reporter Claudia Rosett passed away at the age of 67. Rosett reported that she risked her life on June 4, 1989, in Tiananmen Square, where a massive number of young people sacrificed and lost their lives to bullets fired by Chinese soldiers during a demonstration for democracy. In 1994, Rosett reported on North Korean dispatched Loggers while investigating a concentration camp in a forest in Russia. Due to the reporting of Claudia Rosett reflecting her deep concern for the human rights of the North Korean people, the issue of North Korean workers officially dispatched overseas who are subjected to forced labor has received worldwide attention for the past 30 years.. (Park Jeong-woo, Lee Kyung-ha, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea is preparing to convene another plenary meeting of the ruling Workers' Party in a week or two to discuss economic matters. Analysts believe the unusual frequency of such gatherings — the third one in just six months — suggests an unusually bad food situation. (Jung Min-ho, [Korea Herald](#))
- Commercial satellite imagery of North Korea's Sinpho South Shipyard from June 10 indicates the SINPO-class ballistic missile submarine (SSB) has been moved into the drydock. The

purpose is unclear, but may be related to routine hull maintenance, minor repairs, or some kind of modification. (Peter Makowsky, [38 North](#))

- Commercial satellite imagery of North Korea's Sohae Satellite Launching Station from June 9 reveals new activity at the Vertical Engine Test Stand (VETS), which may indicate preparations for a new liquid-fuel engine test. (Peter Makowsky, [38 North](#))

In South Korea:

- Approximately 16,000 elderly South Koreans are presumed to have died over the past five years while awaiting reunions with family members in North Korea who were separated by the 1950-53 Korean War, data showed Sunday. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The office of President Yoon Suk Yeol said Sunday it is not letting its guard down even though the window for North Korea's satellite launch has expired, as the country can go ahead with a launch at any time. ([Yonhap](#))

[Translation] [Scarlatoiu] US journalist Claudia Rosett and the 1989 Tiananmen Square Protests

On Saturday, May 27, the world-renowned American newspaper reporter Claudia Rosett passed away at the age of 67. Rosett reported that she risked her life on June 4, 1989, in Tiananmen Square, where a massive number of young people sacrificed and lost their lives to bullets fired by Chinese soldiers during a demonstration for democracy. In 1994, Rosett reported on North Korean dispatched Loggers while investigating a concentration camp in a forest in Russia. Due to the reporting of Claudia Rosett reflecting her deep concern for the human rights of the North Korean people, the issue of North Korean workers officially dispatched overseas who are subjected to forced labor has received worldwide attention for the past 30 years..

Rosett was a journalist who was at the forefront of the fight for human rights and democracy during a period of an anti-communist, anti-dictatorship revolution. Only North Koreans who were completely isolated from the outside world were not dreaming of freedom yet, but the winds of freedom started blowing even to China. On April 14, 1989, 34 years ago, intellectual Chinese people and university students led a demonstration in Beijing's Tiananmen Square demanding freedom, openness, and democracy. The Tiananmen Square protest began after the formal communist party General Secretary Hu Yaobang's death. The former General Secretary Hu advocated reform and openness but was forced to step down from his position due to opposition faced by the conservative communist party. After former General Secretary Hu died in April 1989, the Chinese people gathered in Tiananmen Square to mourn him, and it was there that the protest started for freedom, reform, and openness.

On June 4, 1989, many of the young people gathered in Tiananmen Square were injured and killed because of the Chinese government's armed suppression. Claudia Rosett and other foreign correspondents reported on the massacre carried out by Chinese authorities that night. The Chinese government officially announced that more than 240 civilians were killed and 7,000 were injured in the Tiananmen Square massacre. However, Rosett and foreign correspondents reported that the number of civilians killed and wounded was much higher. 34 years after the Tiananmen Square incident, China has implemented economic reform and openness to a certain extent, but has refused to adopt political or social reforms to this day, especially under the pretext of Corona-19

prevention. In contrast, in 1989, when the Soviet Union disintegrated, Eastern Europeans started on the road to freedom.

In 1989, young East and West Germans took hammers and demolished the Berlin Wall, which symbolized the division between East and West Germany. There were peaceful changes in Czechoslovakia, and in the case of Romania, the bloody revolution overthrew dictator Nicolae Ceausescu's communist regime which cost thousands of lives. I was a freshman in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Bucharest during the bloody anti-communist revolution in December 1989. During the protest, Chinese language students graffitied the words "Don't forget Tiananmen" on the University wall. Moreover, Romanian students, workers, and soldiers took lessons from the Tiananmen Square Democracy Demonstration and overthrew the communist dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu. Many Eastern European countries underwent a difficult transition in the 1990s. Eventually, Hungary, Poland, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Romania and Bulgaria had some success in their reform policies toward liberal democracy and the free market after joining the European Union. 34 years after the Tiananmen Square Democratization movement and the collapse of communist dictatorship in Eastern Europe, North Korea is the only remaining country that has not evolved since the post-Cold War era and does not accept political, social, and economic reforms.

The ultimate goal of the Kim family, whose power has been passed down twice thus far, is to maintain and protect the regime. North Korea wastes many of its scarce resources in developing nuclear weapons and missiles while putting citizens at risk of starvation, inhibiting industrial and economic growth, and suppressing human rights, all in the name of the regime. The Kim family, who has been pursuing a post-communist, post-industrial society and chasing dynastic politics, will one day meet a fate similar to those of past Eastern European dictatorships unless it accepts political, economic, and social reforms and openness.

Editor Park Jeong-woo, Web Team Lee Kyung-ha

Translated by Narae Kim, HRNK Intern

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526105952/https://mailchi.mp/789f56a5fdf3/hrnk-news-items-rok-us-alliances-strategy-for-building-free-unified-korea-11191798>

Monday, June 12, 2023

N. Korean leader vows stronger strategic ties with Russia; How North Korea's Hacker Army Stole \$3 Billion in Crypto

In North Korea:

[Aunt, niece poised for power struggle over succession in North Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 06/12/2023)

[Growing unrest among N.K. elites, signs of serial defections](#) (The Dong-A Ilbo, 06/12/2023)

[Kim Jong Un secretly visited medical factories last year, state media reveals](#) (NK News, 06/12/2023)

[North Korea confirms July 27 holiday for next major military parade: Imagery](#) (NK News, 06/12/2023)

[Web surfing a privilege of only North Korea's most rarefied elite: Report](#) (NK News, 06/12/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Seoul to dispose of body likely from North if it doesn't respond](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/12/2023)

International:

[How North Korea's Hacker Army Stole \\$3 Billion in Crypto, Funding Nuclear Program](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 06/12/2023)

[Japan extends order to destroy North Korea rocket or debris](#) (The Japan Times, 06/12/2023)

[N. Korean leader vows stronger strategic ties with Russia in message to Putin](#) (Yonhap, 06/12/2023)

[Russia says it exported 1,300 tons of wheat flour to North Korea in May](#) (NK News, 06/12/2023)

[Senior Pentagon official to visit Seoul this week to discuss deterrence against N.K threats](#) (Yonhap, 06/12/2023)

[South Korea confirms China trying to fish out North Korean rocket debris](#) (NK News, 06/12/2023)

[Top nuclear envoys of S. Korea, U.S. to discuss N.K. spy satellite, other provocations](#) (Yonhap, 06/12/2023)

[Yoon's office says harm can be done to both countries if ambassador fails in bridging role](#) (Yonhap, 06/12/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's daughter Ju-ae has drawn media frenzy since she was first spotted on November 18, 2022 when she was with her father at the launch site of the Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile. Ju-ae is the second female member of North Korea's ruling Kim family to make international headlines, following her aunt Kim Yo-jong who is notorious for her fiery and strongly worded statements. Little is known about the relationship between the aunt and her niece. But, a political scientist said that their ties may turn sour in the event Kim Jong-un becomes incapacitated. (Kang Hyun-kyung, [The Korea Times](#))
- There have been reports indicating that the South Korean government is closely monitoring the situation concerning the North Korean elites and the potential for a series of defections. These concerns arose after a number of North Korean diplomats attempted to defect to South Korea or seek asylum in various locations, including Vladivostok in Russia and certain European countries. (Na-Ri Shin, Kwan-Seok Jang, [The Dong-A Ilbo](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un made rare in-person inspections of two medical equipment factories last November, state media said Monday, belatedly revealing details of the economic-focused visits as he increasingly prioritizes military and ideological matters. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea appears to have confirmed a July 27 war holiday as the date of the country's next military parade, troop formations captured in satellite imagery show, as soldiers continue to carry out large-scale marching practices in preparation for the event. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

- Most North Koreans have never heard of the internet, and even the small group of elites who can access the world wide web must submit to intrusive security measures ranging from fingerprint scanning to surveillance software, according to a new report. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The South Korean government said it will proceed to hold a funeral for a man whose body drifted across the border in May if North Korea does not claim the body by Friday. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- Last year an engineer working for the blockchain gaming company Sky Mavis thought he was on the cusp of a new job that would pay more money. But the recruiter was part of a vast North Korean operation aimed at bringing in funds to the cash-poor dictatorship. And the document was a Trojan Horse, malicious computer code that gave the North Koreans access to the engineer's computer and allowed hackers to break into Sky Mavis. (Robert McMillan, Dustin Volz, [The Wall Street Journal](#))
- Japan has extended an order to destroy any North Korean ballistic missile, rocket or debris that threatens the nation's territory, according to the Defense Ministry, after a satellite launch window announced by Pyongyang expired Sunday. (Jesse Johnson, [The Japan Times](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has voiced his willingness to build closer strategic ties with Russia in his congratulatory message to Russian President Vladimir Putin over Moscow's key national holiday, state media said Monday. ([Yonhap](#))
- Russia sent over a thousand tons of wheat flour to North Korea in May, according to the Russian government, the latest in a series of publicized grain shipments since earlier this year. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- A senior U.S. defense official will visit South Korea later this week to discuss deterrence against growing North Korean threats, Seoul and Washington officials have said, amid joint efforts to curb the recalcitrant regime's provocative acts. ([Yonhap](#))
- Chinese ships are attempting to salvage North Korean rocket parts that splashed down in the Yellow Sea after its failed satellite launch last month, the South Korean military confirmed on Monday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The top nuclear envoys of South Korea and the United States will meet in Washington this week to discuss ways to cooperate on countering North Korea's planned launch of a military spy satellite and other pending issues. ([Yonhap](#))
- The presidential office said Monday that an inappropriate bridging role by an ambassador could harm the national interests of both the home and host countries, referring to Chinese Ambassador Xing Haiming's recent controversial remarks on South Korea's ties with the United States. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Jody Chen, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526111101/https://mailchi.mp/bd09bd4c8134/hrnk-news-items-2023-0612>

Tuesday, June 13, 2023

China expanding prisons where North Korean escapees are held

In North Korea:

[One step forward, two steps back: North Korea's confounding new financial reforms](#) (NK News, 06/13/2023)

[Reports of cannibalism in North Korea amid extreme hunger](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/13/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Seoul to pursue legal action over North Korea's destruction of liaison office](#) (NK News, 06/13/2023)

International:

[China expanding prisons where North Korean escapees are held: Investigation](#) (NK News, 06/13/2023)

[N. Korea's FM reaffirms stronger cooperation with Russia](#) (Yonhap, 06/13/2023)

[Nuclear weapons stockpile rises as world enters 'dangerous phase'](#) (The Telegraph, 06/12/2023)

[Russia resumes oil shipments to North, possibly for weapons](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/13/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. agree additional efforts to cut off funds to N. Korea's weapons: nuclear envoy](#) (Yonhap, 06/13/2023)

[US concerned NK plans to deliver more weapons to Russia](#) (Reuters, 06/12/2023)

[U.S. report warns of 'thousands' of North Korean hackers](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/12/2023)

In North Korea:

- A series of recent reports on banking changes in North Korea have complicated the picture of the country's financial sector, pointing to policies that combine reforms with new efforts to assert control. (Peter Ward, [NK News](#))
- The hunger and economic hardships driven by COVID-19 are forcing North Koreans to resort to extreme means of survival, such as cannibalism, recent defectors were quoted as telling South Korean authorities. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Seoul will seek legal measures over North Korea's destruction of the inter-Korean liaison office three years ago, a unification ministry official said Tuesday, ahead of the expiration of the statute of limitations later this week. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- Three Chinese detention centers known or suspected to hold North Korean escapees have undergone extensive renovation during the pandemic, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery, raising the possibility that China is increasing its capacity to detain defectors ahead of their forced repatriation. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

- North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son-hui has sent a congratulatory message to her Russian counterpart over Moscow's key national holiday and vowed stronger cooperation between the two nations, state media reported Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))
- The estimated number of warheads available for potential use has risen by 86 to 9,576 in past few years, think-tank warns, with North Korea helping to drive the increase in warheads. ([The Telegraph](#))
- Russia officially resumed shipments of refined oil to North Korea in December last year according to the United Nations Security Council website on Tuesday, highlighting growing cooperation between the two countries as they both face international isolation. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea and the United States agreed on Monday to further strengthen their joint efforts to prevent funds from flowing into North Korea's illegal weapons development programs, South Korea's top nuclear negotiator said. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States is concerned that North Korea is planning to deliver more weapons to Russia, a U.S. State Department spokesperson said on Monday after North Korean leader Kim Jong-un vowed to bolster strategic cooperation with Moscow. ([Reuters](#))
- Thousands of IT workers, hackers and front people in Pyongyang's employ may be engaging in cybercrime on the regime's behalf, according to U.S. officials. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Nate Bent, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526111236/https://mailchi.mp/532f3b64aec7/hrnk-news-items-2023-11191806>

Wednesday, June 14, 2023

HRNK Testimony to the Congressional-Executive Commission on China

Top News:

[HRNK Testimony to the Congressional-Executive Commission on China](#) (HRNK, 06/08/2023)

[N. Korean Human Rights - Is There Still a Way Forward?](#) (HRNK, 06/13/2023)

In North Korea:

[Atomic Wallet hack losses more than double](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/14/2023)

[New North Korean military drone spotted on runway, largest seen to date](#) (NK News, 06/14/2023)

[North Korea Increases Exports of Wigs and Fake Eyelashes, Raising Alarms in US](#) (VOA, 06/14/2023)

[North Korea wants to remove household solar panels, build community energy farms](#) (NK News, 06/14/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Foreign ministry condemns N.K.'s missile provocations ahead of ARF](#) (Yonhap, 06/14/2023)

[N. Korea attempts to hack personal info through fake S. Korean website: NIS](#) (Yonhap, 06/14/2023)

[S. Korea files damages suit against N. Korea over 2020 demolition of joint liaison office](#) (Yonhap, 06/14/2023)

International:

[Activists warn U.S. Congress that North Koreans could get repatriated from China](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/14/2023)

[China's facial recognition tech leads to drop in N. Korean defectors](#) (The Korea Times, 06/14/2023)

[Congressional commission holds emergency hearing, urges China to protect N. Korean defectors](#) (Yonhap, 06/14/2023)

[Host China confirms N. Korean registration for Asian Games](#) (Yonhap, 06/14/2023)

[North Korea's high status at WHO sends wrong message to world: health experts](#) (The Korea Times, 06/14/2023)

Top News:

- Yesterday, June 13, the Congressional-Executive Commission on China held a hearing on the subject of "North Korean Refugees and the Imminent Danger of Forced Repatriation from China." HRNK was invited to submit written testimony for this hearing, with an emphasis on the situation of officially dispatched North Korean workers in China. ([HRNK](#))
- On May 18, **HRNK**, the **Hoover Institution**, and the **National Endowment for Democracy** hosted a conference to examine the human rights situation in North Korea and explore a "[Human Rights up Front](#)" approach to North Korea policy. The full video recording of the event, provided courtesy of NED, is now available. ([HRNK](#), 06/13/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean hackers made off with more than \$100 million from users of a decentralized cryptocurrency wallet system, which is more than double the initially estimated losses, according to a blockchain analysis company on Tuesday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- A large new North Korean military drone appeared in commercial satellite imagery for the first time on Wednesday, according to NK Pro analysis, a sign that the country continues testing unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in line with leader Kim Jong Un's development goals. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- Many of the wigs and false eyelashes labeled "Made in China" that are sold by American retailers may violate U.S. sanctions on North Korea, which is where they are actually manufactured, according to experts. (Jiha Ham, [VOA](#))
- North Korean authorities want to remove solar panels from individual homes in favor of building community solar farms, according to state media, calling the proposed system "more efficient" and "better-looking" as the country deals with chronic energy shortages. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The foreign ministry denounced Wednesday North Korea's recent series of missile provocations at a virtual senior officials' meeting ahead of an annual multilateral forum involving Pyongyang slated for next month. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has attempted to steal personal information by creating a fake website of South Korea's major online portal Naver, Seoul's spy agency said Wednesday. ([Yonhap](#))

- South Korea's unification ministry said Wednesday it lodged a damages suit against North Korea over Pyongyang's 2020 demolition of an inter-Korean liaison office in the North's border city of Kaesong. (Kim Soo-yeon and Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Almost 2,000 North Koreans held in detention centers in China could be forcibly repatriated once Pyongyang opens its borders, human rights activists told a U.S. congressional commission at an emergency hearing held Tuesday (local time). (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- China has played a critical role in a sharp drop in the number of North Koreans fleeing their home country after the pandemic, according to experts. (Kang Hyun-kyung, [The Korea Times](#))
- The Congressional Executive Commission on China held an emergency hearing in Washington on Tuesday to urge China to fulfill its obligations as a United Nations member and protect North Korean asylum-seekers. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- China has confirmed North Korea's registration for this year's Asian Games to be held in its eastern city of Hangzhou. (Yoo Jee-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea had claimed to be totally free of COVID-19 patients for almost a year and a half while the coronavirus was raging across the world. After finally reporting its first official case in May 2022, authorities there rejected free offers of vaccine support from other countries for no clear reason, refusing to join the global effort to contain the pandemic and jeopardizing the lives of their own people. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

Prepared by Abbigail Thacker, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526111419/https://mailchi.mp/197e1fb9c99/hrnk-news-items-2023-11191818>

Thursday, June 15, 2023

N. Korea fires 2 short-range ballistic missiles toward East Sea, US targets North Korea's missile development in fresh sanctions

In North Korea:

[N. Korea appears to continue unauthorized use of joint industrial complex](#) (Yonhap, 06/15/2023)

[N. Korea fires 2 short-range ballistic missiles toward East Sea: S. Korean military](#) (Yonhap, 06/15/2023)

[North Korea: Residents tell BBC of neighbours starving to death](#) (BBC, 06/14/2023)

In South Korea:

[Yoon vows 'peace through strength' at joint live-fire drill](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/15/2023)

International:

[N. Korea's Kim touts leadership of China's Xi in birthday greetings](#) (Yonhap, 06/15/2023)

[North Korea suspected of providing more weapons to Russia](#) (The Korea Times, 06/15/2023)

[North Korea has registered for Asian Games in China, organizers confirm](#) (NK News, 06/15/2023)

[US targets North Korea's missile development in fresh sanctions](#) (Reuters, 06/15/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea continues to operate facilities in the shuttered Kaesong Industrial Complex, despite warnings from South Korea. Signs of ongoing activity include buses entering the factory zone and lights being turned on at night. The South Korean government is reviewing various measures to address this issue while emphasizing its commitment to previous reconciliation efforts in inter-Korean relations. ([Yonhap](#))
- Today, North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles towards the East Sea in protest of South Korea-U.S. live-fire drills. The launches were detected by South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, and they called for an immediate cessation of such provocations while expressing readiness to respond strongly. Top nuclear envoys from South Korea, the U.S., and Japan denounced the missile launch and agreed to take strong counteractions in response, emphasizing the violation of UN Security Council resolutions and the threat to global peace and security. (Song Sang-ho and Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- Exclusive interviews conducted by the BBC reveal a dire food shortage in North Korea, with reports of starvation and a worsening situation compared to the 1990s. The government's decision to seal its borders in 2020 and tighten control over people's lives has resulted in limited food supplies, leading to instances of families starving to death and individuals resorting to extreme measures. (Jean Mackenzie, [BBC](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol oversaw the largest-ever joint live-fire artillery drill between South Korean and U.S. troops in Pocheon, Gyeonggi. The exercise, aimed at deterring potential provocations from North Korea, involved 2,500 troops and 610 military assets and focused on demonstrating their ability to respond to nuclear and missile threats while showcasing their combined strength. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un sent a letter to Chinese President Xi Jinping on his 70th birthday, praising his leadership and the strengthening of Beijing's national power under his guidance. Kim expressed confidence in China's continued success and sent good wishes to Xi for his important work in leading the country. ([Yonhap](#))
- There are growing concerns over North Korea's alleged provision of weapons to Russia, as signs of closer ties between the two countries emerge. The United States has confirmed a North Korean arms delivery to the Wagner mercenary group in Russia, despite North Korea's denial. The U.S. has criticized these transfers, citing violations of Security Council resolutions, and the developments indicate a strengthening of relations between North

Korea and Russia, potentially affecting geopolitical dynamics. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))

- North Korea has registered to compete in the upcoming Asian Games in China, raising hopes for its return to international sports after a pandemic-induced hiatus. While the registration indicates their desire to participate, previous instances of registering without sending athletes highlight the uncertainty of North Korea's actual involvement in the event. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- In response to North Korea's missile development activities, the United States has imposed fresh sanctions on the country. The sanctions are aimed at targeting the financing and procurement networks that support North Korea's missile program. The move highlights ongoing efforts by the international community to curb North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile ambitions. (Daphne Psaledakis and Susan Heavey, [Reuters](#))

Prepared by Gabrielle Drinkwine, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526111533/https://mailchi.mp/693a6c7fc150/hrnk-news-items-2023-11191822>

Friday, June 16, 2023

U.S. keeps S. Korea on Tier 2 in human trafficking report, citing insufficient efforts

In South Korea:

[South Korean military salvages North's SLV wreckage](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/16/2023)

[South Korea recovers rocket debris from North Korea's botched satellite launch](#) (NK News, 06/16/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Man's body found at border to be cremated after North Korea refuses to accept it](#) (NK News, 06/16/2023)

[S. Korea to cremate body of presumed N.Korean man as Pyongyang remains unresponsive](#) (Yonhap, 06/16/2023)

[Unification minister confident of winning damages suit against N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 06/16/2023)

International:

[MISSING THE TARGET: The complicated truth about sanctions on North Korea](#) (North Korean Economic Watch, 06/16/2023)

[North Korean author calls for US publisher to respect copyright for his novel](#) (NK News, 06/16/2023)

[US nuclear sub arrives in South Korea, a day after North Korean missile launch](#) (NK News, 06/16/2023)

[U.S., S. Korea and Japan condemn N. Korea's latest missile provocation](#) (Yonhap, 06/16/2023)

[U.S. imposes sanctions on two N. Korean nationals for assisting illegal weapons program](#) (Yonhap, 06/16/2023)

[U.S. keeps S. Korea on Tier 2 in human trafficking report, citing insufficient efforts](#) (Yonhap, 06/16/2023)

[US, Japan, Philippines discuss S. China sea, North Korea](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/16/2023)

[United States affirms cooperation with Japan, Philippines in Tokyo](#) (UPI, 06/16/2023)

[US says North Korean missile agency sent 1,000 workers to China, sold to Iran](#) (NK News, 06/16/2023)

In South Korea:

- South Korea has successfully recovered debris from North Korea's failed satellite launch last month, following a two-week operation that saw the ROK compete with China to retrieve the wreckage first. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The South Korean military retrieved a part of the North Korean satellite launch vehicle (SLV) which sank in the Yellow Sea after 15 days of salvage operations, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said Friday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea's unification minister voiced confidence Friday in winning a damages suit the government has filed against Pyongyang over its 2020 demolition of an inter-Korean liaison office in North Korea's border city of Kaesong. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's unification ministry said Friday it will cremate the body of a presumed North Korean man found near a western island last month, as Pyongyang has not responded to its offer for a return. ([Yonhap](#))
- The body of a man in his 20s who drowned in a possible attempt to escape North Korea will be cremated, Seoul announced Friday, after the DPRK ignored entreaties to accept the remains. (Arius Derr, Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

International:

- A secretive North Korean agency in charge of missile and nuclear weapons development sent over 1,000 workers to China and sold electronics to Iran with the assistance of DPRK nationals in Beijing, according to the U.S. Treasury on Thursday. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- A U.S. nuclear submarine armed with cruise missiles arrived in the South Korean port of Busan on Friday, the first such visit in almost six years amid allied efforts to bolster deterrence against North Korea. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea said Thursday it "rejects and never recognizes" the International Maritime Organization's recent resolution that denounced the North's missile launches following its satellite launch failure. (Sohn Dong-Joo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan met Friday with two Asian counterparts in Tokyo, where the United States, Japan, and the Philippines agreed to expand military cooperation in the region in response to increased Chinese aggression and the growing nuclear threat from North Korea. (A.L. Lee, [UPI](#))
- On the surface, sanctions seem to have had little impact on North Korea's behaviour. At the time of writing, the world is waiting for the launch of a new North Korean military spy satellite that Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un announced on 19 April 2023. (Benjamin Katzeff Silberstein, [North Korean Economic Watch](#))

- The North Korean author Paek Nam Ryong has said he was left in the dark about the publication of his award-winning novel "Friend" in the U.S., calling for the publisher to respect the copyrights of DPRK writers. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The top national security advisers of South Korea, Japan and the United States condemned North Korea's missile launches Thursday, calling them "clear violations" of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States imposed sanctions on two North Korean nationals based in China on Thursday for assisting North Korea's illegal weapons development programs, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States has placed South Korea on Tier 2 in its annual trafficking in persons report, the report showed Thursday, citing what it called "inadequate" efforts to prevent related crimes and protect victims. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The national security advisers of the United States, Japan and the Philippines on Friday discussed regional security issues and ways to strengthen the trilateral alliance, they said in a joint statement. ([The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Narae Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526111644/https://mailchi.mp/455dbfff033e/hrnk-news-items-us-keeps-s-korea-on-tier-2-in-human-trafficking-report-citing-insufficient-efforts>

Saturday, June 17, 2023

North Korea opens key party meeting to discuss diplomatic, defense, and economic strategies

In North Korea:

[N. Korea opens key party meeting to discuss diplomatic, defense strategies](#) (Yonhap, 06/17/2023)

[North Korea convenes delayed party meeting on economy, defense policy](#) (NK News, 06/17/2023)

International

[Blinken holds phone talks with S. Korean FM ahead of China trip](#) (Yonhap, 06/17/2023)

[How North Korean robbed British investors to fund Kim Jong-un's weapons](#) (The Telegraph, 06/17/2023)

[North Korea holds key meeting as US sends nuclear submarine to South Korea](#) (The Guardian, 06/17/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has convened a key party meeting to discuss the country's diplomatic and defense strategies in response to the "changed international situation," with its leader Kim Jong-un in attendance, state media reported Saturday. ([Yonhap](#))

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un kicked off a delayed ruling party plenum on Friday, focusing on the economy and the course of defence and diplomacy, according to state media. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

International:

- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Saturday supported South Korea's efforts to improve its relationship with Beijing in a phone conversation with his counterpart held ahead of his visit to Beijing this weekend, Seoul's foreign ministry said. ([Yonhap](#))
- Pyongyang has 'found a new frontier in cyberspace' and is trying to exploit the lack of regulation and safeguards around cryptocurrencies. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- North Korea opened a key political conference with leader Kim Jong-un in attendance to discuss improving its struggling economy and reviewing defence strategies in the face of growing tensions with rivals, according to state media reports. ([The Guardian](#))

Prepared by Dan McDowall, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526111758/https://mailchi.mp/f6c593fc8dcf/hrnk-news-items-us-keeps-s-korea-on-tie-r-2-in-human-trafficking-report-citing-insufficient-efforts-12236217>

Sunday, June 18, 2023

North Korea tightens watch on elite exodus

In North Korea:

[Failed North Korean Rocket Is Intelligence Win for Kim's Foes](#) (Bloomberg, 06/18/2023)

[North Korea tightens watch on elite exodus](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/18/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea to carry out first in-depth inquiry into forced labor in N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 06/18/2023)

In North Korea:

- A North Korean satellite launch that ended in failure will provide a trove of information about the secretive state's rocket program as South Korea salvages large sections from the bottom of the sea. (Jon Herskovitz, Sangmi Cha, [Bloomberg](#))
- North Korea has allegedly recently tightened controls on elites stationed abroad to stop them from defecting, South Korean intelligence authorities found. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea plans to carry out its first in-depth inquiry into forced labor practices in North Korea through interviews with defectors who have arrived in South Korea over the past five years, sources said Sunday. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ava Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526111954/https://mailchi.mp/1ae68cba117/hrnk-news-items-us-keeps-s-korea-on-tie-r-2-in-human-trafficking-report-citing-insufficient-efforts-12236219>

Monday, June 19, 2023

Ex-N. Korean secretary of inter-Korean affairs returns to party political bureau; NK rebukes officials for failed satellite

In North Korea:

[Ex-N. Korean secretary of inter-Korean affairs returns to party political bureau](#) (Yonhap, 06/19/2023)

[Hardliner behind multiple attacks on S. Korean military returns to N. Korean politics](#) (The Korea Times, 06/19/2023)

[North blames 'irresponsible' officials for failed launch](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/19/2023)

[N. Korea cites botched satellite launch as 'most serious' failure](#) (Yonhap, 06/19/2023)

[North Korea promises more 'powerful nuclear weapons' to counter US 'domination'](#) (NK News, 06/19/2023)

[NK rebukes officials for failed satellite](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/19/2023)

[N. Korea's trade with China shrinks 5 pct on-month in May: data](#) (Yonhap, 06/19/2023)

[North Korea-China trade maintains momentum in May despite slight dip](#) (NK News, 09/19/2023)

[Salvaged launch vehicle part could prove intel treasure trove](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/18/2023)

In South Korea:

[Seoul envoy on N.K. human rights visits Norway, Britain for consultations](#) (Yonhap, 06/19/2023)

[South Korea to carry out 1st probe into forced labor in North Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/19/2023)

[South Korean ministry to investigate forced labor in North Korea](#) (NK News, 06/19/2023)

International:

[Chinese crane vessel engages in likely illicit transfer with North Korean ship](#) (NK Pro, 06/19/2023)

In North Korea:

- Kim Yong-chol, a former top North Korean party official in charge of affairs with South Korea, has returned to the ruling party's politburo following a year of his absence from key party posts. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

- A former top-level spy and military general who was behind multiple attacks against the South Korean military has returned to the center stage of North Korean politics. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea's leadership blamed "irresponsible" officials for Pyongyang's failed attempt to launch a spy satellite into orbit last month, calling it the regime's "most serious" shortcoming this year, even as they vowed to try again at an unspecified time, state media reported Monday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea on Monday called its failed attempt to launch a purported military reconnaissance satellite the "most serious" shortcoming in the first half of this year, following a rare key party meeting that concluded without its leader's speech. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his top political officers pledged to boost production of "powerful nuclear weapons" during a three-day party meeting that ended Sunday, according to state media, while also agreeing to push forward space development despite the "severe defect" of a recent satellite launch failure. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea called the botched attempt last month to launch a military reconnaissance satellite the "most serious failure," vowing to try a second launch without offering exact dates at the ruling party's key meeting held from Friday to Sunday. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea's trade with China dropped 5 percent on-month in May due to a sharp decline in Pyongyang's exports, Chinese customs data showed Monday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's trade with China posted a ninefold increase in May from the year before, official data shows, despite declining slightly from April. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- A salvaged North Korean satellite launch vehicle part may yield critical information on North Korea's ballistic missile technology. (Lee Keun-pyung, Sarah Kim, Michael Lee, Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's envoy for North Korean human rights visited Norway and Britain last week for discussions on addressing the dire situation in the North, Seoul's foreign ministry said Monday. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea will conduct its first in-depth probe into forced labor issues in North Korea by interviewing defectors who fled to the South over the past five years. (Sohn Dong-joo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The South Korean government will launch its first investigation into compulsory or forced labor in North Korea, the unification ministry has announced, as a part of ongoing efforts to spotlight human rights violations in the country. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

International:

- A small Chinese floating crane participated in a likely ship-to-ship transfer involving a recently christened North Korean cargo ship last week, according to NK Pro analysis, as ship activity surges outside the DPRK's largest port. (Anton Sokolin, [NK Pro](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526112055/https://mailchi.mp/0f8b54c46fee/hrnk-news-items-ex-n-korean-secretary-of-inter-korean-affairs-returns-to-party-political-bureau-nk-rebukes-officials-for-failed-satellite>

Tuesday, June 20, 2023

S.Korea to release report on forced labor in N.Korea for 1st time; China in 'unique position' to push N.Korea to return to talks, Blinken says

In North Korea:

[Key fertilizer chemical tops North Korean imports in May, grain shipments rise](#) (NK News, 06/20/2023)

[North Korea calls failed spy satellite launch 'the most serious' shortcoming, vows 2nd launch](#) (AP News, 06/19/2023)

[North Korean market prices suggest serious food shortages](#) (North Korea Economy Watch, 06/20/2023)

In South Korea:

[Cabinet approves establishment of new drone command](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/20/2023)

[Drone command to 'overwhelmingly respond' to North Korean 'provocations': Seoul](#) (NK News, 06/20/2023)

[Salt in the wound: Police probe NGO over project to send salt to North Korea](#) (NK News, 06/20/2023)

[S. Korea to release report on forced labor in N. Korea for 1st time](#) (Yonhap, 06/20/2023)

International:

[Blinken says he urged China to encourage N. Korea to act responsibly](#) (Yonhap, 06/19/2023)

[China in 'unique position' to push North Korea to return to talks, Blinken says](#) (NK News, 06/20/2023)

[US, Japan hold joint naval drills in response to latest North Korean missiles](#) (NK News, 06/20/2023)

[Yoon, Macron discuss security, economy in Paris summit](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/20/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea ramped up imports of a key chemical used in agricultural fertilizers in May, while grain shipments from China also increased amid continuing reports of food shortages. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Top North Korean officials vowed to push for a second attempt to launch a spy satellite as they called their country's first, and failed, launch last month "the most serious" shortcoming this year and harshly criticized those responsible, state media reported Monday. (Hyung-Jin Kim and Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- Recently, the BBC became one of few global outlets to succeed in interviewing ordinary North Koreans inside the country about the food situation. The image is dire: starvation,

empty markets and other signs of severe food shortages. (Benjamin Katzeff Silberstein, [North Korea Economy Watch](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's Cabinet on Tuesday approved the establishment of a drone operations command in September to counter potential North Korean unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) infiltrations. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's new drone command will “overwhelmingly respond” to future North Korean provocations, Seoul's prime minister said Tuesday, as the cabinet approved plans to establish the command. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- A South Korean nongovernmental organization is under police investigation for allegedly misusing government funds earmarked for sending salt to North Korea, the latest in a series of inquiries into groups working on inter-Korean issues. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea plans to disclose a report on forced labor practices in North Korea for the first time as part of efforts to raise awareness on human rights violations in the secretive regime, the unification ministry said Tuesday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has called on China to use its influence on Pyongyang to stop the reclusive country from making further provocations, he said Monday, amid anticipation that North Korea may soon launch a space rocket in violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- US secretary of state calls on Beijing to use influence to solve DPRK nuclear issue, meeting with Xi and top officials (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The U.S. and Japan held joint naval exercises on Monday in response to North Korea's latest missile launch, deploying Aegis-equipped destroyers in the Sea of Japan (East Sea). (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol held a bilateral summit with French President Emmanuel Macron at Élysée Palace in Paris on Tuesday to discuss security matters, including cooperation in the United Nations on North Korean threats, and strengthening their economic partnership. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526112309/https://mailchi.mp/af61a616e368/skorea-to-release-report-on-forced-labor-in-nkorea-for-1st-time-china-in-unique-position-to-push-nkorea-to-return-to-talks-blinken-says>

Wednesday, June 21, 2023

Congressional commission holds emergency hearing; Rights activists say China neglecting North Korean refugees

Top News:

[Activists warn U.S. Congress that North Koreans could get repatriated from China](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/14/2023)

[Congressional commission holds emergency hearing, urges China to protect N. Korean defectors](#) (Yonhap, 06/14/2023)

[Rights Activists Say China Neglecting North Korean Refugees](#) (VOA, 06/15/2023)

In North Korea:

[Eyes in the sky: How North Korea could realize vision for spy satellite network](#) (NK News, 06/21/2023)

[How North Korea embraced an obscure religion as a tool for Korean unification](#) (NK News, 06/21/2023)

[North Korean smartphone brand opens showcase shop on skyscraper street](#) (NK News, 06/21/2023)

International:

[Beijing pushes back against Blinken's call for China to do more on North Korea](#) (NK News, 06/21/2023)

[Biden extends declaration of national emergency with regard to North Korea](#) (Yonhap, 06/21/2023)

[Blinken China's trip likely to bring only temporary relief for tensions](#) (Reuters, 06/21/2023)

[N. Korea calls Blinken's visit to China 'disgraceful begging trip'](#) (Yonhap, 06/21/2023)

[Russian governor unveils plans for industrial park with North Korea and China](#) (NK News, 06/21/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. stress China role in N. Korea disarmament](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/21/2023)

[South Korea environmental impact review clears way for US missile defense system](#) (Reuters, 06/21/2023)

[U.N. needs to sanction North Korea's cyber activities, expert says](#) (UPI, 06/21/2023)

[U.S. commitment to allies will not be shaken by Korean provocation: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 06/21/2023)

Top News:

- Robert King, former U.S. special envoy for North Korean human rights issues, told the hearing, "Chinese government agencies carefully guard entrance to and exit from China. North Koreans who enter China illegally are apprehended and imprisoned in China. They are not permitted to leave China, and they are handed over to the government of North Korea." King noted that the number of North Korean refugees reaching South Korea drastically declined from a yearly average of 1,100 before the pandemic to only 229 in 2020, 63 in 2021 and 67 last year. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- "There are credible rumors that the North Korea-China border will reopen soon because North Korea, which is facing more starvation reminiscent of the Arduous March, must increase exports to, and imports from, China," noted Suzanne Scholte, president of Defense Forum Foundation, a nonprofit human rights activist group based in Virginia. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- Human rights activists and former officials are accusing Beijing of violating both Chinese and international laws, putting thousands of North Korean refugees in imminent danger. (Christy Lee, [VOA](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea has made clear it will plow ahead with plans to launch a military spy satellite despite a high-profile failure last month, and it appears to be only a matter of time until the DPRK successfully places a reconnaissance asset in orbit. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea is widely regarded as one of the world's most hostile states toward religion, with the Kim regime all but eradicating traditional faiths like Christianity and Buddhism during its seven decades of totalitarian rule. But the DPRK state has also found limited uses for religion throughout its history, and arguably no religion has played a more prominent role in the country than the relatively little-known faith of Chondoism. (Nicolas Levi, [NK News](#))
- A North Korean smartphone brand has opened a new shop among the skyscrapers on Pyongyang's recently built Hwasong Street, according to NK News analysis, a sign the brand has become more popular despite the country's economic problems during the pandemic. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

International:

- Beijing has pushed back against U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken's call for China to step up its role in addressing North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, while Pyongyang sharply rebuked the diplomat's "disgraceful begging trip" to China. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- President Joe Biden has notified U.S. Congress of his intention to extend the national emergency declaration period with regard to threats posed by North Korea, the White House said Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The first trip to China by a U.S. secretary of state in five years may have eased tensions that many saw escalating to dangerous levels, but the lack of progress on core issues means the relief will likely only be temporary, according to observers. (David Brunnstrom, Yew Lun Tian, and Martin Quin Pollard, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea on Wednesday called U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken's latest visit to China a "disgraceful begging trip," claiming it demonstrated the U.S. failure in its policy of putting pressure on Beijing. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- Russia plans to build an "industrial and trade park" to showcase goods from North Korea and China, according to a government official in charge of a region along the DPRK border. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- South Korea and the United States said Wednesday the two allies will continue openly calling on China to back their efforts to denuclearize North Korea, following Washington's briefing in Seoul about its latest talks with Beijing. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- A South Korean environmental impact assessment of a U.S. missile defence system found "insignificant" electromagnetic radiation relative to safety standards, the defence ministry said on Wednesday, clearing the way for its permanent deployment. (Soo-hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))
- The United Nations Security Council needs to impose new sanctions on North Korea to target its cybercrime activities, a former U.N. expert on Pyongyang said. But Russia's war in Ukraine and growing tensions between the United States and China are posing major obstacles. (Darryl Coote, [UPI](#))
- The United States' commitment to the defense and security of its allies remains strong and will not be shaken by military provocations staged by North Korea, a Pentagon spokesperson said Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Kaylee Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526112708/https://mailchi.mp/38ea81a6c134/hrnk-news-items-congressional-commission-holds-emergency-hearing-rights-activists-say-china-neglecting-north-korean-refugees>

Thursday, June 22, 2023

UN commissioner calls for North Korea to reengage on human rights

In North Korea:

[North Korea repaves spaceport launchpad after recent satellite failure](#) (NK News, 06/22/2023)

In South Korea:

[Living witness recounts forging of US, South Korea's 'blood alliance'](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/22/2023)
[Presidential official highlights S. Korea's pursuit of role for Indo-Pacific security](#) (Yonhap, 06/22/2023)

International:

[China has responsibility to encourage N. Korea back to dialogue: State Dept](#) (Yonhap, 06/22/2023)
[New US cyber unit to coordinate responses against nation states like North Korea](#) (NK News, 06/22/2023)
[North Korea worries Blinken's trip may lead to US-China detente](#) (The Korea Times, 06/21/2023)
[Seoul clears way for full deployment of US battery against North Korean missiles](#) (NK News, 06/22/2023)
[S. Korea, NATO ink arrangement to begin recognition process for military airworthiness certification](#) (Yonhap, 06/22/2023)
[S. Korea vows \\$130m Ukraine aid this year](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/22/2023)
[U.N. aviation organization adopts resolution condemning N. Korea's missile launches](#) (Yonhap, 06/22/2023)
[UN commissioner calls for North Korea to reengage on human rights](#) (NK News, 06/22/2023)
[US overtakes China as market for South Korean goods](#) (Financial Times, 06/22/2023)
[U.S. nuclear-powered submarine set to depart after combined drills with S. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 06/22/2023)
[Yoon arrives in Vietnam for state visit](#) (Yonhap, 06/22/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has begun repaving the new launchpad used for the country's failed military satellite launch, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery, as the ruling party promised again this week to attempt another launch "in a short span of time. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- 88-year-old Korean War vet who loaded bombs onto US jets recalls soldiers' bravery and sacrifices that set foundation for modern S. Korea. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea intends to "actively" contribute to building deterrence in the Indo-Pacific, a presidential security official said Thursday, amid steady efforts by Seoul and Washington to broaden their security alliance beyond the Korean Peninsula. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- China has both the capacity and responsibility to help bring North Korea back to the negotiating table, a state department spokesperson reiterated Wednesday, echoing recent remarks by Secretary of State Antony Blinken. The top U.S. diplomat said he had raised the issue while meeting with his Chinese counterparts in Beijing earlier this week. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. Justice Department has launched a new unit tasked with countering cyber threats, including from North Korean hackers, a move that one former U.S. intelligence official said was "a long time coming." The new National Security Cyber Section under the National Security Division (NSD) is aimed at strengthening intragovernmental coordination against the growing dangers posed by adversaries' illicit cyber activities, the Justice Department stated in a press release on Tuesday. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Pyongyang fears a scenario where China uses North Korea as a diplomatic card against the U.S. Taking advantage of the new Cold War climate amid Russia's war in Ukraine and China's intensifying hegemony rivalry with the U.S., the North has been able to develop unlawful weapons, while avoiding additional sanctions with China and Russia — permanent members of the U.N. Security Council — rejecting any united move to punish its behavior. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- A U.S. missile defense system for defending against North Korean attack poses no risk to South Korean residents or the environment, Seoul announced Wednesday, clearing the way for the full deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) battery. The conclusion of the yearlong environmental impact survey into the THAAD battery outside Daegu enables the U.S. and ROK military forces to improve infrastructure at the site, following years of protests by residents concerned about safety risks and negative impacts on farms and the economy. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- South Korea and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have signed an arrangement to launch the mutual recognition process for military airworthiness certification, Seoul's defense procurement agency said Thursday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea exported more goods to the US than to China last year for the first time in almost two decades, underlining shifting trade patterns as Washington draws more allies into its supply chains and Beijing boosts its manufacturing self-reliance. (Christian Davies, [Financial Times](#))
- South Korea said Thursday it will provide an additional \$130 million in aid to help Ukraine recover from Russia's invasion, at a two-day annual conference that started a day ago in London for the second time. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has unanimously adopted a resolution denouncing North Korea's missile provocations, Seoul's foreign ministry said Thursday. The U.N. agency's governing body also urgently called on Pyongyang to comply strictly with the provisions of the 1944 Chicago Convention, which outlines the key principles for global aviation, at a session in Montreal, Canada, earlier this week. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))

- The United Nations' chief human rights official called for North Korea to reengage the international human rights system this week, stating that Pyongyang has "isolated itself" even further in recent years. High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk delivered the remarks at the opening of the 53rd regular session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva on Monday. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- A U.S. nuclear-powered guided missile submarine (SSGN) is set to leave South Korea on Thursday, an informed source said, following its combined special warfare drills with the Korean Navy. The Ohio-class SSGN, USS Michigan, arrived Friday last week in an apparent show of America's naval might, a day after North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles toward the East Sea in apparent protest against the allies' massive live-fire drills. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol arrived in Hanoi on Thursday for a three-day state visit focused on expanding economic cooperation with the Southeast Asian nation. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gloria Guo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526112937/https://mailchi.mp/fc8e6cb36190/hrnk-news-items-congressional-commission-holds-emergency-hearing-rights-activists-say-china-neglecting-north-korean-refugees-12236240>

Friday, June 23, 2023

North Korean Human Rights: The Path Ahead; S. Korea blocks access to N. Korean propaganda channels on YouTube

Top News:

[North Korean Human Rights: The Path Ahead](#) (HRNK Insider, 06/22/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea most likely to use nuclear weapons as means of coercion: U.S. intelligence report](#) (Yonhap, 06/23/2023)

[North Korea likely to use nukes to coerce its neighbors: US intelligence report](#) (NK News, 06/22/2023)

[North Korea repaves spaceport launchpad after recent satellite failure](#) (NK News, 06/22/2023)

In South Korea:

[Integrated civil-military drill to focus on nuke attack by North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/22/2023)

[NK's YouTube vlog channels blocked in S. Korea on spy agency's request](#) (The Korea Times, 06/23/2023)

[S. Korea blocks access to N. Korean propaganda channels on YouTube](#) (Yonhap, 06/23/2023)

[S. Korean rights watchdog head urges China to stop repatriation of N.K. defectors](#) (Yonhap, 06/23/2023)

[Seoul clears way for full deployment of US battery against North Korean missiles](#) (NK News, 06/22/2023)

International:

[Calls grow for China to stop repatriating North Korean defectors](#) (UPI, 06/23/2023)

[China's facial recognition technology hinders North Korean escapees](#) (RFA, 06/22/2023)

[China has responsibility to encourage N. Korea back to dialogue: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 06/22/2023)

[New US cyber unit to coordinate responses against nation states like North Korea](#) (NK News, 06/22/2023)

[Russian ambassador rejects reports of famine in North Korea, corpses on streets](#) (NK News, 06/22/2023)

[South Korea, Vietnam to boost work on North Korea nuclear threat](#) (Reuters, 06/23/2022)

[U.N. aviation organization adopts resolution condemning N. Korea's missile launches](#) (Yonhap, 06/22/2023)

[UN aviation agency condemns North Korean missile tests as threat to air traffic](#) (NK News, 06/22/2023)

[UN commissioner calls for North Korea to reengage on human rights](#) (NK News, 06/22/2023)

['Washington Declaration' a step in right direction for Korea-US alliance: Rep. Bera](#) (Yonhap, 06/23/2023)

Top News:

- The Kim Jong-un regime presents a challenge of the utmost urgency to the international community. Without denuclearization and fundamental political change in North Korea, peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula will only be an illusion. Likewise, the values of freedom and human rights on the Korean Peninsula will not be truly realized either. To achieve denuclearization and internal political change, we first need to carefully assess the situation the Kim Jong-un regime is facing, as well as the steps that it may take. (Kim Dong-su, [HRNK Insider](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea will likely use its nuclear weapons to coerce political concessions from South Korea and its allies, a U.S. intelligence report said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un will likely use his growing nuclear arsenal to coerce neighboring countries, including by taking bigger risks with its conventional military forces, according to a newly declassified U.S. intelligence report. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has begun repaving the new launchpad used for the country's failed military satellite launch, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery, as the ruling party promised again this week to attempt another launch "in a short span of time." (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea plans to conduct its first-ever integrated civil and military drill to prepare for contingencies involving a North Korean nuclear attack. The drill is planned to be held during the Ulchi civil defense exercise in August to coincide with large-scale military drills that usually take place in the same time frame, according to an official close to the presidential

office and conservative People Power Party who spoke on condition of anonymity to the JoongAng Ilbo. (Lee Keun-Pyung, Park Tae-In, Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- A number of North Korean YouTube channels that have been publicizing daily life inside the regime were blocked at the request of South Korea's intelligence authorities, according to the Korea Communications Standards Commission, Friday. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea has blocked local access to three YouTube channels, presumably run by North Korea for propaganda purposes, upon request by Seoul's spy agency, amid concerns over the North's psychological warfare against the South, officials said Friday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's human rights watchdog chief on Friday urged China not to send North Korean defectors back to their homeland, citing reports that about 2,000 North Koreans held in China face imminent repatriation. (Yoo Cheong-mo, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.S. missile defense system for defending against North Korean attack poses no risk to South Korean residents or the environment, Seoul announced Wednesday, clearing the way for the full deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) battery. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- The head of South Korea's human rights watchdog group urged China on Friday not to repatriate thousands of detained North Korean escapees after borders are reopened, echoing growing concerns from the international community that a return is imminent. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- Facial recognition technology in China is increasing the risk that North Korean escapees in China will be caught, and raising the prices charged by smugglers who assist them, sources who work closely with escapees told Radio Free Asia. (Cheon Soram, [RFA](#))
- China has both the capacity and responsibility to help bring North Korea back to the negotiating table, a state department spokesperson reiterated Wednesday, echoing recent remarks by Secretary of State Antony Blinken. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. Justice Department has launched a new unit tasked with countering cyber threats, including from North Korean hackers, a move that one former U.S. intelligence official said was "a long time coming." (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The Russian Embassy in North Korea has not observed an increase in beggars in Pyongyang or dead bodies lying in the streets, the country's ambassador has told NK News, dismissing claims featured in a new documentary on famine in the DPRK. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- South Korea and Vietnam agreed on Friday to boost security cooperation, citing North Korea's nuclear threat, and committed to increasing bilateral trade and investment despite a slump this year and Vietnam's planned tax hikes on large firms. (Khanh Vu, Hyunsu Yim, [Reuters](#))
- The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has unanimously adopted a resolution denouncing North Korea's missile provocations, Seoul's foreign ministry said Thursday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.N. aviation authority has denounced North Korean missile launches as "a serious risk" to international air traffic, days after Pyongyang fired ballistic missiles for the first time in months. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- The United Nations' chief human rights official called for North Korea to reengage the international human rights system this week, stating that Pyongyang has "isolated itself" even further in recent years. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

- The recently signed Washington Declaration on U.S. extended deterrence is a step in the right direction to address the nuclear threat posed by North Korea, a U.S. lawmaker said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526113322/https://mailchi.mp/1c1c047785fb/hrnk-news-items-north-korean-human-rights-the-path-ahead-s-korea-blocks-access-to-n-korean-propaganda-channels-on-youtube>

Saturday, June 24, 2023

N. Korea slam Blinken's remarks on China role; Yoon's visit to Vietnam

In North Korea:

[Inside North Korea's strategy to stop defections by officials stranded abroad](#) (NK News, 06/23/2023)

[N. Korea slams Blinken's remarks on China role, warns of 'overwhelming' response to U.S. provocation](#) (Yonhap, 06/24/2023)

[N. Korea's food prices rise, suggesting supply shortages: 38 North](#) (Yonhap, 06/24/2023)

[The other Korean demographic crisis: Unmasking North Korea's population data](#) (NK News, 06/23/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korean nationals safe in Russia's Rostov-on-Don after mercenary revolt: foreign ministry](#) (Yonhap, 06/24/2023)

[S. Korean, Vietnamese leaders have breakfast meeting](#) (Yonhap, 06/24/2023)

[Yoon returns home from trip to France, Vietnam](#) (Yonhap, 06/24/2023)

International:

[Blinken calls S. Korean foreign minister to explain his trip to China](#) (Yonhap, 06/24/2023)

[First ladies of S. Korea, Vietnam discuss cultural exchanges](#) (Yonhap, 06/23/2023)

[U.S. continues to urge China to act on N. Korea with broader, longer view: Kirby](#) (Yonhap, 06/24/2023)

In North Korea:

- Hundreds of North Koreans diplomats, businesspeople and other relatively privileged citizens have been stranded overseas for more than three years on account of the DPRK's pandemic border controls. And as rumors abound that inbound travel could soon resume, reports suggest that some of these North Koreans might jump ship before they're recalled by Pyongyang. (James Fretwell, [NK News](#))
- North Korea warned Saturday of "more overwhelming and offensive" countermeasures against any enhanced U.S. military action, criticizing U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken's recent visit to China. ([Yonhap](#))

- Food prices in North Korea have risen to higher than pre-pandemic levels, suggesting supply shortages, a U.S. website monitoring the country has said. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea famously has the lowest birth rate in the world, setting new records over the past decade that have left it facing an array of social, economic and security challenges. But while less widely known is that just across the border, North Korea also faces its own demographic challenges. (Peter Ward, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- All nine South Korean nationals remain safe in the Russian city of Rostov-on-Don since an armed rebellion by a Russian mercenary group against its military, Seoul's foreign ministry said Saturday. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol had a breakfast meeting with Vietnamese President Vo Van Thuong on Saturday following their summit the previous day, Yoon's office said. ([Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol returned home Saturday after visiting France to promote South Korea's bid to host the 2030 World Expo and then Vietnam for a state visit aimed at deepening economic ties. Yoon began the six-day trip in Paris, where he attended a general assembly of the Bureau International des Expositions, the international body in charge of overseeing the World Expo. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has spoken with his South Korean counterpart to explain the outcome of his recent trip to China, a state department spokesperson said Friday. Blinken also reaffirmed U.S. commitment to the South Korea-U.S. alliance in his call with South Korean Foreign Minister Park Jin, according to department spokesperson Matthew Miller. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean first lady Kim Keon Hee met with her Vietnamese counterpart Friday and discussed cultural exchanges, the presidential office said. Kim met with Phan Thi Thanh Tam at a restaurant in Hanoi while accompanying President Yoon Suk Yeol on a state visit to Vietnam, according to presidential spokesperson Lee Do-woon. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States continues to urge China to use its influence over North Korea to stop the North's illegal weapons development programs, a White House official said Friday. John Kirby, National Security Council (NSC) coordinator for strategic communications, also suggested that the North's weapons programs would eventually hurt China's own interests down the road. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Tessa Aguilar, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526113931/https://mailchi.mp/7ef1896785ed/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-fires-ballistic-toward-east-sea-us-sends-message-to-northand-chinawith-second-sub-visit-to-south>

Sunday, June 25, 2023

N. Korea claims expansion of BRICS could speed up end to U.S. dollar's supremacy

International:

[Leaders of Korea and Vietnam agree to expand security, economic ties](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/25/2023)

[N. Korea claims expansion of BRICS could speed up end to U.S. dollar's supremacy](#) (Yonhap, 06/25/2023)

[N. Korea voices 'strong' support for Russia over Wagner's armed rebellion](#) (Yonhap, 06/25/2023)

[Yoon concludes Vietnam trip, expands economic and security ties](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/25/2023)

International:

- Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol held a bilateral summit with Vietnamese President Vo Van Thuong Friday in Hanoi during a state visit focused on expanding security and economic cooperation and strengthening the two countries' comprehensive strategic partnership. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea's state media claimed Sunday that an expansion of the so-called emerging BRICS nations could challenge and eventually speed up an end of the domination of the U.S. dollar. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's vice foreign minister voiced his "strong" support for any decision by the Russian leadership over the recent armed rebellion by the Wagner mercenary group, according to the North's state media Sunday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol wrapped up a state visit to Vietnam on Saturday which focused on expanding strategic cooperation both in economy and security, including a united response to North Korea's threats. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526113714/https://mailchi.mp/13ee03a13f64/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-claims-expansion-of-brics-could-speed-up-end-to-us-dollars-supremacy>

Monday, June 26, 2023

Calls grow for China to stop repatriating North Korean defectors, North Koreans at mass rally vow to 'pulverize the American empire'

Top News:

[Calls grow for China to stop repatriating North Korean defectors](#) (UPI, 06/23/2023)

In North Korea:

[Mass rallies in N. Korea against U.S. held on Korean War anniversary](#) (Yonhap, 06/26/2023)

[North Korea plagued by worst famine, wary of impact](#) (The Korea Times, 06/26/2023)

[North Korean state media backs Russia, says Wagner chief will be 'put down'](#) (NK News, 06/26/2023)

[North Koreans at mass rally vow to 'pulverise the American empire'](#) (The Telegraph, 06/26/2023)

[North Koreans vow to kill Americans and South Koreans at state-led mass rallies](#) (NK News, 06/26/2023)

[Thousands of North Koreans march in anti-US rallies as country marks Korean War anniversary](#) (AP News, 06/26/2023)

[U.S. pushing peninsula to 'brink of nuclear war': North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/26/2023)

Inter-Korean Relations:

[Defector group sends propaganda leaflets to N. Korea on Korean War anniversary](#) (Yonhap, 06/26/2023)

[N. Korea warns Korean Peninsula close to 'brink of nuclear war'](#) (Yonhap, 06/26/2023)

International:

[North Korea shows support for Russian leadership over recent coup](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/26/2023)

[North Korea uses new malware to 'wiretap' targets working on DPRK issues](#) (NK News, 06/26/2023)

[Panama revokes registration of ships tied to North Korea](#) (NK News, 06/26/2023)

[Wagner mutiny may have killed North Korea's dream project](#) (The Korea Times, 06/26/2023)

Top News:

- "There are credible rumors that the North Korea-China border will reopen soon because North Korea, which is facing more starvation ... must increase exports to, and imports from, China," Suzanne Scholte, said in Congressional testimony last week. "The terrifying fear for all of us human rights advocates is that China's first export to North Korea will be the nearly 2,000 North Korean children, women and men currently detained," she said. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))

In North Korea:

- More than 120,000 people participated in mass rallies in the North Korean capital Pyongyang to denounce what they claim is a "war provocation of aggression" by the United States on the 73rd anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War, the North's state media said Monday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- Violent crimes committed by soldiers against civilians increase amid deaths due to worsening starvation. Dozens of North Korean soldiers were embroiled recently in a violent dispute with health authorities in the reclusive state, according to a defector. (Kang Hyun-kyung, [The Korea Times](#))
- Mercenary commander Yevgeny Prigozhin will be "put down" and Russia will emerge victorious in Ukraine, North Korea said on Sunday, days after the Wagner Group chief staged an armed rebellion against Moscow. Pyongyang also pledged to back any and all decisions from Vladimir Putin during a meeting between vice foreign minister Im Chon Il and Russian Ambassador to the DPRK Alexander Matsegora. (Arius Derr, [NK News](#))
- North Koreans carried banners vowing to "pulverize the American empire" at mass rallies held to mark the 73rd anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War. (Sarah Newey, [The Telegraph](#))

- North Koreans vowed to “exterminate” Americans and South Koreans and displayed new propaganda posters threatening to attack the U.S. with the country’s latest nuclear missiles, joining state-organized mass rallies in recent days to mark the start of the Korean War, according to state media. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- Tens of thousands of North Koreans marched in anti-U.S. rallies over the weekend, pledging “merciless” revenge against “U.S. imperialists,” as the country marked the 73rd anniversary of the start of the Korean War, state media said Monday. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- North Korea’s Foreign Ministry vowed the regime would bolster its “defensive capabilities” as it claimed South Korea and the United States were “pushing the peninsula toward nuclear war,” Pyongyang’s state media reported Monday. In a report carried by the state-controlled Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), the ministry’s Institute for American Studies blamed Seoul and Washington’s “delusional anti-communist military confrontation” for driving “an extremely unstable situation closer to the brink of a nuclear war.” (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relations:

- A North Korean defectors' group said Monday it has sent anti-Pyongyang leaflets and medicine by balloons to the North, as they marked the 73rd anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's foreign ministry on Monday accused Seoul and Washington of pushing tensions to “the brink of a nuclear war” akin to the 1950-53 Korean War, saying it will continue to bolster its self-defensive capabilities. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korea “strongly” supports the Russian leadership over the recent coup by the Wagner mercenary group, the North’s state media said Sunday. North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Im Chon-il, in a meeting with the Russian Ambassador to Pyongyang, “expressed firm belief that the recent armed rebellion in Russia would be successfully put down,” adding the country will endorse any option and decision by the Russian leadership, Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said. (Sohn Dong-Joo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Pyongyang-backed hackers known to target individuals working on North Korea issues have been deploying software to steal information and “wiretap” victims, according to a South Korean cybersecurity firm. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Panama has revoked registrations for an unspecified number of ships flying its flag over potential links to North Korea and international sanctions violations, the country’s ship registry has announced. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korea was keen to take advantage of the war in Ukraine. First, by selling Russia weapons during the conflict and then by taking part in its reconstruction. That plan may now have been seriously — perhaps fatally — disrupted after Yevgeny Prigozhin, head of the Wagner Group, initiated an open military rebellion, an analyst told The Korea Times, Monday. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

Tuesday, June 27, 2023

New NK posters depict nuke attack on US; Joe Biden calls out state torture in North Korea, citing political prison camps

In North Korea:

[New North Korean posters depict nuke attack on US, shooting at ROK leafleting](#) (NK News, 06/27/2023)

[North Korea plans to build two new naval frigates by 2026, IMO data shows](#) (NK News, 06/27/2023)

[North Korea says U.S. has 'sinister intention' in rejoining UNESCO](#) (Reuters, 06/27/2023)

In South Korea:

[Assembly speaker expresses gratitude to Korean War veterans in New Zealand](#) (Yonhap, 06/27/2023)

[Defense ministry establishes decree to create drone operations command](#) (Yonhap, 06/27/2023)

[Military holds meeting of generals, admirals on N.K. deterrence, defense innovation](#) (Yonhap, 06/27/2023)

[South Korean military refutes reports it has salvaged North Korean spy satellite](#) (NK News, 06/27/2023)

International:

[IPC chief hoping to see N. Korea in 2024 Paralympics](#) (Yonhap, 06/27/2023)

[Joe Biden calls out state torture in North Korea, citing political prison camps](#) (NK News, 06/27/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. discuss nuclear security cooperation in working group meeting](#) (Yonhap, 06/27/2023)

[The surprising ways North Korea and Pakistan's nuclear strategies overlap](#) (NK Pro, 06/27/2023)

[YouTube removes North Korean 'vloggers' after South Korea blocks accounts](#) (Reuters, 06/27/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea revealed five new violent anti-U.S. and South Korea propaganda posters this week as part of efforts to stir up hostility among the population, including ones depicting nuclear attack on the U.S. and firing artillery at ROK balloon launches. The DPRK displayed the posters at state-organized mass rallies marking the June 25 Korean War anniversary. Four of them target the “vile puppet traitor group,” referring to South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol’s conservative administration, while one imagines a nuclear extermination unleashed on the “American empire.” (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has notified the International Maritime Organization (IMO) of plans to build two frigate-class vessels by the end of 2026, in the country’s latest effort to upgrade its naval fleet. The two frigates named the FFH-3 (IMO 4746054) and FFH-4 (IMO 4746066) recently appeared in the IMO database under the DPRK flag, with “Korea North Govt Naval Force” listed as the owner. The registry specifies that North Korea will complete the construction of the frigates in Dec. 2026 but does not list other details about the vessels, including their deadweight, tonnage and dimensions. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

- North Korea criticised on Tuesday the U.S. plan to rejoin the U.N. cultural agency UNESCO as a "sinister" move to use an international organisation for the purpose of "realizing the strategy for hegemony". "Clear is the sinister intention of the U.S. hastening the reentry into the organization ... The U.S. has an inglorious background of having withdrawn not only from UNESCO but also from WHO, the UN Human Rights Council and other international organizations," a statement released by North Korea's permanent mission to UNESCO said. (Jack Kim, [Reuters](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korean National Assembly speaker Kim Jin-pyo met with New Zealand veterans of the Korean War during a visit to Auckland and expressed gratitude for their sacrifices, his office said Tuesday. During the meeting held at a hotel, Kim noted that more than 6,000 New Zealanders fought alongside South Korea during the 1950-53 war when New Zealand's population was less than 2 million and the two countries had no diplomatic relations. (Kang Jae-eun, [Yonhap](#))
- The defense ministry on Tuesday established a decree for the creation of a drone operations command ahead of its planned launch later this year amid efforts to counter North Korea's military threats and bolster its use of the unmanned assets. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's military held an annual meeting of general-grade officers from all armed services Tuesday to discuss deterrence against North Korean threats, defense innovation and other security issues, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean military denied reports that it has salvaged North Korea's new military spy satellite from the sea on Tuesday, while emphasizing that it continues to search for debris from last month's failed launch. Several local media outlets reported on Monday that the military had recovered an object that appeared to be the satellite that the DPRK launched on May 31. "The reports by a certain media outlet about the recovery of an object believe to be the Malligyong-1 satellite, which the DPRK claims it launched on a space launch vehicle, is different from the facts," South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) told NK News on Monday evening, apparently referring to the original KBS report. "Our military is continuing related operations and activities." (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- As head of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), Andrew Parsons would like to see as many countries as possible compete in the Paralympic Games, held in conjunction with the Olympic Games for able-bodied athletes. In an interview with Yonhap News Agency on Monday during his visit to South Korea, Parsons said he wants to see the reclusive North Korea in Paris for the 2024 Summer Paralympics. (Yoo Jee-ho, Kim Kyung-youn, [Yonhap](#))
- U.S. President Joe Biden called out "cruel" and "inhumane" punishments by the North Korean government on Monday, in a statement to mark the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. The DPRK was one of just three countries that Biden criticized in the statement, along with Russia and Syria. "In North Korea, there are widespread credible reports of torture and other forms of cruel, inhumane, and degrading punishment by the government, including in political prison camps, and against women specifically, such as sexual violence, forced abortion and forced sterilization," Biden said. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea and the United States have discussed bilateral cooperation in the field of nuclear security in their latest working group meeting held this week, Seoul's foreign

ministry said Tuesday. The sixth South Korea-U.S. Nuclear Security Working Group Meeting, co-led by Yoon Jong-kwon, director-general for nonproliferation and nuclear affairs at the ministry, and Art Atkins, assistant deputy administrator of the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration, was held Monday and Tuesday in Seoul, according to the ministry. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))

- In many ways, North Korea and Pakistan could not be more different. The former is a nominally socialist, atheistic state, the latter the world's second-largest Islamic country. But despite their cultural and geopolitical differences, the two countries are bound by their shared possession of nuclear weapons and close ties to China. The ultimate aim of the DPRK's nuclear program is to ensure the U.S. does not attack, including if Pyongyang presses its claims over the South, and to eventually compel U.S. Forces Korea to leave the peninsula altogether. Pakistan too seeks to repel a much larger enemy — India — with nuclear weapons. (Abhishek Kumar Singh, [NK Pro](#))
- Three YouTube channels seen as linked to North Korea's state media have been taken down, a spokesperson for the U.S. video hosting site said on Tuesday, after South Korean regulators blocked them at the request of the country's spy agency. The channels featured English-speaking young women, including a girl as young as 11, who claimed to offer an unfiltered look at every day life in North Korea as informal video bloggers, or "vloggers." (Hyunsu Yim, [Reuters](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526115445/https://mailchi.mp/18abfdf53e52/hrnk-news-items-new-nk-posters-depict-nuke-attack-on-us-joe-biden-calls-out-state-torture-in-north-korea-citing-political-prison-camps>

Wednesday, June 28, 2023

S. Korea sanctions Russian individual involved in Pyongyang's illegal weapons-financing activities

In North Korea:

[N. Korea slams Japan for continued demand for resolution of abductee issue](#) (Yonhap, 06/28/2023)

[North Korea tightens state control of food](#) (The Korea Times, 06/28/2023)

[Sohae Satellite Launching Station: Progress Continues Toward Kim's Modernization and Expansion Plans](#) (38 North, 06/27/2023)

In South Korea:

[Korean Russian sanctioned over NK weapons programs](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/28/2023)

[Seoul sanctions former South Korean citizen for funding Pyongyang](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/28/2023)

[Seoul sanctions Russian national for aiding North Korean weapons program](#) (NK News, 06/28/2023)

[Seoul sanctions Russian national linked to North Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 06/28/2023)

International:

[S. Korea sanctions Russian individual involved in Pyongyang's illegal weapons-financing activities](#) (Yonhap, 06/28/2023)

[U.S. is working with S. Korea, Japan to deter N. Korean aggression: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 06/28/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea condemned Japan on Wednesday for its repeated call for the resolution of the North's abduction of Japanese nationals decades ago, claiming that such a stance runs counter to Tokyo's hope for a summit with Pyongyang without preconditions. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's great famine in the 1990s, which was a direct result of failures by the state, gave rise to "jangmadang," the informal markets that eventually grew to play an essential role in the economic lives of its people. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- Since Kim Jong Un's March 2022 visit to the Sohae Satellite Launching Station, several changes have occurred to achieve the goals he set forth to expand and modernize the site. The May 31 satellite launch attempt, while ending in failure, showcased some of the modifications that have been made to facilitate the launch of more and larger satellite launch vehicles (SLVs). (Peter Makowsky, Samantha J. Pitz, Jack Liu, [38 North](#)).

In South Korea:

- South Korea unveiled sanctions on a Russian citizen of Korean descent and his company, as well as on a separate North Korean citizen and a joint venture run by the two individuals, the latest efforts to crack down on North Korea's attempts to fund its weapons programs. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The South Korean government levied sanctions on a South Korean-born Russian for raking in money illegally for the North Korean regime and its weapons of mass destruction. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Seoul announced new unilateral sanctions against a Russian national of South Korean descent on Wednesday, accusing him of helping finance North Korea's weapons programs. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- South Korea added a Russian national of Korean descent to its unilateral sanctions list for his alleged involvement in the illegal financing of North Korea's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs, an act that violates United Nations Security Council sanctions, the foreign ministry said, Wednesday. (Kang Seung-woo, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- South Korea on Wednesday imposed unilateral sanctions on a Russian individual of Korean descent involved in the illegal financing of Pyongyang's weapons of mass destruction programs, Seoul's foreign ministry said. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States is working with allies and partners, namely South Korea and Japan, to deter potential aggression from North Korea, a Pentagon spokesperson said Tuesday, after Pyongyang warned that the Korean Peninsula is on the "brink of a nuclear war." (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526114417/https://mailchi.mp/86a313391163/hrnk-news-items-new-nk-posters-depict-nuke-attack-on-us-joe-biden-calls-out-state-torture-in-north-korea-citing-political-prison-camps-12236280>

Thursday, June 29, 2023

Press Briefing with Former ROK National Intelligence Service Officer Kim Ki-sam

Top News:

[Press Briefing with Former ROK National Intelligence Service Officer Kim Ki-sam](#) (YouTube, 06/19/2023)

*This press briefing has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[China's new spy law may curb North Korea aid work, endanger defectors: Experts](#) (NK News, 06/29/2023)

[N. Korea discusses grain output in follow-up measure after key party meeting](#) (Yonhap, 06/29/2023)

[Pyongyang renovates N. Korea-China friendship tower ahead of armistice anniversary](#) (Yonhap, 06/29/2023)

[Sanctioned North Korean tanker appears to transfer oil to freighters near Nampho](#) (NK News, 06/29/2023)

In South Korea:

[Conservative professor tapped to lead unification ministry](#) (Yonhap, 06/29/2023)

[DMZ War and lessons from Cold War](#) (The Korea Times, 06/29/2023)

[Rights watchdog names 1st North Korean non-standing commissioner](#) (The Korea Times, 06/29/2023)

[South Korea picks critic of North's rights record as unification minister](#) (Reuters, 06/29/2023)

[US to send nuclear-armed submarine to S. Korea 'in near future': USFK general](#) (Yonhap, 06/29/2023)

[Yoon names new unification minister in Cabinet reshuffle](#) (The Korea Times, 06/29/2023)

[Yoon names professor who called for DPRK regime change as unification minister](#) (NK News, 06/29/2023)

[Yoon replaces unification minister, 12 vice ministers in 1st reshuffle](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/29/2023)

[Yoon shakes up Cabinet, Olympian and other outsiders stand out](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/29/2023)

[Yonhap forum sheds lights on decadeslong S. Korea-U.S. alliance amid security challenges](#) (Yonhap, 06/29/2023)

International:

[Allies to seek stronger trilateral cooperation in envisaged summit](#) (The Korea Times, 06/29/2023)

[Blinken's role in US-China relations](#) (The Korea Times, 06/29/2023)

[Japanese populist calls for say over any use of U.S. nuclear bombs](#) (Reuters, 06/29/2023)

[Nuclear consultative group likely to meet soon: Envoy](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/29/2023)

[Putin's nuclear threats and averting Armageddon](#) (*The Korea Times*, 06/29/2023)
[Seoul, Washington moving to hold inaugural meeting of Nuclear Consultative Group: envoy](#) (*Yonhap*, 06/29/2023)

Top News:

- On June 19, former ROK National Intelligence Service (NIS) officer Kim Ki-sam held a press conference in Alexandria, VA to discuss recent developments regarding personnel appointments in the NIS. The English translation of his prepared remarks and the Q&A session are enclosed at the bottom of this email. You may also view the recording of the press conference (in Korean) at the enclosed YouTube link. (Kim Ki-sam, [YouTube](#))

In North Korea:

- China's plans to implement a new anti-espionage law from next month could create additional risks for organizations working near the North Korean border, while making it more difficult for defectors to escape, experts told NK News this week. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korea held a Cabinet meeting earlier this week to discuss follow-up measures for policy goals laid out in a recent key party meeting, such as increasing agricultural production, the North's state media said Thursday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has completed the renovation of a tower symbolizing its friendship with China as the 70th anniversary of the armistice that ended the 1950-53 Korean War approaches, the North's state media said Thursday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- A sanctioned North Korean oil tanker rendezvoused with two DPRK cargo vessels near the country's largest port city earlier this month, NK Pro analysis shows, in a possible ship-to-ship transfer to bypass international restrictions on importing energy resources. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Kim Yung-ho, the nominee for South Korea's new unification minister, is a conservative professor known for his hard-line stance toward North Korea and also a vocal advocate of human rights. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- Seventy years ago, the Korean War was halted by an armistice, and South Koreans enjoyed a standard of peace and stability that enabled them to achieve both political freedom and remarkable economic development. During the 70 intervening years, there have been serious challenges to the stability and security of Korea — but perhaps none as serious as the DMZ War in the late 1960s, although history has paid little attention to this conflict or to those who made the ultimate sacrifice. (Chun In-bum, [The Korea Times](#))
- Lee Han-byeol has become the first North Korean refugee to join the National Human Rights Commission of Korea (NHRCK) as one of its seven non-standing commissioners, the rights agency announced on Thursday. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Time](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol on Thursday picked a conservative scholar and an outspoken critic of North Korea's human rights record as the country's new unification minister handling relations with Pyongyang in a cabinet reshuffle. (Soo-Hyang Choi, Hyunsu Yim, [Reuters](#))
- The United States will send a nuclear-armed submarine to South Korea "in the near future" for the first time in decades, in another show of the U.S. commitment to the defense of its

ally, the deputy commander of the U.S. Forces Korea said Thursday. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

- President Yoon Suk Yeol replaced his minister of unification and other key Cabinet members, Thursday, in a bid to breathe new life into his second year in office ahead of the most crucial political test of his five-year term early next year. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol named a prominent conservative thinker as his new point person on inter-Korean relations on Thursday, a nominee likely to face opposition due to his past statements calling for regime change in North Korea. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol on Thursday nominated a new unification minister and replaced 12 vice ministers across 11 ministries in his first major reshuffle, aimed at pushing ahead with his reform drive in his second year in office. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol tapped a scholar known for his hardline stance on Pyongyang as the new head of the Unification Ministry and an Olympic weightlifting gold medalist as vice culture minister as part of an extensive reshuffle of his administration Thursday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Top government officials and experts gathered at a forum in Seoul on Thursday to explore ways to cope with security challenges on the Korean Peninsula, as South Korea and the United States mark the 70th anniversary of their alliance this year. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Kurt Campbell, the White House Indo-Pacific coordinator, said, Thursday, South Korea, Japan and the United States will explore ways to boost trilateral cooperation — probably on North Korea's nuclear program and China's assertiveness — in an envisaged three-way summit. (Kang Seung-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- When Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken went to Beijing last week to try to repair the frayed relationship between the United States and China, both sides kept expectations low. (Doyle McManus, [The Korea Times](#))
- A Japanese political party leader and unabashed populist who admires former U.S. President Donald Trump has called for Japan to have a say in how U.S. nuclear weapons might be used in its defence. (Tim Kelly, Kaori Kaneko, [Reuters](#))
- The inaugural meeting of a new Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG) between South Korea and the United States will likely be held soon amid continued concerns over North Korea's threats, according to Seoul's top diplomat to Washington on Wednesday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- As the costly war in Ukraine grinds on, Russian President Vladimir Putin adopts an increasingly menacing posture. In particular, he is making more references to the possibility of using nuclear weapons. (Arthur I. Cyr, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea and the United States are working to hold their inaugural meeting of the new Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG), South Korea's ambassador to the U.S. Cho Hyun-dong said Wednesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Press Briefing with Former ROK National Intelligence Service Officer Kim Ki-sam

June 19, 2023, 11 am

Held at the Korean Community Center in Alexandria, VA

Attended by Chosun Ilbo, Dong-A Ilbo, and SBS Washington, DC correspondents, Don Kirk, and YouTube journalists; original YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bXWYrggyFMQ>

Ki-sam Kim's Opening Remarks

It's been quite some time since I've officially spoken in front of correspondents. I've been living quietly in the remote countryside, but today I'm standing here as a spokesperson for people whose voices cannot be heard. There are people who can't express the resentment in their hearts or share the truth with the world. So, on behalf of those people, I am here today to share what I know.

Please allow me to briefly introduce myself. I joined the ROK National Intelligence Service (NIS) in 1993. When I joined, I was part of the 30th regular appointment. (Since the NIS was established in 1961, the regular appointment course was made once every year). I worked for the NIS for about 8 years, before I quit at the end of 2000.

The reason I left the NIS was that I entered the NIS with passion and aspirations to make at least a small contribution to achieving the unification of my country, but after joining the NIS, I realized that the NIS was not defending national security but was carrying out activities that undermined the security of the country. I couldn't stand those crimes committed by the leaderships of the nation at the time and left the agency. After leaving, I dug up these treasonous activities more closely by myself and eventually made up my mind to reveal what I got to know.

In 2003, I exposed former President Kim Dae-jung's treasonous activities, secret money transfers to North Korea and the Nobel Peace Prize Operation, former NIS Director Lim Dong-won's suspected espionage activities and then the wiretapping/eavesdropping issues of the National Intelligence Service at the time, among other issues. Before leaving the NIS, I briefly worked on the secret team that supported Mr. Kim Dae-jung's quest for the Nobel Peace Prize. Unfortunately, only one of the 5 or 6 topics I raised and exposed at the time was properly investigated: wiretapping by the NIS.

After revealing what I knew to the world, I was charged by the National Intelligence Service for violation of confidentiality and for defamation, and because of that, I had no choice but to seek asylum in the United States. In the spring of 2012, after eight years of lengthy legal disputes, I was finally granted asylum. As far as I know, there have been only a couple of South Koreans who have been granted political asylum in the United States, and I might be the only one granted asylum based on being a conscientious objector.

Let me explain a bit about the background of this turmoil in the NIS, in the process of personnel reshuffle. First of all I'd like to point out the fact that most of the officers in the NIS, just like regular folk, are subsistence workers who have to support their families. That's why, regardless of their beliefs, they have no choice but to align with the political inclination of the regime, and most of them do so. Moreover, over the past three left-leaning governments, the number of people who believe in leftist ideology in the NIS has increased dramatically. Then, from the days of President Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun, the so-called "Seed Theory," or "Dream Tree Theory" was carried out in the NIS, and recruitment advantage was given to the people from certain regions with additional points. Twenty-five years have passed since, and this has become the most fundamental factor that greatly undermines the identity of the NIS.

First, against this backdrop, the recent personnel turmoil can be said to be aimed at wiping out the very handful of freedom fighters that remain in the NIS as of now, by forming a cartel-style alliance between subsistence right-wing and ideological left-wing forces. Furthermore, it can be seen that it is being carried out with the purpose of paralyzing the ongoing espionage investigations activities by neutralizing Director Kim Kyou-hyun's efforts to reform the NIS. So, delaying tactics will continue until the end of this year, when the NIS' counterintelligence authorization is terminated. In short, in the long run, they are plotting to disable the NIS functions and role permanently.

Second, I would like to briefly talk about the prelude, what happened half a year ago, in relation to the cause of this personnel turmoil. At the time, Cho Sang-joon, Deputy Director for Planning and Coordination, suddenly resigned at the end of last year. Then, there was a serious conflict between Cho Sang-joon and Director Kim Kyou-hyun. As the conflict escalated to the point where it could not be resolved, Deputy Director Cho eventually resigned. Chief Secretary Kim, who played a role as a messenger between Deputy Cho and Director Kim, quit as Chief Secretary as well and took over the newly created Counterespionage Center.

Director Kim has had his own personnel principles from the beginning of his tenure and has firmly adhered to those personnel principles. He had the personnel principle that excluded the following four types of officers from current positions and from future promotions: 1) Supporters of inter-Korean exchange and cooperation, proponents of reconciliation; 2) Traitors such as those leaking secrets about NIS' North Korean Covert Actions; 3) Supporters of the Declaration of the End of the War and Enhancement of a Peace Treaty; and 4) Those who have been promoted more than one level in the Moon Jae-in administration.

On the other hand, Deputy Cho insisted on the principles of Integration, Reconciliation and Harmony. Deputy Cho came to have this view because he was persuaded by his chief aide and the head of the personnel department, who persistently pushed him in this direction. Then, in the midst of the extreme confrontation between Director Kim and Deputy Cho, 1st Deputy Director Kwon Chun-taek also jumped in, and took a stance of actively supporting Deputy Cho, creating a confrontational structure with Director Kim.

Now, let me move on to the direct cause of incident. A week or so ago, President Yoon withdrew his approval on eight key positions, including four Bureau/Division Chiefs. A president's withdrawal of personnel approval like this is unprecedented in six decades of NIS history. To give you the conclusion upfront, it can be said that it is the result of a rebellion plot by some deviant NIS officers. A rebellion is currently underway at the NIS.

The central figure of the rebellion is Mr. Son, who is currently in charge of the personnel planning team of the National Intelligence Service. When Noh Eun-chae, the former Deputy Director for Planning and Coordination was the Chief of the North Korea Operations Bureau, Mr. Son and his co-conspirator Mr. Kim were subordinates who served under him. I judge that Mr. Son planned this rebellion because he anticipated the ramifications of his treasonous activity. He knew that it related to the four personnel principles of Director Kim, and it would soon be targeted. Thus, he preemptively acted against Director Kim Kyou-Hyun to remove him so that he could survive.

Now, let me tell you the most important part of the information I want to share with you today. After the president's personnel withdrawal was decided, various South Korean media outlets have been publishing articles daily about the disputed situation within the NIS, mixing speculation and

distortion. It is an unprecedented phenomenon that such confidential personnel information within the NIS is being indiscriminately disclosed to the public.

Behind the commotion is Kwon Chun-taek, the First Deputy Director. Currently, Kwon Chun-taek is distributing black propaganda press materials related to the NIS personnel turmoil to the editors of various media organizations, including the *Dong-A Ilbo*. Kwon Chun-taek's illegal leaking of confidential information is motivated by his mistaken belief that he would become the Director if Director Kim resigns due to this public relations warfare. Meanwhile, it is highly likely that the exclusive fake news about the nomination of Director Kwon Chun-taek by the *Chosun Ilbo* before the inauguration of the current regime was also the result of false media input by Mr. Kwon.

Now, let me move to the part I'd like to clearly point out today, the part that is farthest from the truth. One of the most attention-grabbing and criticized aspects of the personnel turmoil was the alleged attempt to deploy personnel from a domestic political department, with no career or expertise abroad, as Ministers in Washington and Tokyo. This false information claimed that these newly appointed Ministers had a long history in the political department but could not speak foreign languages and did not know anything about the United States or Japan. These were nothing but groundless lies and false claims. The *Dong-A Ilbo* fell for a poisoned apple and published a big scoop of misinformation.

To tell you the facts, Mr. Kim, who was appointed as the Minister to the United States this time, is an American expert who has worked only in overseas departments for his entire career. In addition, Mr. Kwon, who was appointed as Minister to Japan, is also a Japanese expert who has specialized in *Chosen-Soren*, the pro-NK residents' league in Japan for his entire career at the Anti-Communist Investigation Bureau, although he did not work overseas.

Neither had ever worked in a domestic political department. Moreover, it was alleged that these people were appointed as Ministers under the influence of Director Kim of the Anti-Espionage Center. To tell the truth, they are completely unfamiliar with each other at all, and this is a fact. Kwon Chun-taek worked very hard behind the scenes to get his man, Mr. Chon, appointed as the Minister to the United States. However, Mr. Chon, one of the closest aides to former Director Suh Hoon, was the key man in treasonous operations aimed at implementing scenarios including a declaration of the end of war, the signing of a peace treaty, the establishment of diplomatic ties between the United States and North Korea, and the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the Korean Peninsula. As I mentioned earlier, Director Kim Kyou-hyun's personnel principle is supposed to exclude such people.

Director Kim Kyou-hyun has issued instructions to take strong corrective measures against such treasonous activities committed during the previous administration. However, the people who are now refusing such orders are the First Deputy Director Kwon Chun-taek and his followers.

Q&A

Q: It has been a long time since you left the NIS. How can we trust the sources, evidence, and reliability of the things you say about specific issues?

A: You may find it odd that I obtained this intelligence under the current circumstances. If you know where the information flows and who has the information, it is not impossible to obtain it. But please understand that I can't go into details.

Q: Of course, we will not disclose the source of the report. Because you pointed out misinformation by certain media, we are concerned about your own information sources.

A: Then I will assume full responsibility. I hope you will verify that part with the *Dong-A Ilbo*. It's not a state secret, so you may probably learn a thing or two.

Q: You said that the reason for the confrontation between Deputy Cho and Director Kim was simply because the employees who benefited from the previous administration persuaded Deputy Cho in relation to personnel principles. Is there any basis for this statement?

A: The internal situation of the NIS, especially information related to human resources, cannot and should not be known to outsiders. So I think this part is the president's mistake. They think that if they appoint the Deputy Minister for Planning and Coordination as their own person, they will be able to control the organization and personnel management, but that is a mistake. There is nothing you can do if you enter the company as the Deputy Minister for Planning and Coordination in a blank state without knowing anything. Therefore, you have no choice but to rely on your trusted aides or fellows who are alumni of the same school, such as Mr. Lee Hyun-hoo, who is in charge of personnel affairs. Chief Lee Hyun-woo is also from the same school as me, and he could have been my closest friend if I had stayed with the agency. Because of that thought, I am personally apologetic to him for doing something a little harsh now. Oops, I am sorry for blurting out his real name.

Q: You talked about the two people who planned and executed this personnel turmoil. I am a bit curious about how it was planned and implemented and how the president was influenced. Also, regarding the person who leaked confidential information, i.e. Kwon Chun-taek, the First Deputy Director, please explain a bit more whether Mr. Kwon was conspiring with those two from the beginning.

A: You must have felt there is a missing link in my explanation. I wish I could answer further, but please understand that I can't reveal every detail at this stage, even if I knew more. The second question is a good one, but it is beyond my ability, I just don't know. So, for that part, you or those who are currently working in the NIS, maybe the Inspector General, will have to confirm.

Q: So, are you saying there is no problem with Director Kim Kyou-hyun's personnel plan?

A: Well, it depends on how you see the problem.. If you look at it from one angle or another, you may feel that the majority of employees now think there are problems. However, my judgment is that Director Kim Kyou-hyun is on the right track.

Q: The matter is actually too complex, so can we simplify it like this: "President Yoon Seok-yeol was tricked by far-left elements within the NIS."

A: Right. President Yoon Seok-yeol is being deceived. He is completely fooled. However, I do not want to criticize him for now. At this stage, I am recommending that he take charge of this issue and resolve it.

Q: You left the "company" more than 20 years ago, went through hardships because of the NIS, and now even went into exile in the United States. Is there any other particular purpose why you are doing this press conference?

A: I mentioned the purpose earlier. There are people who have things to say but their voices cannot be heard. No one knows better than me how hard this can be. I can't pretend I didn't see or hear it just for the sake of my own convenience. In fact, I am no longer a South Korean citizen, but a US citizen. You might ask why I am interested in matters in South Korea. Well, my roots are in Korea, I cannot abandon my country of birth. My parents and siblings still live there, and it is the place where our descendants may have to live in the future. I could not remain silent in the face of this reality in which the Republic of Korea was swayed by the left-leaning elements and national security itself could be shaken and the conservative patriotic forces themselves could disappear. It is because of that resolution that I am standing here today and I am uttering these words.

Q: There are even rumors of the resignation of Director Kim Kyou-hyun. Do you think the resignation should be withdrawn?

A: Director Kim did not resign, did he?

Q: How do you view the current situation, the rumors of his resignation?

A: I think that if President Yoon Seok-Yeol is truly courageous, he should once again reverse his decision, his withdrawal of the approval of the personnel plan this time. Mistakes can be made. When the president hears the same story from many different people, not just one, he tends to believe his own people, and has no choice but to judge it that way. So, I would like to say that the President should once again look into what exactly happened and who was in the wrong and false reporting line.

Q: May I assume that the source of what you said today is from the inside the NIS?

A: I figured out what happened. And it is something I have to judge myself and carry the cross. I made up my mind, and that was why I asked you to meet with me.

Q: If there is no follow-up or fix in the future, are you willing to hold this kind of press conference again?

A: As you can see, I don't like being in front of a camera, and it doesn't suit me. I try not to appear in public as much as possible. Today, I told you the facts. This is only a part of the story. If there is no follow-up even after those facts are confirmed, then I may hold this kind of meeting again.

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526114846/https://mailchi.mp/aa7425c9208f/hrnk-news-items-press-briefing-with-for-mer-rok-national-intelligence-service-officer-kim-ki-sam>

Friday, June 30, 2023

Unification Minister nominee Kim lays out his Pyongyang roadmap; S. Korea asks Pyongyang to give prior notice on border dam discharge

In North Korea:

[North Korean satellite to fall toward Earth after 7 years in space, experts say](#) (NK News, 06/30/2023)
[Secret Kim Jong Un theme park ride, new smartphone revealed in propaganda vlog](#) (NK News, 06/30/2023)

In South Korea:

[Unification minister nominee calls for 'selective' review of inter-Korean agreements](#) (Yonhap, 06/30/2023)
[Unification Minister nominee Kim lays out his Pyongyang roadmap](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 06/30/2023)
[Unification minister nominee vows not to compromise on human rights in dealing with N. Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 06/30/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Hyundai chairwoman requests permission to visit North Korea's Kumgangsan](#) (The Korea Herald, 06/30/2023)
[Hyundai Group chief seeks to visit N. Korea's Mt. Kumgang](#) (Yonhap, 06/30/2023)
[Seoul asks North Korea to give notice before releasing water from border dam](#) (NK News, 06/30/2023)
[S. Korea asks Pyongyang to give prior notice on border dam discharge](#) (Yonhap, 06/30/2023)

International:

[Japan imported North Korean goods during pandemic despite blanket trade ban](#) (NK Pro, 06/30/2023)
[The US flies nuclear-capable bombers in a fresh show of force against North Korea](#) (AP, 06/30/2023)

In North Korea:

- A North Korean satellite launched in 2016 will end its space odyssey and fall toward Earth on Friday, experts forecast. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un made a secret trip to ride amusement park rides the day after a high-stakes meeting with the top U.S. diplomat in 2018, according to a new state-produced propaganda vlog. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Kim Yung-ho, the nominee for South Korea's unification minister, said Friday the government needs to "selectively" review whether to honor existing inter-Korean agreements, depending on North Korea's behavior. ([Yonhap](#))
- Unification Minister nominee Kim Yung-ho said that past inter-Korean agreements need to be "selectively" reconsidered in his first press briefing Friday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Kim Yung-ho, the nominee for next unification minister, vowed on Friday not to compromise on any of his principles in the ministry's efforts to improve inter-Korean relations, saying that human rights are among the unnegotiable values. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Hyundai Group Chairwoman Hyun Jeong-eun is planning a trip to Kumgangsan in North Korea to attend a private service on Aug. 4 commemorating her late husband, Chung Mong-hun, said officials on Friday. The event will commemorate the 20th anniversary of the death of Chung Mong-hun. (Lee Jung-joo, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The chief of South Korea's Hyundai Group has sought to visit North Korea's Mount Kumgang in August to hold a memorial service for her late husband and former chairman of the group, an official at Seoul's unification ministry said Friday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- Seoul has called for North Korea to provide advance notice before discharging water from its dam near the inter-Korean border, following the start of the summer monsoon earlier this week. (Bryan Betts, [NK News](#))
- South Korea requested North Korea on Friday to give prior notice should it release water from dams near their border to minimize damage from heavy rains. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Japan has imported more than \$26,000 worth of goods from North Korea in recent years, analysis of Japanese customs records shows, despite a long-standing ban on imports from the DPRK that aims to cut off funding for its weapons programs. (Maiko Takeuchi, [NK Pro](#))
- The United States flew nuclear-capable bombers to the Korean Peninsula on Friday in its latest show of force against North Korea, days after the North staged massive anti-U.S. rallies in its capital. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP](#))

Prepared by Myriam Aribaud, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://wayback-api.archive.org/web/20240526120814/https://mailchi.mp/ed0679cfd487/hrnk-news-items-unification-minister-nominee-kim-lays-out-his-pyongyang-roadmap-s-korea-asks-pyongyang-to-give-prior-notice-on-border-dam-disc-harge>

7. JULY

Saturday, July 1, 2023

N. Korea says 'no intention' to review Hyundai Group chief's bid to visit Mt. Kumgang

In North Korea:

[Outside Information: One of the Keys to Empowering North Korean Citizens as Agents of Change](#) (38 North, 06/30/2023)

[This North Korean player stunned the soccer world – then disappeared](#) (CNN, 07/01/2023)

In South Korea:

[Ex-NIS chief Park Jie-won questioned over alleged illicit hiring charges](#) (Yonhap, 07/01/2023)

[Major annual queer festival takes place in Seoul](#) (Yonhap, 07/01/2023)

[Next year's ODA budget set at record high of 6.8 tln won](#) (Yonhap, 06/30/2023)

[S. Korea to launch upgraded missile defense operations center](#) (Yonhap, 06/30/2023)

[S.Korea to tighten' immigrant investor requirements](#) (The Korea Economic Daily, 06/30/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea says 'no intention' to review Hyundai Group chief's bid to visit Mt. Kumgang](#) (Yonhap, 07/01/2023)

International:

[Kishida's attempt to realize North Korea summit seen as a long shot](#) (The Japan Times, 07/01/2023)

[Senior Seoul diplomat, foreign envoys discuss N. Korea provocations, human rights](#) (Yonhap, 06/30/2023)

[S. Korean industry chief discusses energy security with U.S. congressional delegation](#) (Yonhap, 06/30/2023)

[S. Korea, Japan seek stronger ties on broader trade issues after 'white list' reinstatement](#) (Yonhap, 06/30/2023)

[S. Korean, Slovenian FMs discuss cooperation in nuclear energy, science technology](#) (Yonhap, 06/30/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. hold annual defense ICT talks](#) (Yonhap, 06/30/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean citizens are often only seen as the victims of the Kim Jong Un regime—powerless and disconnected from the rest of the world. Because of this perception, decades of international efforts to engage and access the restrictive state have neglected to consider its people as a key partner in effecting change inside North Korea. (Lynn Lee, [38 North](#))
- In 2017, Han Kwang Song became the first North Korean to score a goal in one of Europe's five major soccer leagues and even made a shock transfer to Italian giant Juventus in 2019, then later to Qatar's Al-Duhail. (Gawon Bae, Andrew McNicol, [CNN](#))

In South Korea:

- Former National Intelligence Service (NIS) chief Park Jie-won was questioned by police Saturday over charges he had illegally meddled in the organization's hiring decisions. (Park Sang-soo, [Yonhap](#))
- Tens of thousands of people gathered in downtown Seoul on Saturday to enjoy an annual major LGBTQ festival amid opposition from some protesters, its organizer said. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))
- The government set next year's budget for official development assistance (ODA) at a record high of 6.8 trillion won (US\$5.2 billion) on Friday, with a focus on providing humanitarian assistance to countries in emergency situations, such as war-torn Ukraine. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's Air Force is set Friday to open an upgraded missile defense operations center in a city just south of Seoul, officials said, in yet another move to strengthen the nation's anti-missile shield against growing North Korean threats. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea will raise the minimum requirements for the country's investment immigration visa program amid growing controversy over foreigners' abuse of their residency status to access the country's social benefits, particularly its universal health insurance coverage. (Jin-Seong Kim, [The Korea Economic Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- N. Korea says 'no intention' to review Hyundai Group chief's bid to visit Mt. Kumgang. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- In a bid to shore up support for his Cabinet ahead of a possible general election, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida is set to dedicate himself to realizing a summit with North Korea. But most analysts say that bid is unlikely to bear fruit anytime soon. (Tomoyuki Tachikawa, [The Japan Times](#))
- A senior South Korean diplomat and foreign ambassadors on Friday discussed North Korea's provocations and they called for efforts to improve North Korea's human rights situation, Seoul's foreign ministry said. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's industry chief met with a visiting U.S. congressional delegation Friday and discussed ways to enhance bilateral cooperation on nuclear power generation, natural gas, and the overall industry, the industry ministry said. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and Japan agreed Friday to work more closely together on a wider range of multilateral trade issues based on a recent thaw in the bilateral ties, Seoul's industry ministry said. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))
- The top diplomats of South Korea and Slovenia held consultations Friday to discuss ways to strengthen bilateral ties in areas of nuclear power plants and science technology, Seoul's foreign ministry said. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Defense officials of South Korea and the United States held their annual meeting on bilateral security cooperation in the area of information and communication technologies (ICT) in Hawaii earlier this week, Seoul's defense ministry said Friday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Bella Packowski, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526121523/https://mailchi.mp/d56449cde493/hrnk-news-items-unification-minister-nominee-kim-lays-out-his-pyongyang-roadmap-s-korea-asks-pyongyang-to-give-prior-notice-on-border-dam-discharge-12>

Sunday, July 2, 2023

Yoon says unification ministry should no longer act like N.K. support agency

In South Korea:

[Unification Ministry does not support North Korea, Yoon says](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/02/2023)

[Yoon orders overhaul of Unification Ministry](#) (Korea Herald, 07/02/2023)

[Yoon says unification ministry should no longer act like N.K. support agency](#) (Yonhap, 07/02/2023)

In South Korea:

- President Yoon Suk Yeol has stressed that the Unification Ministry is not a department that exists to support North Korea. According to the president's office on Sunday, President Yoon said the Unification Ministry's role must be changed to pursue a unification based on basic free democratic order. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol called for a restructuring of the Unification Ministry, saying it is "not a ministry that supports North Korea," according to a statement from his press secretary, Kim Eun-hye, on Sunday. "The Unification Ministry has functioned like a support organization for North Korea, and this must change," Yoon said. He made the remarks during a discussion with Unification Ministry officials, including new minister nominee Kim Young-ho, who was appointed last week. (Lee Jung-Youn, [Korea Herald](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol said Sunday the unification ministry should no longer act like a support agency for North Korea, days after he nominated a conservative scholar to head the ministry. (Yoo Jee-Ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526121646/https://mailchi.mp/b96206d50072/hrnk-news-items-unification-minister-nominee-kim-lays-out-his-pyongyang-roadmap-s-korea-asks-pyongyang-to-give-prior-notice-on-border-dam-discharge-12>

Monday, July 3, 2023

Inauguration ceremony of the America Korea United Society held on June 22

Top News:

[Panel Discussion and Brainstorming for Attaining The AKUS Mission and Goals](#) (America Korea United Society, 06/22/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korea appears to lift strict mask mandates as temperatures rise](#) (NK News, 07/03/2023)

In South Korea:

[HD Korea Shipbuilding wins orders for 1 offshore facility, 8 ships](#) (Yonhap, 07/03/2023)

[Posco to invest \\$92B in steelmaking, future growth businesses](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/03/2023)

[Pro-North Korea or 'fake' independence fighters to lose national merit titles](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/03/2023)

[Unification Ministry to shift focus to N.Korean human rights](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/03/2023)

[Yoon says ministry should stop being 'support agency' for North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/03/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Hyundai chief cancels plans to visit North Korea after Pyongyang's rejection](#) (NK News, 07/03/2023)

[Hyundai Group chief withdraws application to visit Mt. Kumgang after N. Korea's refusal](#) (Yonhap, 07/03/2023)

International:

[North Korean students win hacking contest hosted by US-based firm](#) (NK News, 07/03/2023)

Top News:

- On June 22, the inauguration ceremony of the America Korea United Society was held at the Washington DC Metro Area Korean Community Center. This panel involves a discussion between Greg Scarlatou, Executive Director of HRNK, and Suzanne Scholte, Co-Vice-Chair of HRNK's Board of Directors. ([America Korea United Society](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean authorities appear to have lifted their near-universal COVID-19 face mask mandate over the weekend, according to NK News analysis of state media, becoming likely the last country in the world to do so. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Major South Korean shipyard HD Korea Shipbuilding & Offshore Engineering Co. said Monday it has clinched orders worth billions of dollars to build a floating production unit (FPU) and eight vessels. ([Yonhap](#))
- Posco will invest 121 trillion won (\$92.4 billion) by 2030 in steelmaking as well as its future growth businesses such as hydrogen and electric vehicle (EV) battery materials, the steelmaker said Monday. (Shin Ha-nee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- The Veterans Ministry will revoke national merit titles from independence fighters who supported Kim Il-sung, the former leader and founder of North Korea's communist regime. (Lee jung-youn, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The Yoon Suk Yeol government is seeking to restructure the Unification Ministry to focus on human rights issues in North Korea and analysis of the Kim Jong-un regime, de-emphasizing its role of facilitating inter-Korean dialogue and other projects aimed at the reconciliation of the two Koreas. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Changes in the Unification Ministry's focus and approach to North Korean affairs are expected following remarks by President Yoon Suk Yeol that it should stop "acting like a North Korea support agency." (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- A chairwoman of the South Korean conglomerate Hyundai Group has canceled her plans to visit North Korea's Mount Kumgang for a memorial service, Seoul's unification ministry announced on Monday. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- The chief of South Korea's Hyundai Group has withdrawn an application to visit North Korea's Mount Kumgang, after the North said it has "no intention to examine" the application, an official at Seoul's unification ministry said Monday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korean computer science students swept the top spots in a recent hacking competition hosted by a U.S.-based company, state media revealed last week, renewing concerns that the regime may use programming capabilities honed through such events to support its illicit cyber activities. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Dan McDowall, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526121820/https://mailchi.mp/c72cb636d6fd/hrnk-news-items-unification-minister-nominee-kim-lays-out-his-pyongyang-roadmap-s-korea-asks-pyongyang-to-give-prior-notice-on-border-dam-discharge-12>

Tuesday, July 4, 2023

China's 'Anti-Espionage Law' to Take Effect - Crisis for N. Korean Refugee Rescues

Top News:

[China's 'Anti-Espionage Law' to Take Effect: Crisis for North Korean Refugee Rescues](#) (Radio Free Asia, 06/23/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[Frequent military parades signify NK leader finding it tougher to stay in control](#) (The Korea Times, 07/04/2023)

[N. Korea has apparently lifted mask mandate](#) (Yonhap, 07/04/2023)

[N. Korea says it has achieved economic goals for H1 in key sectors](#) (Yonhap, 07/04/2023)

[North Korean hackers deploy new malware variant with MacOS users in crosshairs](#) (NK News, 07/04/2023)

In South Korea:

[Map apps add locations where South Koreans can shelter from North Korean attack](#) (NK News, 07/04/2023)

International:

[House committee calls for trilateral defense cooperation between S. Korea, Japan and U.S.](#) (Yonhap, 07/04/2023)

[North Korea and Japan officials met to discuss abduction issue, report says](#) (The Japan Times, 07/03/2023)

[Soft propaganda? YouTube deletes channels promoting North Korean lifestyle](#) (Radio Free Asia, 07/03/2023)

['You can never become a Westerner:' China's top diplomat urges Japan and South Korea to align with Beijing and 'revitalize Asia'](#) (CNN, 07/04/2023)

Top News:

- Greg Scarlatou, HRNK's Executive Director, said that this law presents another crisis for North Korean refugees seeking to escape China, following COVID-19 and the introduction of AI facial recognition systems. (Jamin Anderson, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In North Korea:

- Since Kim Jong-un rose to power in 2011 following his father's death, he has overseen a total of 13 military parades so far. In other words, North Korea's show of force has been held almost every year. Following the massive nighttime military parade in February, the totalitarian state is expected to hold another event on July 27 to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the signing of the armistice that halted the 1950-53 Korean War. (Kang Hyun-kyung, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea, which had maintained its rigid COVID-19 restrictions long after most countries eased pandemic measures, appears to have lifted its mask mandate this month, state media footage and photos showed Tuesday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea claimed Tuesday it has exceeded its goals across key economic sectors during the first half of the year, backed by efforts to accomplish its 12 major economic priorities for this year. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean hackers have MacOS users in their crosshairs, deploying a new variant of a malware family to take control of devices and steal personal data. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- The locations of emergency shelters meant to provide protection from North Korean missiles and artillery fire are now searchable on South Korean navigation apps, according to the Ministry of the Interior and Safety. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

International:

- The House Committee on Armed Services is seeking to encourage trilateral defense cooperation between South Korea, Japan and the United States, a committee report showed Monday. In a report on the 2024 National Defense Authorization Act, the committee also stressed the need for the U.S. to develop and deploy more advanced missile defense systems against North Korea's evolving missile threat. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea and Japan held working-level meetings multiple times last month over Pyongyang's past abductions of Japanese nationals, a South Korean newspaper reported Monday, citing informed sources. ([The Japan Times](#))
- In a posh British accent, the 11-year-old Korean girl in school uniform smiled for the camera and complained about the summer heat, saying she wanted to eat some flavored shaved ice, a delicious treat sold right in front of her school. The innocent-looking vlogs, and others like them, are meant to promote North Korea and soften its image, experts and South Korean officials say. Deemed a soft form of propaganda, the videos were blocked in South Korea starting June 5, at the request of the National Intelligence Service, which said they "are part of North Korea's psychological warfare against South Korea." (Han Do Hyun, Lee Jeong Eun, Cho Jinwoo, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- China's top diplomat has urged Japan and South Korea to foster a sense of "strategic autonomy" from the West and cooperate with Beijing to "revitalize Asia," amid rising tensions between China and the two neighboring American allies. (Nectar Gan, [CNN](#))

[Translation] China's 'Anti-Espionage Law' to Take Effect: Crisis for North Korean Refugee Rescues

The Chinese government will soon implement a new "anti-espionage law" that significantly expands the definition of espionage and the scope of activities that are covered by the law. According to reporter Jamin Anderson, this anti-espionage law will make it more difficult to support and rescue North Korean refugees in China.

China's revised anti-espionage law will take effect at the beginning of July.

The revised anti-espionage law significantly expands the definition of espionage, the law's scope of application, and the authority of internal security agencies to conduct investigations.

In particular, there are concerns that this law could be abused. It states that this law applies in instances when China's national security is threatened, even if the activities in question are aimed at another country.

Due to the law, there is room to interpret North Korea's activities as a threat to Chinese security.

The law will also apply to researching North Korean issues in China, filming in the border area between North Korea and China, and journalists' coverage activities.

The biggest concern is the effect on rescuing North Korean refugees.

The safety of North Korean defectors in China is already under direct threat due to China's artificial intelligence (AI) facial recognition technology. The situation is expected to worsen if the revised anti-espionage law is applied.

On June 23rd, a source familiar with the situation in the Sino-North Korean border region told *Radio Free Asia* that the activities of missionary groups helping North Korean defectors in the region have already been significantly reduced.

According to this source, "it is becoming more difficult for missionaries to help North Korean refugees move to southern China. And supporting North Korean defectors can't be done unless you stick your neck out. You can't do religious activities. Surveillance cameras are installed in front of the church, and we can't even display the cross. There would be a life-threatening risk if one were doing something wrong."

A Korean missionary who worked in Dandong, Liaoning Province, located in the Sino-North Korean border region, is currently staying in South Korea to avoid China's heightened surveillance.

According to this source, "even foreigners' mobile phones could be checked on the street. If they discover that Kakao Talk [a South Korean mobile messaging app] is installed on your smartphone, then you could be considered a spy."

In particular, China is approaching the issue of North Korean refugees as a national security issue rather than a human rights issue, so rescuing North Korean defectors could be considered an act of espionage.

Dong-Wan Kang, a professor of North Korean studies at Dong-A University, stated that if the law is implemented, it will directly threaten North Korean refugees support activities and research on North Korea.

Professor Kang has been studying North Korea by frequently visiting the North Korea-China border area for several years. After being denied entry by the Chinese government in 2019, Professor Kang continues to conduct research in Russia.

Professor Kang said that "China currently does not recognize North Korean escapees as refugees. This means that groups or individuals who help or rescue North Korean defectors potentially can be regarded as anti-espionage criminals. If this law goes into effect, it will not simply stop the refusal of

entry or forced deportation, but will be subject to espionage charges under Chinese law, which will pose a threat to personal safety..."

Professor Kang added that China's strong response, which is aimed at protecting its national interests and protecting its security, can be attributed to the close alliance between North Korea and China.

Greg Scarlatoiu, the Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), an American nonprofit organization, said that this law presents another crisis for North Korean refugees seeking to escape China, following COVID-19 and the introduction of AI facial recognition systems.

Scarlatoiu said that "this revision of the law shows that the oppression under Xi Jinping is worsening. Due to this law, the activities of North Korean refugee support and rescue organizations will be reduced, making an already harsh environment for these refugees even worse. The U.S. Congress is paying great attention to the North Korean human rights issue in China. We must find a way to help save North Korean refugees."

Editor Park Jeong-Woo, Web Team Lee Kyung-Ha

Translated by Narae Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Jody Chen, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526122106/https://mailchi.mp/2151fdb21296/hrnk-news-items-0704-2023>

Wednesday, July 5, 2023

Unification Ministry to slash budgets of bodies promoting inter-Korean projects

In South Korea:

[Court rejects another gov't application to deposit compensation for forced labor victims](#) (Yonhap, 07/05/2023)

[North Korean satellite wasn't advanced enough to conduct reconnaissance from space, Seoul says](#) (AP News, 07/04/2023)

[Rival parties show mixed reactions to IAEA's report on Fukushima water release plan](#) (Yonhap, 07/05/2023)

[S. Korea to launch intense inspection into seafood imports on Fukushima concerns](#) (Yonhap, 07/05/2023)

[South Korean military says salvaged parts of North's spy satellite have no military utility](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/05/2023)

[S. Korea marks 3rd year since Korean War hero Gen. Paik's death](#) (Yonhap, 07/05/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Unification Ministry to slash budgets of bodies promoting inter-Korean projects](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/05/2023)

International:

[Group of foreign defense attaches holds 1st event commemorating 2002 inter-Korean naval clash](#) (Yonhap, 07/05/2023)

[Inaugural session of S. Korea-U.S. Nuclear Consultative Group likely to be held in Seoul this month](#) (Yonhap, 07/05/2023)

[Japan and South Korea arranging summit to be held in Lithuania](#) (The Japan Times, 07/05/2023)

[Korea, China hold first high-level meeting in months](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/05/2023)

[Science should dictate planned release of Japan's Fukushima treated radioactive water: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 07/05/2023)

[S. Korean, U.S. Army troops to stage combined drills in California desert next month](#) (Yonhap, 07/05/2023)

In South Korea:

- A regional district court turned down Wednesday a government application to deposit compensation for two late forced labor victims under Japan's 1910-1945 colonization of the Korean Peninsula, citing opposition from the victims' surviving families. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- Rival parties on Tuesday showed mixed reactions to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s report that concluded Japan's plan to discharge water from the crippled Fukushima nuclear plant meets international safety standards. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea will conduct an "unprecedentedly intense" special inspection into the marking of country of origin for imported seafood products amid concerns over Japan's planned release of contaminated water from its crippled nuclear power plant, the oceans ministry said Wednesday. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))
- Senior government and military officials and other citizens attended ceremonies unveiling a statue of Korean War hero Gen. Paik Sun-yup and marking the third anniversary of his death in a southern county on Wednesday. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- The satellite North Korea failed to put into orbit wasn't advanced enough to conduct military reconnaissance from space as it claimed, South Korea's military said Wednesday after retrieving and studying the wreckage. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- The South Korean military has completed salvaging parts of the North Korean spy satellite that crashed into the Yellow Sea, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said Wednesday. (Sohn Dong-joo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The Unification Ministry began downsizing key organizations supporting inter-Korean cooperation projects, including one advocating for the currently shuttered Kaesong

industrial Complex, according to various sources. (Sarah Kim, Kang Tae-hwa, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- A group of foreign defense attaches on Wednesday hosted their first-ever event commemorating the sacrifices of South Korean troops in a deadly 2002 inter-Korean naval skirmish, the Navy said. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Deputy Foreign Minister Choi Yong-sam met with Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong in Beijing on Tuesday, marking the first high-level meeting between the two countries in months since relations frayed over several diplomatic disputes. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Japan and South Korea are arranging a summit meeting for next week in Lithuania, a government source said Wednesday, with Tokyo seeking to gain understanding from its neighbors on its planned release of treated water from the disaster-hit Fukushima nuclear power plant. ([The Japan Times](#))
- South Korean and U.S. Army troops will stage a joint four-week exercise in a desert in California next month, officials said Wednesday, as the allies seek to bolster their combined operational capabilities. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the United States are likely to hold the inaugural session of the newly established Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG) in Seoul later this month, officials said Wednesday. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. State Department expressed its support Tuesday for the planned release of treated wastewater from Japan's crippled Fukushima nuclear power plant, insisting "science should dictate" the planned release. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Narae Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526122328/https://mailchi.mp/0cea21dafla7/hrnk-news-items-unification-ministry-to-slash-budgets-of-bodies-promoting-inter-korean-projects>

Thursday, July 6, 2023

North Korean Human Rights and the Future of the U.S.-ROK Alliance

Top News:

[North Korean Human Rights and the Future of the U.S.-ROK Alliance](#) (HRNK Insider, 07/05/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea discusses economic plans in follow-up measures after key party meeting](#) (Yonhap, 07/06/2023)

In South Korea:

[Regional restrictions to be imposed on E-9 visa holders](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/06/2023)
[South Koreans given location of nearest bomb shelter on their smartphone map apps](#) (The Telegraph, 07/06/2023)
[S. Korea identifies remains of another Korean War soldier](#) (Yonhap, 07/06/2023)
[Veteran actor named special adviser for culture, sports and tourism](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/06/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Ambassador for North's human rights likely to be reappointed](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/06/2023)
[Dossier highlights moments leading to 1st inter-Korean agreement signed after Koreas' division](#) (Yonhap, 07/06/2023)
[South Korea to install anti-drone systems to defend against North Korean threats](#) (NK News, 07/06/2023)

International:

[Russia delivers 1K tons of wheat flour to North Korea in June: Customs agency](#) (NK News, 07/06/2023)
[UN food program projects threefold rise in funding needs for aid to North Korea](#) (NK News, 07/06/2023)
[Yoon to depart for six-day trip for NATO summit, Poland visit](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/06/2023)

Top News:

- Greg Scarlatoiu, HRNK's Executive Director, discusses the future of the U.S.-R.O.K. alliance saying, "To bring change to the Korean Peninsula, we must find out and tell the truth about the Kim regime's crimes against humanity. It is essential to create a coalition of like-minded governments, civil society organizations, and international institutions to put an end to a human rights catastrophe that simply cannot be tolerated in the 21st century." (Greg Scarlatoiu, [HRNK Insider](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea held a Cabinet meeting earlier this week to review economic plans in the first half of the year and discuss follow-up measures for policy goals put forth in a recent key party meeting, state media said Thursday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- E-9 visa holders will only be able to change workplaces within the same region starting from September, according to the Office for Government Policy Coordination on Wednesday. (Lee Tae-hee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Development follows confusion after false air raid alert showed many civilians did not know what to do in an emergency. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- South Korea's military has identified the remains of another soldier killed during the 1950-53 Korean War, some five years after their discovery at a former battle site, the defense ministry said Thursday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

- President Yoon Suk Yeol appointed veteran actor Yoo In-chon, a former culture minister, as his special adviser for culture, sports and tourism Thursday, said his office. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Lee Shin-hwa, South Korea's ambassador for international cooperation on North Korean human rights, will likely be reinstated for another year as the Yoon Suk Yeol administration looks to strengthen its stance on the issue. (Park Hyun-ju, Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's unification ministry on Thursday unveiled newly declassified documents offering a glimpse into what led to the July 4 joint communique in 1972, the first agreement signed between South and North Korea since the division of the peninsula. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea is preparing to install new defense equipment to protect major government facilities and military bases from North Korean drones, according to the Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA) on Thursday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- A Far East Russian region delivered over one thousand tons of wheat flour to North Korea in June, according to the Russian government, the latest in a series of shipments publicized since earlier this year. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The U.N. food program estimates that it will need over three times more funding for projects in North Korea over the next six months, anticipating an increase in its activity if the DPRK ends its COVID-19 border controls. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol will embark next Monday on a six-day trip to Lithuania for the NATO summit and Poland for an official visit, the presidential office said Thursday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Abbigail Thacker, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526122556/https://mailchi.mp/1cf16b3e6b0b/hrnk-news-items-0704-12236349>

Friday, July 7, 2023

Can the UN Secretary-General Help the 2,000 North Koreans Detained in China?

Top News:

[Can the UN Secretary-General Help the 2,000 North Koreans Detained in China?](#) (*The Diplomat*, 07/05/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korea arrests three merchants for selling smuggled memory cards](#) (Radio Free Asia, 07/07/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea publishes hard copies of English report on N. Korea's human rights](#) (Yonhap, 07/07/2023)

[S. Korea held regular defense drills around Dokdo last month](#) (Yonhap, 07/07/2023)

International:

[Amcham hosts luncheon to commemorate Korea-U.S. alliance's 70th anniversary](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/07/2023)

[South Korea says Japan's water release plan meets standards](#) (Reuters, 07/07/2023)

[FM to attend annual ASEAN-hosted meetings in Jakarta next week](#) (Yonhap, 07/07/2023)

[IAEA chief set to arrive in S. Korea to discuss agency report on Fukushima water discharge](#) (Yonhap, 07/07/2023)

[S. Korea-U.S. alliance made 'miracle' of Korea possible: U.S. general](#) (Yonhap, 07/07/2023)

Top News:

- Up to 2,000 North Koreans are currently held in Chinese detention centers, facing forced repatriation to North Korea where they will be severely punished. As international appeals are grow for their release, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres can use his influence to bring attention to the issue, remind China of its obligations under international law, and work towards a diplomatic solution involving a contact group of states to protect the North Koreans and prevent their return. (Roberta Cohen, [The Diplomat](#))

In North Korea:

- In Hyesan, North Korea, three merchants were apprehended by authorities for covertly selling SD cards, sparking concerns among local traders that a wider crackdown will follow. With North Korea's strict restrictions on the internet and foreign media, individuals in the country depend on smuggled SD cards and USB thumb drives from China to gain glimpses of the outside world. (Moon Sung Hui, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In South Korea:

- The South Korean unification ministry has printed an English version of its report on North Korea's human rights situation to increase international awareness. The publication is based on the government's annual report on human rights violations in North Korea, originally released in March as part of President Yoon Suk Yeol's firm stance towards the North. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- Last month, South Korea conducted regular military drills near its easternmost islets of Dokdo, aiming to enhance defense capabilities and protect its territory, people, and property. These drills have been held twice a year since 2003 and have recently taken place on a smaller scale under the Yoon Suk Yeol administration, mobilizing Navy and Coast Guard vessels. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The American Chamber of Commerce in Korea (Amcham) said on Friday that it hosted a special luncheon to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the Korea-U.S. alliance. (Shin Ha-nee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea has announced its acceptance of Japan's decision to release treated radioactive water from the Fukushima nuclear plant, stating that it adheres to global safety standards and respects the approval from the UN's nuclear watchdog, despite concerns from South Korean citizens. (Hyunsu Yim and Soo-Hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))
- South Korean Foreign Minister Park Jin is set to participate in the upcoming ASEAN-led meetings in Jakarta, Indonesia, including the South Korea-ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting, the ASEAN plus three meeting, the East Asia Summit (EAS), and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). He may also engage in separate bilateral discussions with the Chinese and Japanese foreign ministers during the event. Observers are closely monitoring whether North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son-hui will also attend. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- The Chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Rafael Mariano Grossi, is set to visit South Korea to discuss the analysis of the UN watchdog's safety review of Japan's proposed release of treated radioactive water from the Fukushima plant. Grossi's visit follows the IAEA's conclusion that Japan's plan aligns with international safety standards, and he is expected to meet with South Korea's Nuclear Safety and Security Commission head and Foreign Minister during his three-day visit. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- Speaking at a luncheon event commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Korea-US alliance, Lt. Gen. Willard M. Bursleson, commander of the Eighth U.S. Army in South Korea, highlighted the significance of maintaining military readiness for regional stability and emphasized that the enduring security alliance between the United States and South Korea. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gabrielle Drinkwine, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526122808/https://mailchi.mp/4ad2d8f4cc21/hrnk-news-items-0704-12236361>

Saturday, July 8, 2023

Blinken will raise N. Korean issues at upcoming ARF meetings

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un visits Kumsusan palace to mark Kim Il Sung's death anniversary](#) (NK News, 07/08/2023)

[North Korea Anniversary](#) (HJ News, 07/08/2023)

International:

[Blinken will raise N. Korean issues at upcoming ARF meetings](#) (Yonhap, 07/08/2023)

[First meeting of NCG to be held in Seoul this month, involving senior officials](#) (Yonhap, 07/08/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un paid a visit to the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun, the resting place of the nation's founder Kim Il Sung, to commemorate the 29th anniversary of his death, state media reported on Saturday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Citizens and Korean People's Army (KPA) service personnel visit the statues of their late leaders Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il on Mansu Hill in Pyongyang, North Korea Saturday, July 8, 2023, on the occasion of the 29th anniversary of the death of former President Kim Il Sung. (Cha Song Ho, [HJ News](#))

International:

- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken will raise issues with regard to nuclear and missile threats posed by North Korea when he attends a regional forum next week but has no immediate plans to meet with North Korean officials there, a ranking state department official said Friday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The inaugural meeting of the new Nuclear Consultative Group between South Korea and the United States will be held later this month in Seoul, Seoul's presidential office said Saturday. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ava Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526123012/https://mailchi.mp/d9cf77f988e3/hrnk-news-items-0704-12236378>

Sunday, July 9, 2023

For North Koreans in China, Seeking Freedom Is More Perilous Than Ever

In North Korea:

[North Korea Is Training Children to Target 'American Bastards' With Bombs](#) (Wall Street Journal, 07/08/2023)

International:

[For North Koreans in China, Seeking Freedom Is More Perilous Than Ever](#) (New York Times, 07/09/2023)

[N. Korea's mask imports from China plunge 78 pct in May](#) (Yonhap, 07/09/2023)

[North Korea slams IAEA for Fukushima water approval](#) (The Korea Times, 07/09/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has been promoting technology and science ambitions among children, including increasing their interest in missiles and bombs, training them to target Americans as part of exercises. (Dasl Yoon, [Wall Street Journal](#))

International:

- Recent efforts to help people escape Kim Jong-un's regime via China have been thwarted by digital surveillance, profiteering and the pandemic. (Choe Sang-Hun, [New York Times](#))
- North Korea's mask imports from China tumbled 78 percent in May from a month earlier, trade data showed Sunday, as it appears to have recently eased strict COVID-19 restrictions. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Sunday slammed the United Nations' nuclear watchdog for approving Japan's plan to discharge treated water from the Fukushima nuclear plant. ([The Korea Times](#))

Prepared by Nate Bent, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526123250/https://mailchi.mp/38218dbc0e27/hrnk-news-items-0704-12236383>

Monday, July 10, 2023

N. Korea slams U.S. reconnaissance aircraft for intruding in airspace; Defectors open up about hopes, concerns at Hanawon

In North Korea:

[More North Koreans find freedom as China eases border restrictions](#) (*The Korea Times*, 07/10/2023)
[North Korea accuses Japan of bribing IAEA to approve Fukushima water discharge](#) (NK News, 07/10/2023)

[N. Korean defectors say ordeal in China worsened due to COVID-19 pandemic](#) (*Yonhap*, 07/10/2023)

[N. Korea's food crisis is still grave despite imports from China: unification minister](#) (*Yonhap*, 07/10/2023)

[N. Korea slams U.S. plan to send strategic nuclear submarine to Korean Peninsula](#) (*Yonhap*, 07/10/2023)

[N. Korea slams U.S. reconnaissance aircraft for intruding in airspace](#) (*Yonhap*, 07/10/2023)

[North Korea threatens to shoot down US reconnaissance planes](#) (NK News, 07/10/2023)

[North Korea warns it may shoot down US spy planes violating its airspace](#) (*Reuters*, 07/10/2023)

In South Korea:

[Ambassador for North's human rights likely to be reappointed](#) (*Korea JoongAng Daily*, 07/10/2023)

[Amid declining number of NK defectors, Hanawon turns to vocational training](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 07/10/2023)

[Defectors open up about hopes, concerns at Hanawon](#) (*Korea JoongAng Daily*, 07/10/2023)

[Seoul warns heavy rain to hit North Korea, calls for monitoring water levels](#) (NK News, 07/10/2023)

[South rejects North's allegations about U.S. spy flights](#) (*Korea JoongAng Daily*, 07/10/2023)

[Yoon begins 6-day trip to Lithuania, Poland seeking strategic cooperation](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 07/10/2023)

[Yoon says int'l community needs to show resolve to deter N.K. nuclear program](#) (*Yonhap*, 07/10/2023)

International:

[US and South Korea to hold first Nuclear Consultative Group meeting next week](#) (NK News, 07/10/2023)

In North Korea:

- As the COVID-19 pandemic prompted countries around the world to tighten their borders, the number of North Korean escapees arriving in South Korea plummeted from more than 1,000 a year to 63 in 2021 and has remained at that level since. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea has accused Japan of bribing the U.N. nuclear agency to allow the discharge of contaminated water from the Fukushima nuclear power plant, aligning with China and some other Pacific nations that claim the plan poses risks to the environment and human health. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Three North Korean defectors who recently arrived in South Korea after living on the run in China said their ordeal significantly worsened due to strict restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, offering a rare glimpse of how they went through hardships during the period. (Kim Soo-yeon, Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's food prices have stabilized to some degree, aided by grain imports from China, but the secretive regime still faces a serious food crisis, South Korea's unification minister said Monday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea denounced on Monday a plan by the United States to send a strategic nuclear submarine to South Korea, warning it "may incite the worst crisis of nuclear conflict in practice." (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Monday accused U.S. spy aircraft of intruding in its airspace recently, warning that there is no guarantee that such aircraft will not be shot down, state media reported. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea threatened to shoot down U.S. reconnaissance planes flying off its east coast in a statement Monday, accusing Washington of raising tensions with such flights and plans to send a nuclear submarine to South Korea. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea accused the United States on Monday of violating its airspace by conducting surveillance flights and warned that, while Pyongyang was exercising restraint, such flights may be shot down. (Jack Kim, [Reuters](#))

In South Korea:

- Lee Shin-hwa, South Korea's ambassador for international cooperation on North Korean human rights, will likely be reinstated for another year as the Yoon Suk Yeol administration looks to strengthen its stance on the issue. (Park Hyun-ju, Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Hanawon has proactively expanded its primary role by offering a diverse array of vocational training programs in order to empower North Korean defectors and equip them with the skills necessary to pursue in-demand careers as baristas, estheticians, manicurists and pet groomers. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- From the outside, Hanawon appears to be a school like any other, with its gable-roof, red-brick buildings perched on a verdant countryside road about an hour's drive south of Seoul. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- Seoul has warned that heavy rainfall will hit North Korea this week, a development that experts say poses a threat to the DPRK's already dire food situation. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea's military dismissed North Korean allegations that U.S. surveillance flights violated its airspace. (Lee Keun-pyung, Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol kicked off a six-day trip to Lithuania and Poland to discuss an array of issues including military cooperation, North Korea's nuclear deterrence measures and the controversial discharge of contaminated wastewater from the wrecked Fukushima nuclear power plant in Japan. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol has said the international community needs to show that its resolve to deter North Korea's nuclear weapons program is stronger than the regime's desire to develop such weapons, according to an interview published Monday. ([Yonhap](#))

International:

- The U.S and South Korea will hold the inaugural meeting of their new Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG) next week in Seoul, according to the ROK presidential office. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526123506/https://mailchi.mp/af19618f7121/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-slams-us-reconnaissance-aircraft-for-intruding-in-airspace-defectors-open-up-about-hopes-concerns-at-hanawon>

Tuesday, July 11, 2023

Kim Yo Jong claims DPRK aircraft forced 'intruding' US spy planes to retreat; China urged not to repatriate North Korean refugees

In North Korea:

[Kim's sister warns U.S. military will face 'very critical flight' in case of 'repeated intrusion'](#) (Yonhap, 07/11/2023)

[Kim Yo Jong claims DPRK aircraft forced 'intruding' US spy planes to retreat](#) (NK News, 07/11/2023)

[N. Korea denounces U.S. decision to supply Ukraine with cluster bombs](#) (Yonhap, 07/11/2023)

[North Korea is priming the next generation of weapons makers](#) (The Telegraph, 07/10/2023)

[North Korean foreign ministry website goes down for 7 hours after likely attack](#) (NK News, 07/11/2023)

[North Korean police complain to Pyongyang about uncooperative state security agents](#) (Radio Free Asia, 07/10/2023)

In South Korea:

[Hidden 'treasure' helps NIS crack spy's cache of secrets](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/11/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[JCS says North's spy satellite had 'no military utility'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/11/2023)
[N. Korea seen pushing to define its ties with S. Korea as 'state-to-state' relationship](#) (Yonhap, 07/11/2023)

International:

[China urged not to repatriate North Korean refugees](#) (The Korea Times, 07/11/2023)
[Cooperation with S. Korea critical to U.S. national security interests: JCS chief nominee](#) (Yonhap, 07/11/2023)
[Japan and China likely to replace envoys to Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/11/2023)
[Korea, NATO upgrade partnership, stress security cooperation](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/11/2023)
[S. Korea, NATO establish new partnership for cooperation in 11 areas](#) (Yonhap, 07/11/2023)
[S. Korea, Saudia Arabia hold senior-level defense talks in Riyadh](#) (Yonhap, 07/11/2023)
[U.S. urges N. Korea to halt escalatory actions following EEZ violation accusation](#) (Yonhap, 07/11/2023)
[Yoon, Norway PM discuss cooperation in renewable energy, defense](#) (Yonhap, 07/11/2023)

In North Korea:

- The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un warned Tuesday U.S. spy jets will face a "very critical flight" in case of a repeated illegal intrusion into the North's exclusive economic zone (EEZ), threatening to take military action. (Shim Sun-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- Kim Yo Jong warned late Monday that a "shocking incident" will "inevitably" occur if U.S. spy planes operate in North Korean airspace east of the peninsula, claiming that the DPRK "scrambled" aircraft the same day and forced the U.S. to "retreat." (Chad O'Carroll, Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's foreign minister on Tuesday urged the United States to immediately scrap its decision to provide Ukraine with controversial cluster bombs, calling it a "dangerous criminal act to bring a new calamity to the world." (Shim Sun-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea is ordering children to collect scrap metal that can be used in weapons manufacturing. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- North Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs website went offline for about seven hours on Saturday, NK Pro has confirmed, following what one expert identified as a wider internet blackout due to a likely attack on DPRK web infrastructure. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Police in North Korea's Ryanggang province have sent a formal complaint to the central government after their coworkers, agents of the ministry of state security, refused to share data on criminal cases, officials in the province told Radio Free Asia. (Ahn Chang Gyu, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In South Korea:

- For weeks, counterintelligence officials at South Korea's spy agency struggled to crack a tiny adversary — a locked USB stick that they believed was the key to proving that a South Korean labor activist followed orders from the North to foment unrest in the South. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The military spy satellite launched by North Korea in May had “no military utility,” Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said as they revealed Wednesday that the South Korean military had concluded its mission to retrieve wreckage from the failed launch. The announcement by the JCS marks the end of the 36-day operation to salvage debris from the North's Malligyong-1 satellite and Chollima-1 space launch vehicle (SLV), which crashed into the Yellow Sea shortly after takeoff. (Michael Lee, Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea's latest reference to South Korea by using the South's full name, the Republic of Korea (ROK), appears aimed at making official a shift in its policy into dealing with inter-Korean ties as a state-to-state relationship, observers said. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- "We have to continue to raise the issue (of compulsory repatriation) and try to align with likeminded governments throughout the world," Lee Jung-hoon, new chief of the Unification Future Planning Committee and former ambassador-at-large on North Korean human rights, said during a roundtable discussion, titled "2023 Report on North Korean Human Rights," at the Press Center in Seoul, Tuesday. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- Cooperation with South Korea is becoming more and more critical to the United States' national security interests, the nominee for chairman of U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said Tuesday, also highlighting the importance of trilateral cooperation with Japan in dealing with threats posed by North Korea. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- As the diplomatic tides shift on the Korean Peninsula, the Japanese and Chinese ambassadors to Korea will likely be replaced in the second half of this year. (Park Hyun-ju, Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg agreed to upgrade the partnership between South Korea and the Atlantic alliance. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on Tuesday established a new bilateral partnership for cooperation in 11 areas ranging from antiterrorism and nonproliferation to emerging technologies and cyber defense, the presidential office said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and Saudi Arabia have held vice ministerial defense talks in Riyadh to discuss ways to boost arms industry cooperation, Seoul's defense ministry said Tuesday. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.S. state department spokesperson called on North Korea to refrain from escalatory actions on Monday, hours after North Korea accused the United States of violating North Korean airspace within their exclusive economic zone (EEZ). (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol met with Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store on Tuesday and discussed bilateral cooperation in renewable energy and defense, among other sectors, the presidential office said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Kaylee Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526123710/https://mailchi.mp/28f1da85e198/hrnk-news-items-kim-yo-jong-claims-dpr-k-aircraft-forced-intruding-us-spy-planes-to-retreat-china-urged-not-to-repatriate-north-korean-refugees>

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

In Search of the Ordinary: Everyday Life in North Korea

Top News:

[In Search of the Ordinary: Everyday Life in North Korea](#) (HRNK YPWP, 07/11/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea fires ICBM, raises tensions after U.S. spy plane accusations](#) (Yonhap, 07/12/2023)

[N. Korea fires ICBM ahead of Yoon-Kishida summit at NATO](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/12/2023)

[North Korea fires ballistic missile into East Sea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/12/2023)

[North Korea fires intercontinental ballistic missile after threatening US](#) (BBC, 07/12/2023)

[North Korea fires intercontinental ballistic missile into waters near Japan after threatening US](#) (CNN, 07/12/2023)

[North Korea Fires Long-Range Ballistic Missile](#) (VOA, 07/12/2023)

[North Korea fires long-range ballistic missile toward East Sea: Seoul](#) (NK News, 07/12/2023)

[North Korea launches intercontinental ballistic missile into sea after warnings to U.S.](#) (UPI, 07/12/2023)

[North launches long-range missile day after threatening 'shocking incident'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/12/2023)

In South Korea:

[Calls grow for South to get tough on deadbeat North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/12/2023)

[Yoon says North will face consequences for missile launches](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/12/2023)

International:

[Cooperation with S. Korea critical to U.S. national security interests: JCS chief nominee](#) (Yonhap, 07/12/2023)

[First lady visits Korean language institute in Lithuania](#) (Yonhap, 07/12/2023)

[FM to rally support against NK at ASEAN Forum](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/12/2023)

[N. Korean accusation of airspace violation unfounded: State Dept.](#) (Yonhap, 07/12/2023)

[N. Korea, China vow stronger ties on treaty-signing anniversary](#) (Yonhap, 07/12/2023)

[North Korea fires ICBM as South Korea, Japan leaders meet at NATO](#) (Reuters, 07/12/2023)

[North Korea ICBM Had Longest Flight at 74 Minutes, Says Tokyo](#) (VOA, 07/12/2023)

[Nuke envoys of S. Korea, U.S., Japan strongly denounce N. Korea's ICBM test](#) (Yonhap, 07/12/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. will continue to strengthen alliance to counter N. Korean threat: Amb. Cho](#) (Yonhap, 07/12/2023)

[U.S. condemns N. Korea's ICBM test, calls on Pyongyang to engage in dialogue](#) (Yonhap, 07/12/2023)

[Yoon decries NK provocations, urges stronger security with NATO](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/12/2023)

[Yoon holds emergency NSC meeting in Lithuania over N.K. missile launch](#) (Yonhap, 07/12/2023)

[Yoon pitches tighter security cooperation between AP4 and NATO](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/12/2023)

Top News:

- Understanding what ordinary life—or what may be considered ordinary—in North Korea is a challenge. A major difficulty in investigating “normality” is identifying the groups that can be considered ordinary. One North Korean escapee explains that 10% of the population can be considered upper-class, a further 10% middle-class, and the remaining 80% poor. However, there are groups outside of this 80% that may also be considered relatively “ordinary.” This includes those who do not live the luxurious lifestyle of the top elites, but do not experience the serious poverty that is common in the rural areas of the country’s northern provinces. (Daniel McDowall, [HRNK YPWP](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea fired an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) into the East Sea on Wednesday, the South Korean military said, after the recalcitrant regime warned of military action over U.S. spy aircraft operations earlier this week. (Song Sang-ho, Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea fired a long-range ballistic missile off its eastern coast toward Japan on Wednesday morning, when the leaders of South Korea and Japan were set to hold a separate summit later in the day on the sidelines of a NATO summit. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea fired a ballistic missile into the East Sea Wednesday, according to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea has fired a suspected intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), Japanese and South Korean officials report. (Joel Guinto, [BBC](#))
- North Korea on Wednesday fired an intercontinental ballistic missile that flew for more than 70 minutes, Japan’s Defense Ministry said, marking a potential new round of confrontation with Washington and its allies. (Brad Lendon, Seo Yoon-jung, [CNN](#))
- North Korea has fired a single long-range ballistic missile off its east coast, according to South Korea’s military, as leaders of both Japan and South Korea are in Lithuania for NATO summit meetings. (Eunice Kim, [VOA](#)) North Korea fired one “long-range ballistic missile” toward the East Sea (Sea of Japan) on Wednesday morning, according to South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). (Colin Zwirko, Kim Jeong-min, [NK News](#))
- North Korea fired an intercontinental ballistic missile into the sea between Korea and Japan on Wednesday, Seoul and Tokyo said, days after threatening the United States over alleged reconnaissance flights. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- North Korea fired what appeared to be a long-range ballistic missile into the East Sea on Wednesday, according to South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- A conservative lawmaker on Wednesday called on the next unification minister to pursue more “forceful” ways to make Pyongyang cough up more than \$1 billion in unfulfilled debt obligations to Seoul. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol warned North Korea that there will be consequences for its provocations. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- Cooperation with South Korea is becoming more and more critical to the United States' national security interests, the nominee for chairman of U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said Tuesday, also highlighting the importance of trilateral cooperation with Japan in dealing with threats posed by North Korea. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- First lady Kim Keon Hee on Tuesday visited a Korean language institute in Lithuania and promised to help increase student exchanges between the two countries, the presidential office said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- Foreign Minister Park Jin will seek to rally allies and countries to step up efforts for North Korea's denuclearization at the ASEAN Regional Forum, the biggest security gathering in the region set to be held from Thursday to Friday in Jakarta, Indonesia. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea's claim that U.S. aircraft violated its airspace is unfounded, a state department spokesperson said Tuesday, calling on Pyongyang to stop its escalatory actions. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea and China have vowed to strengthen their relationship on the occasion of the 62nd anniversary of the two nations signing a friendship treaty, Pyongyang's state media said Wednesday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea fired an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) off its east coast on Wednesday, prompting U.S. condemnation, as well as from the leaders of South Korea and Japan who met on the sidelines of a NATO summit. (Josh Smith, Kantaro Komiya, Shin Hyon-hee, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea has fired a single long-range ballistic missile off its east coast, as leaders of Japan and South Korea are in Lithuania for NATO meetings and are due to hold a bilateral summit later Wednesday. (Eunice Kim, [VOA](#))
- The top nuclear envoys of South Korea, the United States and Japan "strongly" condemned North Korea's latest launch of a long-range missile during their phone talks on Wednesday, Seoul's foreign ministry said. (Yi Won-ju, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea will continue to deepen its cooperation with the United States to deal with North Korea's evolving nuclear and missile threats and respond to other regional and global challenges, South Korean Ambassador to the U.S. Cho Hyun-dong said Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States on Wednesday condemned North Korea's latest long-range ballistic missile test as a brazen violation of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions, while calling on Pyongyang to engage in serious dialogue. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol condemned North Korea's latest intercontinental ballistic missile launch and urged a stronger collective message from NATO in a summit held Wednesday in Vilnius, Lithuania. (Shin Ji-hye, Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol presided over an emergency National Security Council meeting in Lithuania following North Korea's ballistic missile launch, the presidential office said Wednesday. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol called on NATO's Indo-Pacific partners to establish a "strong collective security posture" in solidarity with the Atlantic alliance to respond to North Korea's nuclear and missile threats. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://mailchi.mp/4c927f2a8d02/hrnk-news-items-in-search-of-the-ordinary-everyday-life-in-north-korea>

Thursday, July 13, 2023

China's Waning Leverage Over SKorea Lessens Chances of Retaliation, Experts Say

Top News:

[China's Waning Leverage Over SKorea Lessens Chances of Retaliation Against THAAD, Experts Say](#) (VOA, 06/29/2023)

[Mongolia Forum: Peace and security in Northeast Asia through Korean unification](#) (The Korea Times, 07/04/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim vows to boost North Korea's nuclear capability after observing new long-range missile launch](#) (AP News, 07/13/2023)

[NK says ICBM firing a strong warning to S. Korea, US](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/13/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim vows 'stronger' offensive with successful launch of solid-fuel ICBM](#) (Yonhap, 07/13/2023)

[North Korea says it fired latest Hwasong-18 ICBM](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/13/2023)

[North Korea: What missiles does it have?](#) (BBC News, 07/13/2023)

[North Korea's latest ballistic missile is its most powerful yet](#) (The Washington Post, 07/13/2023)

[North Korea's newest smartphone 'Samtaesong 8' mirrors Samsung Galaxy phones](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/13/2023)

[Unknown to most, Kim Jong Un's sister has become the defiant voice against the US](#) (CNN, 07/13/2023)

[Watch: North Korean state TV shows latest missile launch](#) (BBC News, 07/12/2023)

[What are solid-fuel missiles, and why is North Korea developing them](#) (Reuters, 07/13/2023)

In South Korea:

[NIS seeks decree compensating for loss of power to probe North Korea spying](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/13/2023)

[N. Korea appears to ramp up threats to overcome 'unfavorable' situation: ministry](#) (Yonhap, 07/13/2023)

[North Korea seeing South Korea as separate nation 'worrying': defector-lawmaker](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/13/2023)

International:

[Campbell gives emergency security briefing to PPP delegation after N.K. missile launch](#) (Yonhap, 07/13/2023)

[North Korean missile launch 'risks destabilizing' the region, White House says](#) (Politico, 07/12/2023)

[North Korean student goes missing in Russian Far East in possible defection](#) (NK News, 07/13/2023)

[South Korea and NATO call for united front against North Korean nukes](#) (NK News, 07/12/2023)
[U.N. Security Council to hold meeting on N.K. missile launch](#) (Yonhap, 07/13/2023)

Top News:

- "China has less leverage now, and like-minded democracies in the free and open Indo-Pacific and throughout the world are in a much different position towards China than they were in 2017," said David Maxwell, vice president of the Center for Asia Pacific Strategy. "South Korea now has really started de-risking, and, in some ways, decoupling from China," he continued. (Christy Lee, [VOA](#))
- Since Mongolia transitioned from communism to democracy it has been quietly working behind the scenes as a peace builder serving as a convening location for numerous talks, dialogues, processes, workshops and forums. However, the "Mongolia Forum for Peace and Development in Northeast Asia and Korean Unification," held on June 23, is unique in that it advocates for a free and unified Korea as a path to peace and prosperity. (David Maxwell, [The Korea Herald](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed to further bolster his country's nuclear fighting capabilities as he supervised the second test flight of a new, powerful intercontinental ballistic missile designed to strike the mainland United States, state media reported Thursday. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- While admitting to launching the newly developed Hwasong-18 intercontinental ballistic missile, North Korea on Thursday said the latest missile test the day before was carried out to convey a "strong practical warning" to its adversaries. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea said Thursday it test-fired a Hwasong-18 solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) the previous day, with its leader Kim Jong-un threatening to take "stronger" military offensive to deter the United States and South Korea. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un oversaw the launch of a Hwasong-18 solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) on Wednesday, vowing his regime would continue its "military offensive" until South Korea and the United States admit "defeat." (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea has tested a variety of ballistic and cruise missiles in recent years. It's also tested hypersonic missiles, which can fly at several times the speed of sound and at low altitude to escape radar detection, as well as others launched from submarines. ([BBC News](#))
- The Hwasong-18 ICBM reached a height of more than 3,800 miles during its almost-vertical flight on Wednesday — twice as high as the first launch of this kind of missile in April and 16 times as high as the International Space Station. It flew for a record 74 minutes. (Min Joo Kim and Michelle Ye Hee Lee, [The Washington Post](#))
- A new North Korean smartphone bearing a resemblance to Samsung smartphones called the Samtaesong 8 was recently featured on the North's state-run Korean Central Television. (Park Soong-joo, [The Korea Herald](#))
- CNN's Will Ripley looks at how Kim Yo Jong, sister to Supreme Leader of North Korea Kim Jong Un, has become the voice behind North Korea's defiance and the mastermind behind the Kim Family brand. ([CNN](#))

- North Korean state media has broadcast a video showing the country's latest intercontinental ballistic missile test launch which happened on Wednesday morning. ([BBC News](#))
- North Korea's Hwasong-18 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), launched for the second time on Wednesday, uses solid-fuel technology, giving it the capability to launch with little preparation. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))

In South Korea:

- The National Intelligence Service of Korea is seeking steps to make up for the pending loss of its authority to investigate espionage and other crimes against the state, such as anti-communism investigations. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea appears to be intensifying provocations against South Korea and the United States in efforts to break through "unfavorable" circumstances, Seoul's unification ministry said Thursday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea may be beginning to officially re-define its relations with South Korea as two separate nations, according to Rep. Tae Yong-ho of the ruling People Power Party on Thursday. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- White House Indo-Pacific Coordinator Kurt Campbell gave an emergency security briefing to a delegation of South Korea's ruling People Power Party (PPP) in Washington after North Korea's latest long-range missile launch, lawmakers said. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))
- White House officials condemned North Korea for launching an intercontinental ballistic missile on Wednesday, saying it "needlessly raises tensions" and "risks destabilizing" the region. (Matt Berg, [Politico](#))
- A North Korean student attending a college in the Russia Far East has gone missing this month, according to a Russian nongovernmental organization, in a possible defection attempt following the disappearance of two other DPRK citizens in June. (Anton Sokolin, Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea's president called on NATO and several of the bloc's member states to oppose North Korea's nuclear and missile activities on Tuesday, while Seoul reached an agreement with the organization to boost cooperation on nonproliferation and cybersecurity. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) will hold an urgent meeting Thursday (New York time) to discuss North Korea's latest missile launch and South Korea will join the session as an observer, Seoul officials said. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526124149/https://mailchi.mp/f4327a88155e/hrnk-news-items-chinas-waning-leverage-over-skorea-lessens-chances-of-retaliation-experts-say>

Friday, July 14, 2023

North Korea's Propaganda Events Targeting Congress and U.S. Media

Top News:

[North Korean Stooges Step Into the Light | Opinion](#) (Newsweek, 07/14/2023)

[U.S. calls for UNSC action against N. Korean ICBM test, but China, Russia veto](#) (Yonhap, 07/14/2023)

In North Korea:

[Government crackdown makes smoking a drag for women in North Korea](#) (Radio Free Asia, 07/13/2023)

[Kim Yo Jong says 'unkind things' await US after it slams North Korea's ICBM test](#) (NK News, 07/14/2023)

[Kim's sister slams UNSC meeting over ICBM launch, defends it as exercise of self-defense](#) (Yonhap, 07/14/2023)

[North Korean man stabbed multiple times in Moscow, Russian media reports](#) (NK News, 07/14/2023)

[N.K. leader's sister vows to accelerate building "most overwhelming" nuclear deterrence against U.S.](#) (Yonhap, 07/14/2023)

In South Korea:

[South Korea asks China to play 'constructive role' against North's threats](#) (Reuters, 07/14/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea remains unresponsive to Seoul's request for prior notice on dam water discharge](#) (Yonhap, 07/14/2023)

International:

[Almost half of North Korea's population undernourished due to food shortages: UN](#) (NK News, 07/14/2023)

[Campbell gives emergency security briefing to ruling party delegation after NK missile launch](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/13/2023)

[North Korea warns of 'nuclear crisis' in rare comments at UN Security Council](#) (NK News, 07/14/2023)

[South Korea evasive about sharing North Korean satellite debris with UN experts](#) (NK News, 07/14/2023)

[S. Korea slaps more unilateral sanctions on N. Korea after ICBM launch](#) (Yonhap, 07/14/2023)

[S. Korean, U.S., Japanese FMs hold talks after N. Korea's ICBM launch](#) (Yonhap, 07/14/2023)

[Top diplomats of G7 condemn N. Korea's ICBM test, call for strong response by UNSC](#) (Yonhap, 07/14/2023)

Top News:

- On July 27 and 28 this year in Washington, D.C., some of the spirit of North Korea's "Month of Anti-U.S. Struggle" propaganda event, albeit in a camouflaged form, will be present in several events targeting Congress and the media. Taking the form of a lobbying campaign by self-styled advocates of "peace" on the Korean peninsula, these events in reality constitute an exercise in deception, and to some extent a foreign influence operation targeting Congress. As demonstrated by the extremist views of some its organizing/sponsoring

groups and their leaders, it is an effort by pro-North Korean forces, some of whom have connections to North Korean agents, to influence American policy to benefit the Kim Jong-un regime. Members of Congress and the media should be aware of this deception and conduct due diligence research into the extremist nature and appalling views of some of the groups/activists behind this campaign. (Lawrence Peck, [Newsweek](#))

- The United States and 12 other members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) unsuccessfully sought to hold North Korea accountable for its recent long-range missile test Thursday due to opposition from China and Russia. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean authorities are cracking down on women for smoking in public, saying they are promoting capitalist culture and extinguishing socialist morals, residents in the country told Radio Free Asia. But the same thinking does not seem to apply to men. The country's supreme leader, Kim Jong Un, for example, is a chain smoker often seen in state media holding a lit cigarette. (Son Hyemin, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- Kim Yo Jong warned on Friday that "very unkind things await the U.S." if it does not withdraw its "hostile policy" toward North Korea, justifying the country's latest long-range missile launch as in line with its "legitimate right to self-defense." The statement by the North Korean leader's powerful sister followed a U.N. Security Council meeting on Thursday, at which the DPRK's representative put forward similar arguments while the U.S. condemned the test of the Hwasong-18 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) the day before. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The powerful sister of the North Korean leader Kim Jong-un on Friday condemned the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for holding a meeting over the North's latest firing of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), calling it a legitimate exercise of self-defense. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- A North Korean man was reportedly stabbed multiple times in the Russian capital on Thursday, suffering serious injuries. In a statement, Russian police said that "a man with bodily injuries" was admitted to a hospital in southwestern Moscow at 2 a.m. on Thursday. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- N.K. leader's sister vows to accelerate building "most overwhelming" nuclear deterrence against U.S. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's Foreign Minister Park Jin on Friday called on China to play a "constructive role" in curbing North Korea's threats, after Pyongyang launched an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) this week. The remarks were made during a meeting with Chinese top diplomat Wang Yi on the sidelines of an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) meeting in Jakarta, where Park "strongly denounced" North Korea's ICBM launch. (Soo-hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea has not responded to South Korea's request for prior notice should it release water from its border dams to minimize damage from heavy rains, Seoul's unification ministry said Friday. Referring to an inter-Korean agreement on dam water discharge, the ministry publicly made the request in late June as the annual monsoon season arrived on the

Korean Peninsula. The ministry made the request through the press, as Pyongyang has remained unresponsive to daily routine calls via an inter-Korean liaison communication channel since April. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Almost 12 million North Koreans are undernourished, a new U.N. report shows, a massive surge of more than 1 million people compared to data from the same assessment last year. 45.5% of the North Korean population was undernourished between 2020 and 2022, according to the annual “The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World Report” published Wednesday, up from 41% from between 2019 and 2021. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- White House Indo-Pacific Coordinator Kurt Campbell gave an emergency security briefing to a delegation of South Korea's ruling People Power Party in Washington after North Korea's latest long-range missile launch, lawmakers said. (Kim Han-joo, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Tensions on the Korean Peninsula are reaching “a nuclear crisis” that exceeds the Cold War era, North Korea said Thursday in rare comments at the U.N. Security Council (UNSC). DPRK Ambassador Kim Song placed the blame solely on the U.S. for the current friction, warning that it was up to Washington to decide whether an “extreme situation” will occur. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea remains noncommittal on whether it will share recovered North Korean satellite debris with U.N. sanctions investigators, foreign ministry comments to NK News suggest, even though Seoul provided such access after a similar salvage operation in 2013. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- South Korea on Friday imposed unilateral sanctions on four North Korean individuals, including Pyongyang's top military officer, and three entities in response to the North's launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) earlier this week, Seoul's foreign ministry said. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- The top diplomats of South Korea, the United States and Japan held three-way talks Friday in Indonesia to discuss ways to deal with North Korea's evolving threats highlighted by this week's test-firing of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- Foreign ministers of the Group of 7 (G7) countries condemned North Korea's recent long-range missile test on Thursday, calling it a flagrant violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions. They also called for a “strong and unified response” by the U.N. Security Council (UNSC), hours before the 15-member council was set to hold an emergency meeting in New York to discuss the North's latest missile provocation. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gloria Guo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526124325/https://mailchi.mp/b6b274946ffc/hrnk-news-items-chinas-waning-leverage-over-skorea-lessens-chances-of-retaliation-experts-say-12236444>

Sunday, July 16, 2023

A North Korean defector captivated U.S. media. Some question her story

Top News:

[A North Korean defector captivated U.S. media. Some question her story](#) (*The Washington Post*, 07/16/2023)

International:

[U.S. concerned about N. Korea's additional missile launches, nuclear test: Sullivan](#) (*Yonhap*, 07/16/2023)

[US remains concerned North Korea will conduct another missile test](#) (*Reuters*, 07/16/2023)

[Yoon concludes weeklong trip to Europe, returns to Seoul](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 07/16/2023)

Top News:

- Megyn Kelly introduced a guest on a February episode of her podcast in February with an unusual caveat: “People have been coming for” Yeonmi Park, she said, by accusing the North Korean defector turned American conservative activist of telling false stories about her home country. (Will Sommer, [The Washington Post](#))

International:

- U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan on Sunday said Washington remains concerned about North Korea's additional intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launches and another nuclear test. (Ok Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))
- White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said on Sunday the Biden administration remains concerned that North Korea will move forward with another intercontinental ballistic missile test. ([Reuters](#))
- At the NATO summit in Vilnius, Yoon condemned North Korea's latest intercontinental ballistic missile launch, urging a stronger collective response from NATO. Yoon expressed his hope for continued close collaboration between South Korea and NATO in the future, aiming for the denuclearization of North Korea. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526124451/https://mailchi.mp/669437addc1b/hrnk-news-items-a-north-korean-defector-captivated-us-media-some-question-her-story>

Monday, July 17, 2023

Kim's sister calls U.S. 'delusional' for believing in N. Korea's disarmament

In North Korea:

[Kim's sister calls U.S. 'delusional' for believing in N. Korea's disarmament](#) (*Yonhap*, 07/17/2023)

[North Korea's Kim Yo Jong warns US against 'foolish act' that risks security](#) (Reuters, 07/17/2023)

International:

[Asean diplomats expected to criticize North's nuke program](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/17/2023)

[Competing drills in East Sea reflect growing bloc rivalry](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/17/2023)

[North Korean envoy faces criticism of latest ICBM launch at ASEAN forum](#) (NK News, 07/17/2023)

[US, ROK and Japan hold missile defense drills after North Korean ICBM launch](#) (NK News, 07/17/2023)

In North Korea

- The powerful sister of the North Korean leader Kim Jong-un warned Monday that it would be "delusional" for the United States to believe that Pyongyang's disarmament was possible. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's Kim Yo Jong, the powerful sister of leader Kim Jong Un, said on Monday that the United States should avoid what she called a foolish act that could put its stability at risk, state media KCNA reported. ([Reuters](#))

International:

- Top Asean diplomats are soon expected to release a statement heavily critical of North Korea's nuclear weapons program. (Park Hyun-ju, Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The waters surrounding the Korean Peninsula appear increasingly crowded with dueling military drills that highlight the hardening divide between the United States and its regional allies on one side, and China and Russia on the other. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea's envoy to Indonesia joined an annual conference of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) last week, where participants condemned Pyongyang's latest intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The U.S., South Korean and Japanese navies held a joint maritime missile defense exercise on Sunday aimed at countering North Korean missile threats, days after Pyongyang launched an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526124626/https://mailchi.mp/ba36907509c3/hrnk-news-items-a-north-korean-defector-captivated-us-media-some-question-her-story-12236461>

Tuesday, July 18, 2023

U.S. national crosses military demarcation line into N. Korea; Number of N. Korean defectors entering S. Korea nearly doubles in Q2

In North Korea:

[Major North Korean websites go offline after problem with Russian data link](#) (NK News, 07/18/2023)
[North Korean media issues rare rebuke of those who waste 'precious electricity'](#) (NK News, 07/18/2023)
[Number of N. Korean defectors entering S. Korea nearly doubles on-quarter in Q2](#) (Yonhap, 07/18/2023)

In South Korea:

[N. Korea is legally obligated to complete, verifiable denuclearization: Seoul foreign ministry](#) (Yonhap, 07/18/2023)
[Yoon says 1st NCG session will be important starting point for strong extended deterrence](#) (Yonhap, 07/18/2023)
[Yoon says N. Korea should be made to not dare use nuclear weapons](#) (Yonhap, 07/18/2023)

International:

[ARF statement reflects Indo-Pacific region's concerns over N. Korea: Seoul foreign ministry](#) (Yonhap, 07/18/2023)
[Nuclear-capable USS Kentucky ballistic missile submarine arrives in Busan: defense ministry](#) (Yonhap, 07/18/2023)
[Russia denies North Korean missile fell in economic zone, downplaying evidence](#) (NK News, 07/17/2023)
[S. Korea-U.S. nuclear consulting group aims to curb N. Korea's nuclear threat](#) (Yonhap, 07/18/2023)
[U.S. focused on threats posed by N. Korea rather than peace treaty: Krittenbrink](#) (Yonhap, 07/19/2023)
[U.S. national crosses military demarcation line into N. Korea: UN Command](#) (Yonhap, 07/18/2023)
[U.S. nuclear missile submarine visits South Korea for first time in four decades](#) (NK News, 07/18/2023)
[U.S. open to dialogue with N. Korea on 'any topic' including de-escalation steps: state dept.](#) (Yonhap, 07/18/2023)
[Yoon makes surprise visit to Ukraine](#) (Yonhap, 07/15/2023)

In North Korea:

- Major North Korean websites disappeared from the internet on Tuesday after losing access to Russian routers, outages that one expert said may also be connected to electricity shortages. The websites of the propaganda outlet Naenara and the DPRK Portal went offline between 5:01 and 5:02 a.m. KST Tuesday for 15 and 25 minutes, respectively, the web-monitoring service Pingdom shows. Cybersecurity specialist Junade Ali told NK Pro that available evidence does not suggest an attack on North Korea's internet network. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's main newspaper issued a stern rebuke of individuals and units who waste electricity on Tuesday, describing their activities as undermining "vigorous" national efforts to save energy. The Rodong Sinmun report, which described positive steps taken by other work units to conserve energy supplies, was notable for delivering a rare dressing-down of

those who have allegedly misused “precious electricity” in a “reckless” manner. “Recently, one unit used over half of the electricity reflected in the monthly supply plan by illegally operating around 10 power facilities,” the article stated, blaming “personnel” who ignored party guidelines and national objectives. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))

- The number of North Korean defectors coming to South Korea reached 65 in the April-June period, nearly doubling from 34 three months earlier, government data showed Tuesday, in an apparent rise after China eased its strict COVID-19 restrictions. After escaping the North, 18 men and 47 women reached South Korea in the second quarter, bringing the total number of the North's defectors to 33,981, according to data from Seoul's unification ministry. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- North Korea faces no choice but to seek complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization (CVID) as it is a legal obligation imposed by the United Nations Security Council, Seoul's foreign ministry said Tuesday. "(CVID) is an international legal obligation imposed on North Korea by eleven unanimous resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, leaving no room for choice," the ministry said in a statement. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol said Tuesday that the first meeting of a South Korea-U.S. nuclear consultation body is expected to be an important starting point for building strong and effective extended deterrence. Yoon made the remark during a Cabinet meeting shortly after the inaugural session of the Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG) got under way in Seoul to discuss ways to strengthen the U.S. extended deterrence commitment to defending South Korea with all of its military capabilities, including nuclear weapons. "It will carry out actual efforts to block North Korea's nuclear and missile threat at its source through a South Korea-U.S. alliance upgraded to a new nuclear-based paradigm," he added. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol called Tuesday for strengthening extended deterrence to the point that North Korea dares not use nuclear weapons, his office said. Yoon made the remark as he stopped by the inaugural session of the South Korea-U.S. Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG), which brought together senior national security and defense officials from both sides to discuss ways to strengthen the U.S. extended deterrence commitment to defending South Korea with all of its military capabilities, including nuclear weapons. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The latest statement issued by the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) expressing concerns over North Korean threats reflects the Indo-Pacific region's growing worries over Pyongyang's evolving nuclear and missile development programs, Seoul's foreign ministry said Tuesday. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.S. nuclear-capable ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) arrived in South Korea on Tuesday for the first time in more than four decades, in a clear display of Washington's commitment to the defense of its ally, Seoul's defense ministry said. "This deployment of a U.S. SSBN to the Korean Peninsula demonstrates by action that the U.S. extended deterrence (commitment) to the Republic of Korea will be firmly implemented," Defense Minister Lee Jong-sup was quoted as saying, using South Korea's official name." To North Korea, (it) shows the overwhelming capabilities and posture of the alliance, while it demonstrates the solid

combined defense posture of South Korea and the United States to our people and the international community," he added. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

- Moscow's foreign ministry has downplayed reports that the long-range missile North Korea tested last week fell in Russia's exclusive economic zone (EEZ), despite evidence to the contrary from the Japanese government. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- A bilateral nuclear consultative group between South Korea and the United States is aimed at curbing North Korea's nuclear threat, Seoul's vice defense chief said Tuesday, shortly before the allies hold the group's first meeting on nuclear deterrence. President Yoon Suk Yeol and U.S. President Joe Biden agreed in their summit in April to create the Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG) and temporarily deploy more nuclear-capable assets to South Korea, in a clear message to North Korea about nuclear deterrence. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States is currently focused on dealing with the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear and missile development programs instead of formally ending the 1950-53 Korean War with a peace treaty, a senior state department official said Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.S. citizen has crossed the military demarcation line separating the two Koreas into North Korea without authorization, the U.S.-led U.N. Command (UNC) said Tuesday. The person moved into the North during a tour to the Joint Security Area in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and is believed to be in North Korea's custody, according to the UNC. The command did not elaborate on the person's gender or other details. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. and South Korea held the first meeting of their new Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG) in Seoul on Tuesday, repeating their vow to "end" the North Korean regime if it uses weapons of mass destruction. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The United States is open to meet with North Korea without preconditions on any topic including discussion on steps that both sides could take with the aim of improving the security situation on the Korean Peninsula, a state department spokesperson said Monday, after North Korea dismissed U.S. overtures for dialogue as a "trick." (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol has made an unannounced visit to Ukraine, his office said Saturday. Yoon visited the site of mass killings in Bucha, near Kyiv, before visiting Irpin, a civilian residential area that has been subject to large-scale missile attacks. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527100430/https://mailchi.mp/8f824e219499/hrnk-news-items-us-national-crosses-military-demarcation-line-into-n-korea-number-of-n-korean-defectors-entering-s-korea-nearly-doubles-in-q2>

Wednesday, July 19 , 2023

What treatment can US soldier expect after crossing into North Korea?

Top News:

[What treatment can US soldier expect after crossing into North Korea?](#) (BBC News, 07/19/2023)

[Travis King: US soldier held by North Korea after crossing border](#) (BBC News, 07/19/2023)

[US soldier Travis King crossed into North Korea: What to know](#) (Al Jazeera, 07/19/2023)
[Young professionals from NK seek to bring change to Pyongyang](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/19/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea fires 2 short-range ballistic missiles into East Sea: JCS](#) (Yonhap, 07/19/2023)
[N. Korea stole US\\$700 mln of crypto in 2022: NIS](#) (Yonhap, 07/19/2023)
[North Korea: what are the DMZ and JSA and what happens on border tours?](#) (Reuters, 07/19/2023)
[North Korean trade with China triples in first half of 2023 despite June dip](#) (NK News, 07/19/2023)
[The surreal Korean border village where a US soldier crossed into the North](#) (AP News, 07/19/2023)

In South Korea:

[South Korea's Yoon says any nuclear provocation to lead to end of North Korean regime](#) (Reuters, 07/19/2023)

International:

[A closer look at the Joint Security Area between North and South Korea](#) (CNN, 07/19/2023)
[A look at some Americans who crossed into North Korea over the past years](#) (AP News, 07/19/2023)
[Chaos as U.S. soldier Travis King bolted into North Korea -witness](#) (Reuters, 07/19/2023)
[For North Korea, US defectors can be a propaganda win, but a logistical pain](#) (Reuters, 07/19/2023)
[Latest US-North Korea spat is high-risk moment for Biden](#) (BBC News, 07/19/2023)
[S. Korean nuclear envoy heads to Japan for trilateral talks on NK threats](#) (Yonhap, 07/19/2023)
[Travis King not first US soldier to cross border](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/19/2023)
[U.S. service member crosses border to N. Korea without authorization: Austin](#) (Yonhap, 07/19/2023)
[U.S. soldier defector fined in Seoul for kicking police vehicle](#) (Yonhap, 07/19/2023)
[U.S. soldier's border crossing raises prospects for direct engagement between U.S., N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 07/19/2023)
[US soldier who crossed to North Korea faced charges for assault, property damage](#) (NK News, 07/19/2023)
[US soldier who fled to N. Korea skipped flight claiming missing passport: sources](#) (The Korea Times, 07/19/2023)
[US soldier's NK defection raises alarm over JSA tour security](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/19/2023)
[What we know about U.S. soldier Travis King, detained in North Korea](#) (The Washington Post, 07/19/2023)
[Yoon touts solidarity on US sub](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/19/2023)
[Yoon visits US nuclear sub in joint show of force](#) (The Korea Times, 07/19/2023)

Top News:

- North Korea is reported to have detained a serving US army soldier who crossed the heavily-fortified border from South Korea without permission. (Greg Scarlatoiu, [BBC News](#))
- Greg Scarlatoiu, executive director of the Washington DC-based Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, told the BBC that authorities in the North were likely to "try pump information out of him" about his military service and "try to coerce him into becoming a propaganda tool". (Antoinette Radford, Simon Fraser, [BBC News](#))
- "It's very likely that he will be subjected to harsh treatment, especially since he is a member of the US armed forces so the likelihood that he will be tortured, he will face psychological

pressure, physical torture, the likelihood of that happening is very high,” Greg Scarlatoiu told Al Jazeera. ([Al Jazeera](#))

- Last week, Lee Seo-hyun, a North Korean defector, joined a group of fellow defectors in meetings with US policymakers and think tanks in Washington, including the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, to make North Korea-related proposals, and to speak to diplomats from around 100 countries in New York to urge that the UN must keep North Korean defectors in China from getting sent back to the North. (Kim So-hyun, [The Korea Herald](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles into the East Sea on Wednesday, Seoul's military said, after the arrival of a U.S. nuclear ballistic missile submarine here and the inaugural session of a new South Korea-U.S. security dialogue. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea stole a total of US\$700 million worth of cryptocurrency last year, equivalent to the money that would enable the country to fire 30 intercontinental ballistic missiles, South Korea's state intelligence agency said Wednesday. (Kim Boram, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's trade with China jumped threefold in the first half of 2023 compared to the same period last year, as commercial volumes continue to rebound after years of meager exchange during the pandemic. (Do Gyun Kim, Soo-hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea's trade with China jumped threefold in the first half of 2023 compared to the same period last year, as commercial volumes continue to rebound after years of meager exchange during the pandemic. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Blue-roofed huts, a raised slab of concrete and some raked gravel are all that separate the rival Koreas at Panmunjom, a rare point of close contact along the most heavily armed border in the world. (Foster Klug, [AP News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said on Wednesday that if North Korea stages a nuclear provocation, it will lead to the end of its regime, in comments made while boarding a U.S. nuclear submarine. (Hyonhee Shin, Ed Davies, [Reuters](#))

International:

- CNN's Will Ripley reports from near the Korean Demilitarized Zone one day after a U.S. soldier crossed the demarcation line that separates North and South Korea and is now in North Korean custody. (Will Ripley, [CNN](#))
- There have been cases of Americans crossing into North Korea over the past years, including a small number of U.S. soldiers. Some of the Americans who crossed were driven by evangelical zeal or simply attracted by the mystery of a severely cloistered police state fueled by anti-U.S. hatred. (Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))
- American and South Korean guards shouted "get him" as they scrambled unsuccessfully to stop U.S. Army soldier Travis King from sprinting into North Korea, a New Zealand woman who was on the same tour to the border area said on Wednesday. (Ju-min Park, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea is likely to milk the border crossing by a U.S. soldier for propaganda purposes but will probably not be able to gain political leverage, analysts and a former North Korean diplomat said. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))

- North Korea hasn't been much of a foreign policy priority for Joe Biden's administration since he took office in January 2021, but recent escalating tensions on the Korean peninsula are moving it up the list. (Anthony Zurcher, [BBC News](#))
- South Korea's top nuclear envoy on Wednesday traveled to Japan to hold talks with his United States and Japanese counterparts on North Korea's evolving nuclear and missile provocations. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- A US soldier is believed to be in North Korean custody after crossing the demilitarized zone that divides North and South Korea while on a tour of the border village of Panmunjom, the United Nations Command said Tuesday. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- An active U.S. service member has willfully crossed the inter-Korean border into North Korea without authorization, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin confirmed Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- An American soldier who crossed the inter-Korean border into North Korea had been sentenced to a fine for kicking and damaging a police patrol car in Seoul, legal sources said Wednesday. (Park Boram, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.S. soldier's detention in North Korea this week is raising cautious expectations for direct diplomatic reengagement between Washington and Pyongyang as bilateral ties have remained in the freezer amid the recalcitrant regime's dogged pursuit of nuclear armament. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- The American soldier who bolted across the border into North Korea at the Joint Security Area (JSA) on Tuesday had a history of misdemeanors in the South, including physically assaulting an ROK national, damaging police cars and swearing at police officers while intoxicated, court documents seen by NK News showed on Wednesday. (Jeongmin Kim, Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- An American soldier who defected to North Korea during a Joint Security Area (JSA) tour on Tuesday apparently lied that his passport was missing to avoid boarding a flight back to his home country, where he faces disciplinary action, according to sources, Wednesday. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))
- The defection of a US soldier to North Korea has brought forth significant questions about the means and motives behind his crossing of the inter-Korean border within the Joint Security Area in the heavily fortified Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) that divides the two Koreas. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- A U.S. soldier who darted across the border from South Korea was detained in North Korea, in a rare case of an American service member being held in one of the world's most isolated states. The incident has sparked a diplomatic emergency at a time of already strained ties between Pyongyang and Washington. (Ellen Francis, [The Washington Post](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol on Wednesday boarded the USS Kentucky, an Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine, in a show of solidarity and force with its biggest ally in deterring North Korea's evolving nuclear missile threats. (Shin Ji-hye, Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol visited the Busan Naval Base, Wednesday, and toured the Ohio-class nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) USS Kentucky which docked at the southeastern port city a day earlier. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527100721/https://mailchi.mp/17293ee1451b/hrnk-news-items-us-national-crosses-military-demarcation-line-into-n-korea-number-of-n-korean-defectors-entering-s-korea-nearly-doubles-in-q2-12236480>

Thursday, July 20, 2023

Here's how North Korea treated previous US detainees; NK warns US nuke deployment to South 'could' trigger preemptive strike

Top News:

[Here's how North Korea treated previous US detainees](#) (CNN, 07/20/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea poses grave threat to cyber security, cutting off illicit funds to weapons program important: U.S. official](#) (Yonhap, 07/20/2023)

[N. Korea warns U.S. nuclear submarine visit to S. Korea may fall under conditions for its nuke use](#) (Yonhap, 07/20/2023)

[North Korea warns US nuke deployment to South 'could' trigger preemptive strike](#) (NK News, 07/20/2023)

In South Korea:

[Noose tightens around Lee Jae-myung as key ally spills](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/20/2023)

[Yoon set for trilateral summit in US](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/20/2023)

International:

[American soldier held in North Korea may have some propaganda value](#) (CNN, 07/20/2023)

[G.I. detained in NK new headache in relations](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/20/2023)

['He was going so fast': US officials try to piece together why soldier bolted into North Korea](#) (CNN, 07/20/2023)

[Missing wife, son of North's diplomat arrested in Russia](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/20/2023)

[N. Korea remains silent to U.S. calls to verify status of soldier in its custody: state dept.](#) (Yonhap, 07/20/2023)

[N. Korea's trade reliance on China hits 10-year high in 2022](#) (Yonhap, 07/20/2023)

[North Korea fails to answer entreaties about US soldier who crossed border.](#) (The Guardian, 07/20/2023)

[South, U.S. and Japan's envoys discuss North's ICBM launch](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/20/2023)

[Top nuclear envoys of S. Korea, U.S., Japan denounce N. Korea's latest missile test](#) (Yonhap, 07/20/2023)

[Travis King's brother speaks after North Korea arrest](#) (BBC News, 07/20/2023)

[Travis King: North Korea 'not responding to calls' on missing soldier, says US](#) (BBC News, 07/20/2023)

[Travis King: US soldier in N Korea had been held after fighting in Seoul](#) (BBC News, 07/20/2023)

[Travis King: What we know so far about North Korea's detention of a US soldier](#) (BBC News, 07/20/2023)

[U.S. Army report suggests G.I.'s JSA dash was premeditated](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/20/2023)

[US deploys nuclear-armed submarine to South Korea in show of force against North Korea](#) (AP News, 07/20/2023)

[US soldier in North Korea had been convicted for aggression against South Korean police](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/20/2023)

Top News:

- American soldier Travis King's fate in North Korea is still unknown. When asked if King will see a similar fate to a previous American military defector to North Korea James Dresnok, Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu told CNN, "Do I see Travis King as a new James Dresnok? Not really." He explained, "These are different times. This is a young man who is used to being on his phone, using the internet, and probably playing video games." Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu advised the family of Travis King to use similar tactics of families of previously held Americans, keep his story in the media, and do not let the public forget about him. When discussing American Otto Warmbier's fatal detention in North Korea for stealing a propaganda poster, Scarlatoiu told CNN, "He was arrested and imprisoned for something, if true, barely amounts to a college frat prank anywhere in the half-decent world." The successful release of previous Americans came after consistent pressure from the media and officials. Scarlatoiu said that it is possible for another high-level American could be sent to North Korea to get King out. However, it all depends on whether King wants to leave after all. (Brian Todd, [CNN](#))

In North Korea:

- The United States is most concerned about cyber crimes committed by North Korean and Russian actors, Brian Nelson, a ranking U.S. official said Wednesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's defense chief Kang Sun-nam warned Thursday a U.S. nuclear-capable strategic submarine's port visit to South Korea this week may fall under the legal conditions for his country's use of nuclear weapons. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea warned the U.S. that deployments of nuclear assets to South Korea could trigger a preemptive nuclear strike in the future, according to state media Thursday night. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- A close ally of Democratic Party (DP) leader Lee Jae-myung told investigators that Lee was aware that the former chairman of an underwear company had made payments to North Korea on his behalf, according to state prosecution officials. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol is poised to attend a trilateral summit with his US counterpart Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in the United States in August, according to Yoon's office on Thursday. (Son Ji-hyoung, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- The American soldier who willingly entered North Korea likely has limited propaganda value for the Kim regime, says military analyst Malcolm Davis. ([CNN](#))
- It's still unclear how North Korea will respond to the crossing into its territory of US soldier Travis King. North Korea's response to the case could have significant implications for

US-North Korea relations. It may either add a new layer of complexity, further straining relations, or potentially serve as a catalyst to cool down heightened tensions. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

- Officials across the US government are now trying to piece together what might have motivated King, a US national, to willfully and without prior authorization cross into one of the most hostile countries on earth. (Natasha Bertrand, Kylie Atwood, Haley Britzky, [CNN](#))
- Two people believed to be the missing wife and son of a North Korean diplomat, 43-year-old Kim Kum-sun and 15-year-old Park Kwon-ju were arrested by Russian authorities. The pair had reportedly been in hiding since June. According to a report by Radio Free Asia (RFA) they were arrested on July 7 after boarding a plane from Yemelyanovo International Airport, located on the outskirts of the Siberian city of Krasnoyarsk. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea has yet to respond to U.S. outreach regarding the safety and whereabouts of a U.S. service member who crossed the inter-Korean border into the reclusive country this week Matthew Miller, a state department spokesperson, said Wednesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's dependency on China for foreign trade hit its highest level in 2022 since its leader Kim Jong-un took the helm of the reclusive country 10 years earlier, a report showed Thursday. Pyongyang's trade with Beijing came to US\$1.53 billion last year, up about 125 percent from the previous year, according to the report from the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA). ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea is not responding to US attempts to discuss the American soldier who crossed the heavily armed border and whose prospects for a quick release are unclear when military tensions are high and communication channels inactive. (Betsy Reed, [The Guardian](#))
- The top nuclear negotiators of South Korea, the United States and Japan met in Nagano on Thursday to discuss North Korea's latest intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) test. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The top nuclear negotiators of South Korea, the United States and Japan met in Japan on Thursday and strongly condemned North Korea's recent ballistic missile launch, Seoul's foreign ministry said. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- The brother of US soldier Travis King, who was detained in North Korea, said the episode was weighing very heavily on the family. ([BBC News](#))
- North Korea is not responding to attempts to negotiate the release of a US soldier who fled over its heavily-armed border, Washington says. The US was still trying to ascertain the soldier's whereabouts and well-being, a spokesperson added. The US has tried to contact North Korea's military through "multiple channels", the White House said. (Kelly Ng, Jean Mackenzie, [BCC News](#))
- Private 2nd Class (PV2) Travis King, 23, crossed from South Korea into the North after joining a Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) border tour. Further details are being released as more information comes to light. (Jean Mackenzie, Emily McGarvey, [BBC News](#))
- U.S. military report leaked on Wednesday included details suggesting that the soldier, identified as Private 2nd Class Travis King, had planned ahead of time before crossing the Military Demarcation Line (MDL) at the Joint Security Area (JSA) on Tuesday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The United States deployed a nuclear-armed submarine to South Korea on Tuesday for the first time in four decades, as the allies warned North Korea that any use of the North's nuclear weapons in combat would result in the end of its regime. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))

- Travis King, the US soldier who fled to North Korea on Tuesday, had been convicted earlier for aggression against the South Korean police, a court ruling reveals. According to the Seoul Western District Court ruling obtained by The Korea Herald, the American had damaged a police car and shouted expletives at officers who were called to a nightclub in Seoul, where King was reported for assaulting a man. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527100914/https://mailchi.mp/45f51a2108dd/hrnk-news-items-heres-how-north-korea-treated-previous-us-detainees-nk-warns-us-nuke-deployment-to-south-could-trigger-preemptive-strike>

Friday, July 21, 2023

**"It will be a very difficult time for this young man, he will likely be tortured":
HRNK's Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu**

Top News:

["It will be a very difficult time for this young man, he will likely be tortured":](#) HRNK's Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu is interviewed live by Romania's Antena 1 TV (Antena 1 TV, 07/21/2023)

*The content of this interview has been translated from Romanian. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[North Korean market prices suggest serious food shortages](#) (North Korean Economy Watch, 07/20/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea to seek 'substantive' approach in dealing with N. Korea: minister nominee](#) (Yonhap, 07/21/2023)

[Unification minister nominee grilled over calls for North Korea regime change](#) (NK News, 07/21/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Inter-Korean tensions rise further as NK threatens nuclear attack](#) (The Korea Times, 07/21/2023)

[Pyongyang will face doom if it uses nukes, Seoul warns](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/21/2023)

[S. Korea hits back after N. Korea warns against U.S. nuclear submarine visit, NCG](#) (Yonhap, 07/21/2023)

[S. Korea warns NK: Nuclear threats risk regime's end](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/21/2023)

International:

[Defectors fear impact of mounting skepticism over accounts told by celebrated N. Korean escapee](#) (The Korea Times, 07/21/2023)

[How Private Travis T. King made his dash into North Korea](#) (Reuters, 07/21/2023)

[Mounting US worries over Private Travis King after silence from North Korea](#) (Reuters, 07/21/2023)

[North Korean hackers break into US software firms in latest supply chain hack](#) (NK News, 07/21/2023)

[North Korea silent on fate of American soldier who dashed across border, US says](#) (NK News, 07/21/2023)

[Propaganda tool? Bargaining chip? What North Korea may have in mind for Travis King](#) (AP News, 07/21/2023)

[Rare submarine visit reminds North Korea of U.S. nuclear missiles out of sight, in range](#) (Reuters, 07/21/2023)

[U.S. continues to seek safe return of service member in N. Korean custody](#) (Yonhap, 07/21/2023)

[US sanctions North Korean for facilitating arms sales to Russia's Wagner Group](#) (NK News, 07/21/2023)

[Travis King disappeared into a North Korea more isolated than ever](#) (Reuters, 07/21/2023)

Top News:

- HRNK's Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu is interviewed live by Romania's Antena 1 TV. Scarlatoiu explains the situation of Private Second Class Travis King. ([Antena 1 TV](#))

*The content of this interview has been translated from Romanian. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

- Recently, the BBC became one of few global outlets to succeed in interviewing ordinary North Koreans inside the country about the food situation. The image is dire: starvation, empty markets and other signs of severe food shortages. (Benjamin Katzeff Silberstein, [North Korean Economy Watch](#))

In South Korea:

- The nominee to serve as South Korea's new point man on North Korea said Friday he will prioritize "substantive" results over dialogue in dealing with North Korea, in an apparent reaffirmation of the government's hard-line stance against the recalcitrant regime. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's opposition party grilled unification minister nominee Kim Yung-ho over his controversial YouTube channel and repeated calls for regime change in North Korea, challenging his qualifications to manage inter-Korean ties in a contentious confirmation hearing at the National Assembly on Friday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Tensions on the Korean Peninsula are rising further, as the two Koreas traded barbs over North Korea's threat to use nuclear weapons in protest of the recent visit of a United States nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) to South Korea's Busan. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea would face an end if it decides to use its nuclear arms against the South-U.S. alliance, South Korea warned Friday. (Sohn Dong-Joong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- South Korea warned Friday that North Korea will face the "end" of its regime in the event of a nuclear attack after it said the deployment of a U.S. nuclear-capable submarine and other strategic assets here could meet the conditions for its use of nuclear arms. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean Defense Ministry issued a stern warning against North Korea on Friday in response to the regime's threat to use nuclear weapons prompted by the US deploying a strategic nuclear submarine in Busan. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- Some North Korean defectors are growing concerned about the possible impact on their community from media reports focusing on Park Yeon-mi, another escapee from the North who became a celebrity in the U.S. for her outspoken criticism of the repressive regime. (Kang Hyun-kyung, [The Korea Times](#))
- U.S. Army Private Travis T. King had finished serving nearly two months in detention in South Korea and was being escorted to the airport to fly home and likely face disciplinary action. But he never made it to his plane. (Ju-min Park, Josh Smith, Matt Spetalnick, [Reuters](#))
- The United States on Thursday voiced mounting concern over Army Private Travis King, who dashed into North Korea two days ago, saying Pyongyang had a history of mistreating captured Americans. (Phil Stewart, Idrees Ali, [Reuters](#))
- The North Korean hacking outfit Lazarus broke into an American enterprise software company, likely aiming to compromise a large number of systems in subsequent attacks, cybersecurity firm SentinelLabs reported on Thursday. (Nils Weisensee, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has not responded to inquiries about the American soldier who crossed into the DPRK earlier this week, U.S. officials said on Thursday, expressing concern about the possibility of his mistreatment in the country. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- What will North Korea do about the first U.S. soldier in decades to flee into its territory? (Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))
- When a U.S. ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) surfaced for a rare visit to South Korea this week it was a blunt reminder that Washington always has nuclear-tipped missiles deployed within close striking distance of North Korea, analysts said. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- The United States is continuing to work for the safe return of a U.S. service member who crossed the inter-Korean border into North Korea this week, state department spokesperson Matthew Miller said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. has sanctioned a North Korean national for facilitating arms sales to the notorious Russian paramilitary Wagner Group, in a move to limit Moscow's ability to continue its war efforts in Ukraine. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- When U.S. soldier Travis King sprinted across the border into North Korea from the South this week, he disappeared into a North Korea where lingering COVID-19 concerns and restrictions have made the already secretive country more isolated than ever. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))

[Translation] "It will be a very difficult time for this young man, he will likely be tortured": HRNK's Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu is interviewed live by Romania's Antena 1 TV

Scarlatoiu explains the situation of Private Second Class Travis King. King will likely be subjected to harsh interrogation as well as psychological and physical torture, as the North Korean Military Security Command (MSC) and the Ministry of State Security (MSS) will attempt to: verify whether

his desertion is for real; extract information from him, including information about his training, chain of command, base access, infrastructure etc; and, somewhere down the road, if everything checks out, force him to work for North Korean propaganda, possibly appearing as the "evil American" in North Korean movies, just like James Dresnok before him. He visits the history of US Army deserters who ended up in North Korea, pointing out that only one of them left that country alive before passing away in Japan, Charles Jenkins. Scarlatoiu addresses the tragic case of Otto Warmbier, the young UVA student imprisoned and killed by the North Korean regime. Speaking about Charles Jenkins, married to Japanese abductee Soga Hitomi, Scarlatoiu pivots to address the abduction of Japanese, South Korean, and other foreign nationals by North Korea. He reminds the Romanian audience that US Army deserter James Dresnok was married to Romanian abductee Doina Bumbea, taken in 1978, deceased in North Korea in 1997. The two sons of Bumbea and Dresnok have appeared in video footage praising the North Korean regime.

Prepared by Myriam Aribaud, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527101040/https://mailchi.mp/884879cace09/hrnk-news-items-it-will-be-a-very-difficult-time-for-this-young-man-he-will-likely-be-tortured-hrnks-executive-director-greg-scarlatoiu>

Saturday, July 22, 2023

US Soldier in North Korea Sure to Face Harsh Interrogation: Expert

Top News:

[US Soldier in North Korea Sure to Face Harsh Interrogation: Expert](#) (NTD, 07/21/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea fires several cruise missiles into Yellow Sea: JCS](#) (Yonhap, 07/22/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Inter-Korean tensions rise further as NK threatens nuclear attack](#) (The Korea Times, 07/21/2023)

International:

[Bringing Private King home: reaching Pyongyang is the first challenge](#) (Reuters, 07/21/2023)

[Cardinal Lazzaro You visits Seoul with pope's peace message for Korea](#) (Yonhap, 07/22/2023)

[Cooperation between U.S., Japan, S. Korea important to maintaining peace in Indo-Pacific: U.S. officials](#) (Yonhap, 07/22/2023)

[Exclusive: G7, others ask China to stop North Korea sanctions evasion in its waters](#) (Reuters, 07/21/2023)

[N. Korean missile launches only solidify U.S. alliances with S. Korea, Japan: Blinken](#) (Yonhap, 07/22/2023)

Top News:

- We're still waiting to hear more about the condition of the U.S. soldier who crossed into North Korea. Greg Scarlatoiu, an Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, speaks on this issue. (Steve Lance, [NTD](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea fired several cruise missiles into the Yellow Sea on Saturday, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Tensions on the Korean Peninsula are rising further, as the two Koreas traded barbs over North Korea's threat to use nuclear weapons in protest of the recent visit of a United States nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) to South Korea's Busan. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- It has never been easy for the United States to secure the return of citizens from North Korea, one of the world's most isolated nations. The task may be even harder in the case of Private Travis King, with communication between the countries now almost non-existent, say diplomats and negotiators. (Simon Lewis, David Brunnstrom, [Reuters](#))
- Cardinal Lazzaro You Heung-sik said Saturday that Pope Francis has sent a message of peace for the Korean Peninsula, which will be announced on the 70th armistice anniversary of the 1950-53 Korean War. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- Trilateral cooperation between South Korea, Japan and the United States is reaching unprecedented levels thanks to the leadership of South Korean and Japanese leaders, a senior U.S. administration official said Friday, calling it a "huge innovation" that helps promote peace and stability in the region. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The Group of Seven, European Union and three other countries plan to appeal to China for help to stop North Korea evading United Nations sanctions by using Chinese territorial waters, according to their letter seen by Reuters on Friday. (Michelle Nichols, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea's unprecedented missile provocations have done little but solidify the United States' cooperation with South Korea and Japan, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Friday, insisting that U.S. alliances have only grown stronger over the years. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Bella Packowski, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527101143/https://mailchi.mp/6efc517b6211/hrnk-news-items-unification-minister-no-minee-kim-lays-out-his-pyongyang-roadmap-s-korea-asks-pyongyang-to-give-prior-notice-on-border-dam-discharge-12>

Sunday, July 23, 2023

UNC makes contact with North over U.S. soldier; Unification Ministry to downsize inter-Korean dialogue units

In North Korea:

[North Korea fires 'several' cruise missiles toward west coast: JCS](#) (NK News, 07/22/2023)

In South Korea:

[Unification Ministry to downsize inter-Korean dialogue units](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/23/2023)

International:

[UNC makes contact with North over U.S. soldier: Report](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/23/2023)

[Video: Mother of US soldier who ran into North Korea speaks out](#) (CNN, 07/22/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea fired “several” cruise missiles toward the Yellow Sea in the early morning on Saturday, according to South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), hours after a U.S. nuclear submarine reportedly left the peninsula. (Ifang Bremer, Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's Unification Ministry will undergo significant restructuring and downsizing, after President Yoon Suk Yeol urged for a structural shake-up amid the prolonged deadlock in inter-Korean relations. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- The United Nations Command (UNC) has made contact with the North Korean military regarding the U.S. Army private who dashed into the North at the Joint Security Area (JSA) last week, according to the London-based Sunday Times on Saturday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Claudine Gates, the mother of Private Travis King, speaks to reporters outside her Wisconsin home. While on a tour inside the demilitarized zone, Travis King dashed across the demarcation line into North Korea, an eyewitness on the same tour and US officials familiar with the case told CNN. ([CNN](#))

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527101330/https://mailchi.mp/5e809522c87a/hrnk-news-items-unc-makes-contact-with-north-over-us-soldier-unification-ministry-to-downsize-inter-korean-dialogue-units>

Monday, July 24, 2023

North Korea fires ballistic toward East Sea; U.S. sends message to North—and China—with second sub visit to South

In North Korea:

[N. Korea says 'no end' to bolstering military power ahead of key anniversary](#) (Yonhap, 07/24/2023)

[North Korea fires ballistic toward East Sea: ROK military](#) (NK News, 07/25/2023)

In South Korea:

[DP suggests bringing unification minister to ethics committee over virtual asset trading](#) (Yonhap, 07/24/2023)

[Suspicious int'l parcels have no connection with terrorism so far: gov't](#) (Yonhap, 07/24/2023)

[Yoon calls for devising guidelines to protect teachers' rights](#) (Yonhap, 07/24/2023)

International:

[China, Russia conclude drills as US, South Korea, Japan deepen security ties](#) (Reuters, 07/24/2023)

[China told to stop tankers in its waters reaching N. Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 07/22/2023)

[N. Korea invites Chinese delegation as 1st known foreign guests since pandemic](#) (Yonhap, 07/24/2023)

[United Nations in 'delicate' talks with North Korea over US soldier](#) (The Telegraph, 07/24/2023)

[U.S. sends message to North—and China—with second sub visit to South](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/24/2023)

[Vice FMs of S. Korea, U.S., Japan vow cooperation ahead of trilateral summit in Aug.](#) (Yonhap, 07/24/2023)

[Video: UN holds talks with North Korea on US soldier](#) (AP News, 07/24/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea said Monday that there is "no end" to strengthening its military power in an apparent attempt to justify the development of its nuclear and missile programs ahead of a key anniversary this week. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea launched at least one "unidentified ballistic missile" toward the East Sea (Sea of Japan), South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said just after midnight Tuesday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- The main opposition Democratic Party (DP) urged the ruling People Power Party (PPP) on Monday to refer Unification Minister Kwon Young-se to the parliamentary ethics committee following revelations that Kwon had engaged in virtual asset trading. (Kang Jae-eun, [Yonhap](#))
- Nearly 700 suspicious international parcels that have been received from across the nation have shown no connection to terrorism so far, the government said Monday. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol instructed the government on Monday to come up with comprehensive guidelines aimed at protecting teachers' rights and enhancing their authority in classrooms, his spokesperson said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- China and Russia on Sunday wrapped up an air and naval exercise in the Sea of Japan aimed at "safeguarding" the security of waterways, the Chinese defence ministry said. (Albee Zhang, Ryan Woo, [Reuters](#))
- The Group of Seven nations, the European Union and three other countries are urging China to expel oil tankers from its waters that appear to be taking fuel to North Korea in defiance of U.N. sanctions, according to a letter seen by AFP, Friday. ([The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea said Monday it has invited a Chinese party and government delegation as part of commemorations for the 70th anniversary of the armistice of the Korean War, marking the first known invitation of official foreign guests since the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- The United Nations has said that "delicate" talks have begun with Pyongyang over the fate of US soldier Travis King, who unexpectedly bolted into North Korea last week. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- A nuclear-powered U.S. submarine arrived in South Korea on Monday, marking the second deployment of a U.S. strategic asset in the past week intended to highlight Washington's extended deterrence commitment to Seoul. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The vice foreign ministers of South Korea, the United States, and Japan agreed Monday to work closely together to successfully hold a trilateral summit of their leaders next month, Seoul's foreign ministry said. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- The deputy commander of the U.N. Command said Monday it has started conversations with North Korea over an American soldier who ran into the North last week across the Koreas' heavily armed border. ([AP News](#))

Prepared by Kaylee Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527101505/https://mailchi.mp/7ef1896785ed/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-fires-ballistic-toward-east-sea-us-sends-message-to-northand-chinawith-second-sub-visit-to-south>

Tuesday, July 25, 2023

N. Korea invites Russian delegation to Victory Day ceremony

In North Korea:

[N. Korea revs up festive mood ahead of Victory Day](#) ([Yonhap](#), 07/25/2023)

In South Korea:

[Controversial description of late Korean War hero deleted](#) ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#), 07/25/2023)

[Court nixes minister's impeachment over Itaewon disaster](#) ([Korea JoongAng Daily](#), 07/25/2023)

[Gangnam murder suspect claimed to accomplices that he was special agent](#) ([The Korea Herald](#), 07/25/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[North Korea calling South Korea by its official name 'intended to offend': intelligence authorities](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/25/2023)

International:

[N. Korea invites Russian delegation to Victory Day ceremony](#) (Yonhap, 07/25/2023)

[N. Korea remains unresponsive to inquires about U.S. service member in custody: state dept.](#) (Yonhap, 07/25/2023)

[North invites China, Russia as first post-Covid guests](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/25/2023)

[Yoon meets with Luxembourgish veteran of Korean War](#) (The Korea Times, 07/25/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea will hold a grand ceremony marking the 70th anniversary of the armistice of the Korean War, state media reported Tuesday, including celebrations that will bring its first known official foreign guests in years. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- The Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs decided to delete a state burial record describing late Korean hero Hen. Paik Sun-yup as a pro-Japanese traitor. (Cho Jung-woo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The Constitutional Court on Tuesday unanimously overturned the National Assembly's impeachment of Interior Minister Lee Sang-min over last year's fatal crown crush in Itaewon, central Seoul, which claimed 159 lives. (Lee Sung-eun, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- A kidnapping murder case in Seoul's Gangnam district in March that sent shockwaves through the nation took a twist on Monday when it was revealed that one of the main suspects had claimed to be a special operative trained for missions in North Korea. (Kim So-hyun, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Recent statements by Kim Yo-jong, the sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, referring to South Korea by its official name, the Republic of Korea, show a "clear intention to be offensive," according to a document released by South Korean national intelligence authorities Tuesday. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- North Korea said Tuesday it has invited a Russian military delegation for a ceremony to mark the 70th anniversary of the armistice of the 1950-53 Korean War this week in a rare invitation of foreign guests since the COVID-19 outbreak. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States has not had any substantive response from North Korea about the safety of a U.S. service member who crossed the inter-Korean border into the reclusive state last week, a state department spokesperson said Monday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- A Russian military delegation led by Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu is set to visit North Korea to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Korean War armistice, Pyongyang's state media reported Tuesday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- President Yoon Suk Yeol met with a Luxembourgish veteran of the Korean War on Tuesday as part of commemorations for the 70th anniversary of the armistice signing. ([The Korea Times](#))

Prepared by Abigail Thacker, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527101738/https://mailchi.mp/04eb570d01bd/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-fires-ballistic-toward-east-sea-us-sends-message-to-north-and-china-with-second-sub-vist-to-south-12236520>

Wednesday, July 26, 2023

WSJ Op-ed: The Phony Korean 'Peace' Movement

Top News:

[The Phony Korean 'Peace' Movement](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 07/25/2023)

[Event Review: "Harmony Across Borders: A Performance & Lecture by Won Hyung-joon"](#) (HRNK, 07/26/2023)

[American Journalist Recalls Life as Reporter Inside North Korea](#) (VOA, 07/24/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un approves first paintings of himself in boost to personality cult](#) (NK News, 07/26/2023)

[Kim Jong-un stresses 'anti-US' stance at war anniversary cemetery visits](#) (NK News, 07/26/2023)

[N. Korean leader pays respect to fallen soldiers ahead of armistice anniv.: state media](#) (Yonhap, 07/26/2023)

[N. Korea may stage military parade to mark Victory Day as early as midnight](#) (Yonhap, 07/26/2023)

In South Korea:

[Former nuclear envoy named new ambassador to Russia](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/26/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[South Korean POWs still held in NK, 70 years after armistice](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/26/2023)

International:

[China, Russia can and must help reduce tensions on Korean peninsula: State Dept](#) (Yonhap, 07/26/2023)

[Defense chiefs of N. Korea and Russia hold talks in Pyongyang: TASS](#) (Yonhap, 07/26/2023)

Top News:

- "A coalition of self-styled peace groups are planning a "National Mobilization to End the Korean War" in Washington this week—a conference, a rally and lobbying meetings with my

counterparts in the U.S. House and Senate. Some lawmakers are already on board: Rep. Brad Sherman's Peace on the Korean Peninsula Act has drawn 33 co-sponsors. The effort is a deception. Both the mobilization and the legislation promote the North's demand that the U.S. sign an unconditional peace agreement. Pro-Pyongyang groups are parroting the regime's "hostile policy" refrain—that tensions on the Korean Peninsula result from U.S.-South Korean military exercises, the presence of U.S. troops in Korea, and U.S. economic sanctions." (Ji Seong-ho, [The Wall Street Journal](#))

- On Monday, July 24, HRNK hosted Mr. Won Hyung-joon, a renowned South Korean violinist, at the DACOR Bacon House in Washington, D.C. Mr. Won is the Music Director of the Lindenbaum Festival Orchestra and the International Chair for the Cinema for Peace Foundation. ([HRNK](#))
- Interviewed by VOA, HRNK Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu said the following on Travis King, the US Soldier being held in North Korea after running across the DMZ: "If he's there on his own free will, and he actually wants to collaborate with the North Koreans, he will do that. This will be employed as a propaganda tool, but not before he undergoes very harsh investigation and interrogation." ([VOA](#))

In North Korea:

- A North Korean art exhibition displayed a slew of new paintings depicting Kim Jong Un riding a horse and tractor and meeting with children this week, marking the first time state media has revealed such paintings in a boost to Kim's personality cult. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited two cemeteries Tuesday to mark 70 years of "victories in the undaunted confrontation with U.S. imperialists" and thank China for its help in the Korean War, according to state media. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has visited cemeteries to pay respects to the country's soldiers killed during the 1950-53 Korean War and to commemorate the anniversary of the signing of the armistice, state media said Wednesday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea may conduct a much-anticipated military parade as early as midnight Wednesday to mark the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Korean War armistice celebrated in the reclusive country as Victory Day, multiple sources said. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- President Yoon Suk Yeol tapped Lee Do-hoon, a former second vice foreign minister, as South Korea's new ambassador to Russia, the presidential office announced Wednesday. Lee served as a former presidential secretary for foreign affairs in the Park Geun-hye administration and later as a special representative for Korean Peninsula peace and security affairs, doubling as Seoul's top nuclear envoy, in the Moon Jae-in administration. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Despite 70 years having elapsed since the signing of the armistice on July 27, 1953, there are still South Korean POWs who remain in captivity in North Korea. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- China and Russia have a role to play in bringing North Korea to the dialogue table, a state department spokesperson said Tuesday, insisting the two countries are also required to do so as members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- Russia's Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu held talks with his North Korean counterpart, Kang Sun-nam, in Pyongyang on Wednesday and expressed his determination to boost bilateral ties, Russian media reported. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Nate Bent, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527101917/https://mailchi.mp/837cb700c82c/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-fires-ballistic-toward-east-sea-us-sends-message-to-northand-chinawith-second-sub-visit-to-south-12236528>

Thursday, July 27, 2023

Commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the Korean War Armistice

Top News:

[Commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the Korean War Armistice](#) (HRNK, 07/27/2023)

[What Reporting From Pyongyang Taught US Journalist About North Korea](#) (VOA, 07/26/2023)

In North Korea:

[Foldable smartphone pictured with Kim Jong-un likely Chinese product: NIS](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/27/2023)

[Kim shows off North's arsenal to Russian defense chief](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/27/2023)

[N.K. leader greets Russian, Chinese delegates on occasion of armistice anniversary](#) (Yonhap, 07/27/2023)

[N.K. leader visits arms exhibition with Russian delegation ahead of armistice anniversary](#) (Yonhap, 07/27/2023)

[N. Korea holds military parade to mark armistice anniversary: source](#) (Yonhap, 07/27/2023)

[N. Korea warmly receives Chinese delegation in Pyongyang for Victory Day celebrations: state media](#) (Yonhap, 07/27/2023)

[North Korean ICBMs appear to line up ahead of military parade start: Imagery](#) (NK News, 07/27/2023)

[North Korea's Lazarus Group appears to snatch \\$100M from two crypto platforms](#) (NK News, 07/27/2023)

In South Korea:

[Korea commemorates 70th anniversary of Armistice Agreement](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/27/2023)

[Opposition party demands Yoon withdraw controversial unification minister pick](#) (NK News, 07/27/2023)

[S. Korea stresses arms trade with N. Korea illegal amid Pyongyang-Moscow defense talks](#) (Yonhap, 07/27/2023)

[Yoon pays respects to war dead at UN memorial cemetery](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/27/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Two Koreas mark 70 years of armistice amid growing tension](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/27/2023)

International:

[Japan to meet North Korea, South Korea face China in World Cup qualifying](#) (Reuters, 07/27/2023)

[Pope Francis sends peace message on 70th Korean War armistice anniv.](#) (Yonhap, 07/27/2023)

[UN chief calls for 'surge in diplomacy' to denuclearize Korean Peninsula](#) (NK News, 07/27/2023)

[U.S., S. Korea Working Group holds meeting on N. Korean cyber threat](#) (Yonhap, 07/27/2023)

Top News:

- Despite the great differences that have emerged between the two Koreas over the past 75 years, inter-Korean peace and unification are not a matter of choice. Unification is the destiny of the Korean people. It is a destiny that can be fulfilled only by seeking human rights and justice, not by whitewashing the Kim regime's crimes against humanity and other egregious human rights violations. Human rights improvement is the only clear roadmap to true peace, reconciliation, prosperity, and unification on the Korean Peninsula. (Greg Scarlatoiu, [HRNK](#))
- With no independent reporting, the primary source of information coming out of North Korea is from state media. "Of course, this creates a little bit of a problem in terms of knowing more about what's happening in the country," said Greg Scarlatoiu, executive director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea. "There is no press freedom in North Korea. Basically, everything is under the strict control of the North Korean authorities." (Liam Scott, [VOA](#))

In North Korea:

- South Korea's National Intelligence Service believes the mobile device pictured next to North Korean leader Kim Jong-un earlier this month is likely a Chinese product, according to the state agency's assessment obtained by the National Assembly on Thursday. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un showcased his regime's latest missiles and drones to Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu, who is visiting Pyongyang to attend commemorations of the armistice that concluded the 1950-53 Korean War, according to the North's state media Thursday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea conducted a military parade in Pyongyang on Thursday to mark the 70th anniversary of the signing of the 1950-53 Korean War armistice, celebrated in the country as Victory Day, an informed source said. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has met with official Russian and Chinese delegations that are visiting Pyongyang to attend celebrations for the 70th anniversary of the armistice of the 1950-53 Korean War, state media said Thursday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has visited an arms exhibition showcasing the country's latest weaponry with Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu, who is visiting Pyongyang to

attend celebrations for the 70th anniversary of the armistice of the Korean War, state media said Thursday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea has extended its "warm welcome" to a Chinese delegation that arrived in Pyongyang this week to attend the North's commemorations of the 70th anniversary of the Korean War armistice, according to state media Thursday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's newest long-range nuclear missiles will likely feature in a military parade on Thursday evening, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery, with ROK media reporting that the event kicked off around 8 p.m. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean hackers likely stripped two cryptocurrency payment services of nearly \$100 million in an attack earlier this month, according to blockchain investigators, as the regime seeks to secure funds for its nuclear weapons program. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- President Yoon Suk Yeol underscored that the South Korea of today exists because of the sacrifices of soldiers who fought with the United Nation forces on Thursday, marking the anniversary of the armistice agreement that ended the 1950-53 Korean War. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's opposition Democratic Party (DP) has urged President Yoon Suk-yeol to withdraw his nomination of Kim Yung-ho as unification minister, stating that the nominee is "unfit" to manage relations with North Korea. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Seoul's foreign ministry on Thursday stressed that any form of weapons trade between North Korea and other nations would constitute a violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions, following high-level defense talks held between Pyongyang and Moscow this week. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol, joined by foreign dignitaries, visited the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Busan to pay respects to fallen soldiers to mark the 70th anniversary of the 1950-53 Korean War ceasefire on Thursday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea and North Korea on Thursday marked the 70th anniversary of the cease-fire to the Korean War, a three-year conflict that left the Korean Peninsula divided, still with no formal peace treaty in sight, amid growing tension in the region. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- Japan were drawn to face North Korea and Syria in Asia's preliminaries for the 2026 World Cup on Thursday, while South Korea will face China and Thailand when the second round of the continent's qualifiers kick off in November. (Michael Church, [Reuters](#))
- Pope Francis wished for peace on the Korean Peninsula in a message sent to a special mass commemorating the 70th armistice anniversary of the 1950-53 Korean War on Thursday. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.N. chief hailed the Korean War armistice as the "foundation" of peace on the Korean Peninsula on the 70th anniversary of its signing Thursday, while calling for a return to negotiations on North Korea's denuclearization. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The United States and South Korea held a working group meeting on North Korea's cyber threat this week, the state department said Wednesday, amid their joint efforts to cut off

illicit funds from being funneled into the North's illegal weapons development programs. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Narae Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240526114521/https://mailchi.mp/62d3b6ca4f07/hrnk-news-items-commemorating-the-70th-anniversary-of-the-korean-war-armistice>

Friday, July 28, 2023

N. Korea suffers economic contraction for 3rd straight year in 2022

In North Korea:

[New drones conduct flyovers as North Korea shows off nukes at military parade](#) (NK News, 07/28/2023)

[N. Korea suffers economic contraction for 3rd straight year in 2022: BOK report](#) (Yonhap, 07/28/2023)

[N. Korea showcases drones, ICBMs at military parade on armistice anniv.](#) (Yonhap, 07/28/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korean ambassador says N. Korean threats will only lead to stronger deterrence from S. Korea-U.S. alliance](#) (Yonhap, 07/28/2023)

[Unification ministry to downsize, overhaul organization amid strained inter-Korean ties](#) (Yonhap, 07/28/2023)

[Yoon hails UN troops who defended ROK from North Korea's 'totalitarian forces'](#) (NK News, 07/28/2023)

[Yoon Suk-yeol appoints new unification minister despite opposition objections](#) (NK News, 07/28/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[South Korean POWs abandoned for decades in North Korea](#) (BBC News, 07/27/2023)

International:

[Brother of man slain by North Korea to meet with family of Japanese abductees](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/28/2023)

[North Korean missiles pose greater threat to Japan than ever. Tokyo says](#) (NK News, 07/28/2023)

[Putin thanks North Korea for supporting Russia's invasion of Ukraine](#) (NK News, 07/28/2023)

[Senate approves nomination of special envoy for N. Korean human rights](#) (Yonhap, 07/28/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea showcased new military drones, an underwater attack drone, and its largest nuclear missiles at a military parade in Pyongyang. North Korean defense minister Kang Sun

Nam reportedly delivered a speech at the event, saying: “Now, the question is not if a nuclear war will occur on the Korean Peninsula, but rather who will ignite this nuclear war and when.” (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

- North Korea poses a more severe threat to Japan than ever before, Tokyo’s new defense white paper states, necessitating “counterstrike capabilities” in case the DPRK carries out ballistic missile attacks. (Kosuke Takahashi, [NK News](#))
- In 2022, North Korea’s economy faced its third consecutive year of contraction, mainly due to ongoing global sanctions, strict border controls, and unfavorable weather conditions. The economy is estimated to have shrunk by 0.2 percent, following previous declines of 4.5 percent in 2020 and 0.1 percent in 2021. Despite some increase in foreign trade, especially with China, the overall economic situation remained difficult, and the country’s gross national income and GNI per capita remained significantly lower than those of its southern neighbor. (Park Sang-soo, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea staged a massive military parade in Pyongyang to mark the 70th anniversary of the Korean War armistice, displaying its latest intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and drones as a show of military strength. North Korean leader Kim Jong-un was present at the parade, along with senior officials from China and Russia, aiming to demonstrate solidarity with their allies amid heightened tensions caused by Pyongyang’s continued missile tests. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea’s ambassador to the United States, Cho Hyun-dong, emphasized the significance of the South Korea-U.S. alliance on the 70th anniversary of the Korean Armistice Agreement, which ended the Korean War. He highlighted the need to strengthen the alliance in the face of North Korea’s growing nuclear and missile threats, stating that history has shown the importance of a strong defense posture to deter aggression. The recent establishment of the ROK-U.S. Nuclear Consultative Group is seen as a concrete step towards implementing measures outlined in the historic Washington Declaration to address the evolving security challenges posed by North Korea. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean Unification Ministry has announced a restructuring plan to streamline its organizational structure by merging four divisions, including those overseeing inter-Korean exchange, amid frozen ties and growing security tensions with North Korea. The plan also includes relocating around 15 percent of its workforce and establishing a new unit to handle prisoners of war and South Koreans detained in the North, while emphasizing the ministry’s role in intelligence analysis and promoting public awareness on reunification. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol paid tribute to U.N. forces who defended the ROK against North Korean invasion and whose “blood-stained uniforms” laid the foundation for the country’s freedom and prosperity, marking the 70th anniversary of the armistice agreement that halted hostilities in the Korean War. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol appointed scholar Kim Yung-ho as the country’s new unification minister on Friday, despite controversy over his YouTube channel and advocacy for regime change in North Korea. The appointment coincided with the ministry’s announcement that it will “reshuffle” 80 personnel as part of Yoon’s efforts to deemphasize dialogue and cooperation. Four departments that handle inter-Korean dialogue will be merged into a single unit, according to the ministry. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- At the age of 92, Lee Dae-bong, a former South Korean soldier, endured over five decades of captivity in a North Korean coal mine after being captured during the Korean War. Only a few managed to escape, including him and Chae Ah-in, the daughter of another prisoner. Despite their suffering and desire for recognition, the issue of prisoners of war remains largely unresolved, and the dream of peace and reunification between North and South Korea feels increasingly distant, even after 70 years since the armistice. (Jean Mackenzie, [BBC News](#))

International:

- Lee Rae-jin, the brother of a late South Korean fisheries official who was killed by North Korean soldiers, expressed hope for a joint response to human rights violations by North Korea during a meeting with Japanese families. He believes that coming together and sharing their pain can lead to new solutions and ideas in their quest for justice. The late official drifted into North Korean waters, and former top officials are currently under trial for alleged attempts to cover up the circumstances surrounding his death. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Russian defense chief Sergei Shoigu delivered a message from Vladimir Putin thanking North Korea for supporting the invasion of Ukraine on Thursday, according to DPRK state media, while also holding one-on-one talks with Kim Jong Un. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- The U.S. Senate has approved Julie Turner as the new special envoy for North Korean human rights by a voice vote, following her nomination by President Joe Biden six months ago. Turner, who currently serves as the director of East Asia and the Pacific at the state department, will be the first U.S. special envoy for North Korean human rights since 2017. She highlighted the severity of the human rights crisis in North Korea during her confirmation hearing and emphasized the connection between the country's widespread violations and abuses and the threat it poses to international security. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gabrielle Drinkwine, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://mailchi.mp/256111b0c0e/hrnk-news-items-commemorating-the-70th-anniversary-of-the-korean-war-armistice-12236567>

Saturday, July 29, 2023

US says Shoigu looking for weapons in North Korea

In North Korea:

[Kim meets with Chinese official after two cheer on nukes at military parade](#) (NK News, 07/29/2023)
[N.K. leader meets with Chinese delegation after armistice anniv.](#) (Yonhap, 07/29/2023)

In South Korea:

[Unification ministry to create unit supporting victims of North Korean abductions](#) (The Korea Times, 07/29/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Satellite photos reveal N. Korea discharged dam water without notice](#) (Yonhap, 07/29/2023)

International:

[Biden to host trilateral summit with S. Korean, Japanese leaders at Camp David next month](#) (Yonhap, 07/29/2023)

[S. Korea, US stage joint anti-submarine drills involving nuclear-powered sub](#) (Yonhap, 07/29/2023)

[Travis King's family share disbelief at his defection to North Korea](#) (The Independent, 07/29/2023)

[Ukraine fires North Korea rockets to blast Russian positions](#) (Financial Times, 07/29/2023)

[Unification ministry to create unit supporting victims of North Korean abductions](#) (The Korea Times, 07/29/2023)

[US says Shoigu looking for weapons in North Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 07/29/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has met with a Chinese delegation, a day after commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Korean War armistice, the North's state media reported Saturday. (Kim Na-young, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- The ministry said on Friday that it will launch a new department dedicated to supporting the victims of abduction by North Korea as part of its reform effort to focus more on the North's poor human rights record in handling inter-Korean relations. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Satellite photos have detected signs of North Korea releasing water from a dam in the border area despite South Korea's request to give prior notice, a U.S.-based radio company reported Saturday. (Kim Na-young, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- President Joe Biden will host a three-way summit with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida here in Washington next month, the White House said Friday. (Shim Sun-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the United States staged combined anti-submarine drills, involving a US nuclear-powered submarine, in waters south of the Korean Peninsula on Saturday, Seoul's Navy said, amid joint efforts to reinforce readiness against North Korean military threats. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

- The family of a [US Army](#) private who fled across the border into North Korea have issued a fresh plea to the Biden administration to do whatever it takes to bring him home. (Bevan Hurley, [The Independent](#))
- Ukrainian artillery crews have been firing rockets made in North Korea against Russian positions, turning Pyongyang's munitions against the invasion forces of its ally President Vladimir Putin. (Christopher Miller, [Financial Times](#))
- The ministry said on Friday that it will launch a new department dedicated to supporting the victims of abduction by North Korea as part of its reform effort to focus more on the North's poor human rights record in handling inter-Korean relations. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Saturday that the United States believes Russia's defense minister is in North Korea to secure supplies of weapons to aid his country's stalled invasion of Ukraine. ([The Korea Times](#))

Prepared by Ava Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527102349/https://mailchi.mp/256111b0c0e/hrnk-news-items-commemorating-the-70th-anniversary-of-the-korean-war-armistice-12236567>

Sunday, July 30, 2023

North castigates South's 'human rights abuses' in report

In South Korea:

[Seoul speeds up deployment of anti-drone measures against N. Korea's evolving threats](#) (*The Korea Times*, 07/30/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[North castigates South's 'human rights abuses' in report](#) (*Korea JoongAng Daily*, 07/30/2023)

International:

[N. Korea looks to cement Russia ties amid tension](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 07/30/2023)

[N. Korea registers 7 judokas for Asian Games](#) (*Yonhap*, 07/30/2023)

[North Korea, China reaffirm military ties in top-level Pyongyang meeting](#) (*UPI*, 07/29/2023)

[North Korea turns to Russia, China as Asia enters 'Cold War 2.0'](#) (*Nikkei Asia*, 07/30/2023)

In South Korea:

- South Korea is seeking to speed up the deployment of anti-drone killers after North Korea unveiled new surveillance and attack drones that appeared to be almost identical to the U.S. Global Hawk and Reaper unmanned aerial vehicles. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea recently published its own human rights report to counter the one released by the South Korean government. The paper, which criticizes South Korea's human rights violations, was issued on July 21 by Pyongyang Publishing House under the United Front Department of the Workers' Party of Korea. (Bae Jae-sung, Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- The North's state media said Saturday that the regime will bolster exchanges with Russia and China, its two biggest allies, to deal with the changing global political landscape. Pyongyang highlighted the message in particular for Moscow rather than Beijing -- its traditional ally -- amid rising tension between Russia and the US. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea has registered seven judokas to compete in the upcoming Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, the roster showed Sunday. The North's planned participation in the Sept. 23-Oct. 8 event marks its first registration in a major international sporting event since the 2018 Jakarta Palembang Asian Games. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and top Chinese officials have reaffirmed the close military ties between the two communist nations, official media reported Saturday. (Simon Druker, [UPI](#))
- North Korean state media reported Friday on a massive military parade staged in Pyongyang with a Russian delegation led by Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and a Chinese delegation led by Li Hongzhong, vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the Chinese National People's Congress, in attendance. The North's decision to invite the Russian and Chinese delegations highlights the strengthening of this trilateral bloc while South Korea makes parallel moves to strengthen military cooperation with the U.S. (Gabriela Bernal, [Nikkei Asia](#))

Prepared by Jody Chen, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527102454/https://mailchi.mp/f8b87f505b5e/hrnk-news-items-0730-2023>

Monday, July 31, 2023

Bill proposed to protect North Korea escapees' support funds

In North Korea:

[North Korean economy contracts for third straight year in 2022: Bank of Korea](#) (NK News, 07/31/2023)

[North Korean hackers appear to impersonate US military in new phishing campaign](#) (NK News, 07/31/2023)

In South Korea:

[Bill proposed to protect North Korea escapees' support funds](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/31/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Seoul demands North Korea stop arms sales after its rockets show up in Ukraine](#) (NK News, 07/31/2023)

[Seoul dismisses Pyongyang's report on South's human rights](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 07/31/2023)

[S. Korea voices 'strong' regret over Pyongyang's military parade marking armistice anniv.](#) (Yonhap, 07/31/2023)

International:

[S. Korea seeks concrete results from summit with US, Japan](#) (The Korea Herald, 07/31/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea's economy contracted for the third straight year in 2022, according to a new Bank of Korea (BOK) report, in what appears to be a result of the DPRK's ongoing COVID-19 border restrictions, international sanctions and the impact of severe weather. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korean hackers may be behind a new phishing campaign in South Korea impersonating the U.S. military, according to cybersecurity researchers. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korean Rep. Ji Seong-ho, who fled North Korea in 2006, proposed a bill that protects North Korean escapees from having their cash assistance taken away by "brokers." (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea's defense ministry demanded that North Korea "immediately" cease all arms sales on Monday, in response to the first confirmation that DPRK rockets have appeared on the battlefield in Ukraine. (Ifang Bremer, Yeji Chung, [NK News](#))
- The Unification Ministry on Monday hit back at North Korea's latest report on the state of South Korean human rights, which included a myriad of unfounded claims regarding life in the South. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's unification ministry expressed "strong" regret Monday over North Korea's military parade marking the 70th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice Agreement last week and urged Pyongyang to choose the "right" path for peace. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- South Korea is discussing a joint statement on expanding trilateral security and economic ties with the US and Japan during a summit at Camp David in Maryland on Aug. 18, according to South Korea's presidential office. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527102758/https://mailchi.mp/160bed2d2ac4/hrnk-news-items-bill-proposed-to-protect-north-korea-escapees-support-funds>

8. AUGUST

Tuesday, August 1, 2023

N. Korea ramps up efforts to cope with heat wave; U.S. threatens more sanctions after Russian visit to North

In North Korea:

[N. Korea frequently releases water from dam near inter-Korean border in July: Seoul](#) (Yonhap, 08/01/2023)

[N. Korea ramps up efforts to cope with heat wave](#) (Yonhap, 08/01/2023)

In South Korea:

[JCS chief orders army to deliver 'decisive blow' to North Korean 'provocations'](#) (NK News, 08/01/2023)

[NGO releases paper solidifying links between NK's Kim family and crimes against humanity](#) (The Korea Times, 08/01/2023)

International:

[Biden sees Korea-US-Japan ties as special: envoy](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/01/2023)

[Cloud company assisted 17 different government hacking groups -US researchers](#) (Reuters, 08/01/2023)

[U.S. threatens more sanctions after Russian visit to North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/01/2023)

[U.S. will impose sanctions on N. Korea, Russia when necessary: state dept.](#) (Yonhap, 08/01/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea frequently released water from a dam near the inter-Korean border in July despite South Korea's request for prior notice, Seoul's unification ministry said Tuesday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has ramped up efforts to prepare for a heat wave, calling measures to cope with scorching temperatures an "important" political task, state media said Tuesday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- The chief of South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) has instructed soldiers to deliver a "decisive blow that cuts off the breath" of North Korea if its military conducts "provocations" at the border during upcoming U.S.-ROK summertime drills. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Nonprofit organization NK Watch held a press conference, July 25, to present its new report, titled "The Suryong Dictatorship Mechanism: Who Is Ultimately Responsible for Crimes Against Humanity." The 239-page document solidifies the links between Kim Jong-un's regime and the brutal oppression North Korea has become infamous for. (Rachel Stine, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- The summit US President Joe Biden is hosting on Aug. 18 for South Korea and Japan at Camp David in Maryland, the first of its kind, is evidence that Biden considers the alliance special, South Korea's ambassador to the US said Monday. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- An obscure cloud service company has been providing state-sponsored hackers with internet services to spy on and extort their victims, a cybersecurity firm said in a report to be published on Tuesday. (Raphael Satter, Christopher Bing, [Reuters](#))
- Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu's recent trip to North Korea elicited a warning on Monday from the U.S. State Department that Washington "won't hesitate" to impose sanctions on entities that are found to be supporting Pyongyang or Moscow's military programs. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The United States will not hesitate to impose sanctions on North Korea and Russia when necessary, a state department spokesperson said Monday, following the Russian defense minister's trip to Pyongyang that many believe may lead to increased military cooperation between the two countries. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527103029/https://mailchi.mp/b40078c3d867/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-ramps-up-efforts-to-cope-with-heat-wave-us-threatens-more-sanctions-after-russian-visit-to-north>

Wednesday, August 2, 2023

North Korea responds to UN Command on US Private Travis King, Pentagon says

In North Korea:

[North Korea appears to test rocket engine as it preps for next satellite launch](#) (NK News, 08/02/2023)

[What is life like for disabled people in North Korea?](#) (NK News, 08/02/2023)

In South Korea:

[Unification minister to meet civic group chiefs over abductees, detainees in N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 08/02/2023)

International:

[China Holds the Key to Halting North Korea's 7th Nuke Test](#) (The Diplomat, 08/01/2023)

[Groups urge discussion on issue of abductees, detainees in N. Korea at Camp David summit](#) (Yonhap, 08/02/2023)

[North Korea responds to UN Command on US soldier Travis King who ran across border](#) (The Telegraph, 08/01/2023)

[North Korea responds to UN Command on US Private Travis King, Pentagon says](#) (Reuters, 08/01/2023)

[N. Korea slams France for staging joint air drills with S. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 08/02/2023)

[N. Korea slams new U.S. human rights envoy as 'wicked' meddler in sovereign state affairs](#) (Yonhap, 08/02/2023)

[Possible weapons trade between Russia, N. Korea shows difficulties facing Moscow: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 08/02/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea appears to have conducted a rocket engine test at its main spaceport in July, possibly to troubleshoot the launch vehicle that failed to put a military satellite in orbit in late May and prepare for the next attempt, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- Life is harsh for everyone in North Korea. But for disabled people, it's even worse. People with serious disabilities are almost invisible. Even in Pyongyang, support systems for the disabled are virtually nonexistent. There are no wheelchairs or automatic doors. With few available means of movement, they are usually stuck at home. (Jung Min-ho, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's new unification minister will meet with chiefs of civic groups dedicated to resolving the issue of abductees and detainees in North Korea this week as his first official schedule since the inauguration, his office said Wednesday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Against this backdrop, China must reconsider its stance on the hiring of North Korean workers. Their repatriation – in line with U.N. Security Council resolutions – could be instrumental in curbing the North's nuclear ambitions. While it may seem like a small measure, such repatriation would send a strong message to Pyongyang. Blocking North Korea's most reliable source of hard currency will jeopardize its plans to advance its nuclear missile program, dealing a decisive blow to the Kim Jong Un regime, which has survived on the lifeline of Beijing's backing. (Min-yong Lee, [The Diplomat](#))
- Civic groups on North Korea's human rights said Wednesday they have sent an open letter to President Yoon Suk Yeol calling for discussing the issue of abductees and detainees in the North during his upcoming summit with the leaders of the United States and Japan at Camp David. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has acknowledged a United Nations Command request for information on US soldier Travis King who bolted across the country's border last month, the Pentagon has said. But Pyongyang stopped short of giving any details about the 23-year-old's whereabouts. (Susie Coen, [The Telegraph](#))
- North Korea has offered a very brief response to the United Nations Command about a U.S. soldier who dashed over the heavily-guarded border with South Korea on July 18 and was immediately taken into custody, the Pentagon said on Tuesday. However, Pentagon spokesperson Brigadier General Patrick Ryder said that North Korea only acknowledged the U.N. Command's request for information about U.S. Army Private Travis King and stopped short of offering detailed information about him. (Idrees Ali, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea on Wednesday lambasted France for holding a combined air exercise with South Korea for the first time last week, decrying it as an "undisguised military provocation" threatening the North's security. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea on Wednesday denounced the new U.S. special envoy for the North's human rights as a "wicked woman" who has plotted anti-Pyongyang campaigns over rights issues and meddled in the internal affairs of sovereign states. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The potential weapons trade between North Korea and Russia demonstrates the dire situation Russia finds itself in amid its ongoing war against Ukraine, a Pentagon spokesperson said Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gloria Guo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527103220/https://mailchi.mp/587246e131ca/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-ramps-up-efforts-to-cope-with-heat-wave-us-threatens-more-sanctions-after-russian-visit-to-north-12236583>

Thursday, August 3, 2023

North Korea respond to UN Command on US soldier Travis King who ran across border

In North Korea:

[North Korea appears to test rocket engine as it preps for next satellite launch](#) (NK News, 08/02/2023)

[What is life like for disabled people in North Korea?](#) (NK News, 08/02/2023)

In South Korea:

[Unification minister to meet civic group chiefs over abductees, detainees in N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 08/02/2023)

International:

[China Holds the Key to Halting North Korea's 7th Nuke Test](#) (The Diplomat, 08/01/2023)

[Groups urge discussion on issue of abductees, detainees in N. Korea at Camp David summit](#) (Yonhap, 08/02/2023)

[North Korea responds to UN Command on US soldier Travis King who ran across border](#) (The Telegraph, 08/01/2023)

[North Korea responds to UN Command on US Private Travis King. Pentagon says](#) (Reuters, 08/01/2023)

[N. Korea slams France for staging joint air drills with S. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 08/02/2023)

[N. Korea slams new U.S. human rights envoy as 'wicked' meddler in sovereign state affairs](#) (Yonhap, 08/02/2023)

[Possible weapons trade between Russia, N. Korea shows difficulties facing Moscow: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 08/02/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea appears to have conducted a rocket engine test at its main spaceport in July, possibly to troubleshoot the launch vehicle that failed to put a military satellite in orbit in late May and prepare for the next attempt, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- Life is harsh for everyone in North Korea. But for disabled people, it's even worse. People with serious disabilities are almost invisible. Even in Pyongyang, support systems for the disabled are virtually nonexistent. There are no wheelchairs or automatic doors. With few available means of movement, they are usually stuck at home. (Jung Min-ho, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's new unification minister will meet with chiefs of civic groups dedicated to resolving the issue of abductees and detainees in North Korea this week as his first official schedule since the inauguration, his office said Wednesday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Against this backdrop, China must reconsider its stance on the hiring of North Korean workers. Their repatriation – in line with U.N. Security Council resolutions – could be instrumental in curbing the North's nuclear ambitions. While it may seem like a small measure, such repatriation would send a strong message to Pyongyang. Blocking North Korea's most reliable source of hard currency will jeopardize its plans to advance its nuclear missile program, dealing a decisive blow to the Kim Jong Un regime, which has survived on the lifeline of Beijing's backing. (Min-yong Lee, [The Diplomat](#))
- Civic groups on North Korea's human rights said Wednesday they have sent an open letter to President Yoon Suk Yeol calling for discussing the issue of abductees and detainees in the North during his upcoming summit with the leaders of the United States and Japan at Camp David. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has acknowledged a United Nations Command request for information on US soldier Travis King who bolted across the country's border last month, the Pentagon has said. But Pyongyang stopped short of giving any details about the 23-year-old's whereabouts. (Susie Coen, [The Telegraph](#))
- North Korea has offered a very brief response to the United Nations Command about a U.S. soldier who dashed over the heavily-guarded border with South Korea on July 18 and was immediately taken into custody, the Pentagon said on Tuesday. However, Pentagon spokesperson Brigadier General Patrick Ryder said that North Korea only acknowledged the U.N. Command's request for information about U.S. Army Private Travis King and stopped short of offering detailed information about him. (Idrees Ali, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea on Wednesday lambasted France for holding a combined air exercise with South Korea for the first time last week, decrying it as an "undisguised military provocation" threatening the North's security. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Wednesday denounced the new U.S. special envoy for the North's human rights as a "wicked woman" who has plotted anti-Pyongyang campaigns over rights issues and meddled in the internal affairs of sovereign states. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The potential weapons trade between North Korea and Russia demonstrates the dire situation Russia finds itself in amid its ongoing war against Ukraine, a Pentagon spokesperson said Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gloria Guo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527103328/https://mailchi.mp/98d29e89e84c/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-respond-to-un-command-on-us-soldier-travis-king-who-ran-across-border>

Friday, August 4, 2023

The Curious Case of Pvt Travis King - U.S. Serviceman Flees to North Korea

Top News:

[The Curious Case of Pvt Travis King - U.S. Serviceman Flees to North Korea](#) (KEI, 08/02/2023)

In North Korea:

[Imitation Is the Sincerest Form: North Korea Unveils Two Types of Copycat UAVs](#) (38 North, 08/04/2023)

[N. Korea criticizes U.S. weapons package for Taiwan](#) (Yonhap, 08/04/2023)

In South Korea:

[Foreign ministry sets up task force to address diplomatic offices' concerns over jamboree](#) (Yonhap, 08/04/2023)

[Police to beef up patrols, stop and searches in wake of back-to-back stabbing rampages](#) (Yonhap, 08/04/2023)

[Threats of copycat crimes follow department store stabbing rampage near Seoul](#) (Yonhap, 08/04/2023)

[Yoon orders providing unlimited air-conditioned buses, freezer trucks for jamboree event](#) (Yonhap, 08/04/2023)

International:

[China executes S. Korean drug offender for 1st time in 9 years](#) (Yonhap, 08/04/2023)

[Crypto Heists Funneling Billions to North Korea's Nuclear Program Attract Senate Scrutiny](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 08/04/2023)

[Ex-UN expert says China, Russia sabotaging North Korea sanctions investigations](#) (NK News, 08/04/2023)

[Ex-U.N. panel coordinator says UNSC 'completely deadlocked' in imposing sanctions against N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 08/04/2023)

[N. Korea considering providing military support to Russia: NSC](#) (Yonhap, 08/04/2023)

[North Korea quarantined Russian diplomats after Shoigu visit, embassy says](#) (NK News, 08/04/2023)

[S. Korea, Japan to hold additional talks over Fukushima plan Monday](#) (Yonhap, 08/04/2023)

[South Korea tries to fill Vietnam's security void after Russia's invasion of Ukraine](#) (The Korea Times, 08/04/2023)

[White House says top Russian official pitched North Korea on increasing sale of munitions to Moscow](#) (AP News, 08/03/2023)

Top News:

- Americans held by North Korea, including both military defectors as well as tourists and business detainees, have been treated with little sensitivity or compassion. The initial assumption is that these individuals are seeking to harm the regime and that they are agents of the hostile United States, and they are treated harshly. The questioning starts with an assumption of guilt and malice on the part of the detainees... Based on past experience with Americans in North Korea, we are not likely to get any information until the interrogation is completed. (Robert King, [KEI](#))

In North Korea:

- During an arms exhibition and military parade on July 26-27, North Korea revealed it is producing two new types of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) that strongly resemble the large US Global Hawk and the medium-sized US Reaper. Pyongyang's drone development was one of the many goals set during its Eighth Party Congress in 2021. However, while these new drones may look like US UAVs, the quality of the components hidden inside the airframes, which will determine their actual performance, is still unknown. (Vann H. Van Diepen, [38 North](#))
- North Korea warned Friday that Washington's plan to provide weapons to Taiwan reflects its "sinister intention" to deter China and will heighten regional tensions to an "ignition point of war." (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- The foreign ministry on Friday established a temporary task force to address concerns raised by diplomatic offices in South Korea over the scorching heat wave and other issues marring the 25th World Scout Jamboree underway in the southwestern coastal region. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Police will beef up patrols and stop and search operations for suspicious people on the streets in the wake of back-to-back mass stabbings, the national police chief said Friday, declaring a "special policing" operation. (Kim Hyun-soo, [Yonhap](#))
- A series of threats to commit copycat crimes have been posted online following a stabbing rampage at a department store in Bundang, just south of Seoul, sending police to step up patrols and hunt down the writers, authorities said Friday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol instructed the government Friday to provide unlimited air-conditioned buses and refrigerator trucks to protect young participants of the World Scout Jamboree from the scorching heat wave, according to his spokesperson. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- China executed a South Korean drug offender Friday for the first time in nine years, an official at Seoul's foreign ministry said. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Three Democratic senators are pressing the Biden administration to disclose more information about its efforts to counteract North Korea's dependence on stolen cryptocurrency to fund its nuclear program, calling Pyongyang's growing reliance on digital assets to evade sanctions a severe national security threat. (Dustin Volz, [The Wall Street Journal](#))

- The former head of the U.N. Panel of Experts overseeing North Korea sanctions chastised Russia and China on Friday for obstructing the panel's work and sabotaging its investigations. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- A former U.N. panel expert on North Korea said Friday the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) remains "completely deadlocked" in imposing sanctions against Pyongyang's banned weapons programs, apparently criticizing China and Russia for failing to remain impartial and vetoing sanctions. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea is considering providing additional military support to Russia, including munitions to be used in the latter's ongoing war in Ukraine, a National Security Council (NSC) official said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea quarantined the Russian Embassy for one week after the departure of a Russian military delegation last Thursday, an embassy representative told NK News, raising questions about Pyongyang's current COVID-19 policies and the possibility the visits were conducted inside a bubble. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- South Korea and Japan will hold another director-general-level meeting through video conference next week to discuss Seoul's requests regarding Tokyo's plan to discharge contaminated water from the crippled Fukushima nuclear power plant, an official said Friday. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))
- Vietnam's unique geopolitical landscape makes South Korea ideal defense partner, says expert. Vietnam's diplomatic reputation has taken a hit, while the Southeast Asian country's weapons procurement channel was also disrupted due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. (Kang Hyun-kyung, [The Korea Times](#))
- The White House on Thursday said U.S. intelligence officials have determined that Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu spoke last week to North Korean officials during a visit to Pyongyang about increasing the sale of munitions to Moscow for its war in Ukraine. (Aamer Madhani, [AP News](#))

Prepared by Kaylee Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527103438/https://mailchi.mp/5a315534e9ac/hrnk-news-items-the-curious-case-of-pvt-travis-king-us-serviceman-flees-to-north-korea>

Saturday, August 5, 2023

US declines to invoke prisoner of war status for Travis King

In South Korea:

[Arrest warrant issued for 2nd son of Sewol ferry operator's late owner](#) (Yonhap, 08/05/2023)

[Arrest warrant issued for stabbing rampage suspect](#) (Yonhap, 08/05/2023)

[Seoul police nab 3 more people suspected of copycat crime threats following stabbing rampage](#) (Yonhap, 08/05/2023)

[World Scout Jamboree continues despite U.S., U.K. withdrawals amid heat wave](#) (Yonhap, 08/05/2023)

International:

[Permanent Mission of North Korea to U.N. defends Pyongyang's nuclear weapons as sovereign right](#) (Reuters, 08/04/2023)

[Positive views growing for annual 3-way summit between S. Korea, US, Japan](#) (The Korea Times, 08/04/2023)

[US declines to invoke prisoner of war status for Travis King](#) (Reuters, 08/04/2023)

[What Are North Korea's Nuclear-Weapon Capabilities and Is the Threat Expanding?](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 08/03/2023)

In South Korea:

- A local court issued a warrant Saturday to arrest the second son of Yoo Byung-eun, the late chairman of Semo Group, linked to the deadly Sewol ferry sinking in 2014, on charges of embezzlement. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- A local court issued a warrant Saturday to arrest the suspect in a stabbing rampage earlier this week that wounded 14 people in Bundang, south of Seoul. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- Seoul police have apprehended three more people suspected of threatening to commit copycat crimes in Seoul following a recent stabbing rampage on the outskirts of the capital, officials said Saturday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Representatives of the participating countries decided to go ahead with the World Scout Jamboree on Saturday despite sweltering temperatures and other challenges that led U.S., British and other Scouts to pull out from the campsite on the country's southwest coast. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The Permanent Mission of North Korea to the United Nations has criticized the U.S. for having nuclear weapons and urged it to stop "sharing nuclear" or "beefing up extended deterrence," state media KCNA reported on Saturday. ([Reuters](#))
- Seoul, Washington and Tokyo are having "positive views" on holding their trilateral summit annually, and tangible outcomes can be expected from the upcoming three-way summit scheduled for Aug. 18, South Korea's National Security Director Cho Tae-yong said Friday. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- The United States has declined so far to classify Army Private Travis King as a prisoner of war, despite his being taken into North Korean custody after he crossed into the country last month, four U.S. officials told Reuters. (Phil Stewart, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea sees its nuclear program as essential to regime survival, serving to deter a U.S.-led invasion. Decades of denuclearization talks, economic sanctions, and diplomacy have done little to slow Pyongyang's advance to becoming a self-declared nuclear state. (Timothy W. Martin, [The Wall Street Journal](#))

Prepared by Kaylee Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527103552/https://mailchi.mp/7b949ffb1e19/hrnk-news-items-us-declines-to-invoke-prisoner-of-war-status-for-travis-king>

Sunday, August 6, 2023

Kim Jong Un inspects nuke launcher and drone engine plants, fires sniper rifles

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un inspects nuke launcher and drone engine plants, fires sniper rifles](#) (NK News, 08/06/2023)

[Kim Jong Un tells North Korea arms factories to boost capacity](#) (Reuters, 08/06/2023)

[N. Korean leader inspects major weapons factories: state media](#) (Yonhap, 08/06/2023)

[N. Korean leader makes rare visits to key arms factories](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/06/2023)

[Russia ally Kim Jong-un demands more North Korean weapons output](#) (The Guardian, 08/06/2023)

[Why are over 70% of North Korean defectors female?](#) (The Korea Times, 08/06/2023)

In South Korea:

[Why Some Koreans Want Nuclear Weapons](#) (The National Interest, 08/06/2023)

In North Korea:

- Kim Jong Un inspected North Korea's most advanced weaponry including multiple-launch rocket systems (MLRS) and engines for cruise missiles and drones this week as part of the country's "war preparation," state media reported Sunday. (Anton Sokolin, Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has instructed factories making missile engines, artillery and other weapons to boost capacity as an important part of bolstering the country's defence capabilities, state media said on Sunday. (Jack Kim, [Reuters](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has conducted a three-day inspection of major arms factories, including those that produce shells of large-caliber multiple rocket launchers and engines of strategic cruise missiles, state media said Sunday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has conducted a series of rare visits to his country's arms factories, underscoring their role in war preparations, notably in the run-up to major defense-oriented military exercises between South Korea and the United States. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Kim Jong-un visited several major North Korean arms factories this week, including facilities making engines for strategic cruise missiles, and called for increased weapons production, state media has reported. ([The Guardian](#))
- Every day, news about North Korea is broadcast to the world — updates on ballistic missile launches, nuclear threats and spy satellites. While many are intrigued by the country's rampant military threats and mysterious operations, significantly less attention is paid to the people that flee over its borders. (Elinor Ketelhohn, [The Korea Times](#))

In South Korea:

- This year, an American nuclear submarine docked at a Korean port for the second time. This results from the Washington Declaration, an agreement between ROK president Yoon Suk Yeol and U.S. president Joe Biden. Struck in April, the compact reassures Seoul of the

continuing coverage of Washington's nuclear umbrella, calming national fervor in support of a Korean nuclear program. (Mitchell Blatt, [The National Interest](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527103809/https://mailchi.mp/87b3f8fe6e6b/hrnk-news-items-kim-jong-un-inspects-uke-launcher-and-drone-engine-plants-fires-sniper-rifles>

Monday, August 7, 2023

NK hackers breached top Russian missile maker; UNC says unclear when JSA tours will resume

In North Korea:

[Exclusive: North Korean hackers breached top Russian missile maker](#) (Reuters, 08/07/2023)

[N. Korean leader's visits to arms factories apparently had 'multiple' purposes: Seoul](#) (Yonhap, 08/07/2023)

[North Korea insists it is 'responsible nuclear state,' slams US nuke policy](#) (NK News, 08/07/2023)

[North Korea's arms exports to Russia likely to increase: analysts](#) (The Korea Times, 08/07/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea's top general visits key Air Force, Navy, Marine units to check readiness](#) (Yonhap, 08/07/2023)

International:

[UNC says unclear when JSA tours will resume, weeks after Travis King crossing](#) (NK News, 08/07/2023)

[US senators pressure Biden to crack down on North Korean cryptocurrency theft](#) (NK News, 08/07/2023)

In North Korea:

- An elite group of North Korean hackers secretly breached computer networks at a major Russian missile developer for at least five months last year, according to technical evidence reviewed by Reuters and analysis by security researchers. Reuters found cyber-espionage teams linked to the North Korean government, which security researchers call ScarCruft and Lazarus, secretly installed stealthy digital backdoors into systems at NPO Mashinostroyeniya, a rocket design bureau based in Reutov, a small town on the outskirts of Moscow. (James Pearson, Christopher Bing, [Reuters](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un appears to have visited major weapons factories last week for "multiple" purposes, including a response to a planned military exercise between Seoul and Washington, and an intention for arms exports, South Korea's unification ministry said Monday. The North's leader inspected key weapons factories, including those producing

shells for large-caliber multiple rocket launchers and engines for strategic cruise missiles, from Thursday to Saturday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea insisted that it is a “responsible nuclear weapons state” on Saturday in response to recent criticism of its ongoing weapons development, while slamming the U.S. for allegedly undermining global nuclear nonproliferation efforts. The DPRK’s mission in Vienna released a statement amid an ongoing “preparatory meeting” in the city for the 2026 Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference, following introductory remarks by various countries critical of North Korea’s ongoing nuclear weapons development efforts. (Chad O’Carroll, [NK News](#))
- After North Korean leader Kim Jong-un inspected key weapons factories from Thursday to Saturday, its state media honed in on “defense business” — a term it has never before used. Speaking to reporters on Monday, Koo Byoung-sam, the spokesman for the Unification Ministry, said that recent signs indicate that North Korea might be seeking to export arms to Russia, a country in need due to its invasion of Ukraine. For some experts, the ministry’s analysis is a bit too conservative. They believe that North Korea has already violated the resolutions by sending arms to Moscow and that the size of its exports of “Russia-tailored” weapons will likely expand further. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

In South Korea:

- Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Chairman Gen. Kim Seung-kyum visited front-line Air Force, Navy and Marine units Monday to check readiness amid concerns about the possibility of North Korean provocations ahead of a major summertime South Korea-U.S. military exercise. His visit came as Seoul and Washington are preparing to hold the annual Ulchi Freedom Shield (UFS) exercise set to kick off later this month. Pyongyang has denounced the exercise as a war rehearsal against it. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- It remains unclear when tourists will be able to visit the Joint Security Area (JSA) on the inter-Korean border again, the U.N. Command (UNC) told NK News on Monday, nearly three weeks after an American soldier dashed into North Korea during a tour of the sensitive area. The extended suspension marks the latest stumbling block for JSA tours over the last four years, after outbreaks of swine flu and then COVID-19 led to long-term closures from mid-2019. Regular tours resumed following South Korea’s relaxation of virus restrictions in the last year, only for the apparent defection by Travis King to disrupt the momentum toward normalization. (Chad O’Carroll, [NK News](#))
- U.S. lawmakers are pressuring President Joe Biden to take a more decisive stance on North Korean cyberthreats, seeking to cut off funding for the regime’s weapons programs. In a letter released last week, Democratic senators Elizabeth Warren, Tim Kaine and Chris Van Hollen called on the Biden administration to “address North Korea’s reliance on cryptocurrency to evade sanctions” and detail its current and future plans to stop DPRK cybercriminals. The lawmakers also expressed concern about North Korea’s use of digital assets to skirt international sanctions and “fund its illegal weapons programs” in the letter, which they addressed to U.S. Treasury undersecretary Brian Nelson and national security advisor Jake Sullivan. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240625150501/https://mailchi.mp/322d15a4e2f7/hrnk-news-items-nk-hackers-breached-top-russian-missile-maker-unc-says-unclear-when-jsa-tours-will-resume>

Tuesday, August 8, 2023

Kim Jong Un showcases arms production

Top News:

[Kim Jong Un showcases arms production](#) (CNN, 08/08/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea on alert as Typhoon Khanun approaches](#) (Yonhap, 08/08/2023)

[N. Korea urges all-out efforts to minimize damage from Typhoon Khanun](#) (Yonhap, 08/08/2023)

[North Korea invites foreign golfers to join tournament, but doesn't say when](#) (NK News, 08/08/2023)

In South Korea:

[Blue House cut Foreign Ministry out of Thaad talks: Diplomatic sources](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/08/2023)

[Ministry denies report of Tokyo demanding support for Fukushima water release at S. Korea-U.S.-Japan summit](#) (Yonhap, 08/08/2023)

[ROK prosecutors indict 8 people for attempting to smuggle fuel to North Korea](#) (NK News, 08/08/2023)

[Seoul to intensify penalties for unauthorized civilian inter-Korean exchanges](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/08/2023)

[Yoon calls for priority on building deterrence against North Korea](#) (Yonhap, 08/08/2023)

[Yoon says military must be able to 'eliminate' North Korea's threats](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/08/2023)

International:

[North Korean hackers broke into Russian missile producer's systems: Report](#) (NK News, 08/08/2023)

[North Korean hacking of Russian technology highlights distrust between allies: experts](#) (The Korea Times, 08/08/2023)

[U.S. concerned about N. Korea-Russia cooperation, will enforce all sanctions: state dept.](#) (Yonhap, 08/08/2023)

[US vows to enforce sanctions after Russian military plane visits North Korea](#) (NK News, 08/08/2023)

Top News:

- In a recent interview about the U.S. soldier who defected to North Korea, HRNK's Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu said, "Perhaps he doesn't know much, but they will ask questions

about everything, chain of command and control, names, training process, access to bases, any memories that he might have of his military life and his supreme military civilian life." ([CNN](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea on Monday issued an alert against Typhoon Khanun and called for efforts to prevent possible damage as the typhoon was forecast to hit the Korean Peninsula later this week. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Tuesday renewed its call for efforts to minimize potential damage from the approaching Typhoon Khanun, saying the country's economy could be dealt a blow if it does not thoroughly prepare for it. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's official tourism agency has invited foreign golfers to participate in a tournament in Pyongyang, though one expert says this does not necessarily imply an imminent border reopening. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Diplomatic sources say former President Moon Jae-in's office cut the Ministry of Foreign Affairs out of negotiations with China over the deployment of the U.S.-led antimissile Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (Thaad) system, with the Blue House taking direct charge of the talks. (Yoo Jee-hye, Jeong Jin-woo, Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Seoul's foreign ministry on Tuesday denied a media report that Tokyo has insisted on including support for its Fukushima water release plan in a joint statement following a trilateral summit between South Korea, the United States and Japan later this month. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean prosecutors have indicted eight individuals, including the operator of an ROK oil trading company, for allegedly attempting to smuggle nearly 2,000 tons of fuel to North Korea last year. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- The Yoon Suk Yeol government is set to strengthen legal consequences aimed at preventing unauthorized interactions between South and North Korean individuals. A new center will be launched this month to strengthen monitoring of such illicit exchanges, the Unification Ministry said Tuesday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol said Tuesday the military should prioritize building its deterrence capability against North Korea's nuclear and missile threats. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean military must be able to "eliminate" the sources of threats when North Korea launches "provocations" with its nuclear weapons or missiles, President Yoon Suk Yeol said Tuesday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- North Korean cybercriminals broke into a leading Russian missile manufacturer's systems last year, new research revealed Monday, in an apparent attempt to steal classified information to advance its own weapons development. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- A team of North Korean hackers reportedly breached the computer networks of a major Russian weapons maker for at least five months last year, in an episode analysts said demonstrates deep-rooted distrust between the two countries. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

- The United States remains concerned about growing military cooperation between North Korea and Russia, a state department spokesperson said Monday, adding the U.S. will continue to implement all existing sanctions on the two countries. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. is determined to enforce sanctions over North Korea's efforts to "assist" Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the State Department said Monday. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240527132931/https://mailchi.mp/4621a5cbd960/hrnk-news-items-nk-hackers-breached-top-russian-missile-maker-unc-says-unclear-when-isa-tours-will-resume-12236619>

Wednesday, August 9, 2023

North Korea vows to launch satellites at any time, N.K. and Russia defend war in Ukraine during joint showing of a Nazi trials film

In North Korea:

[N. Korea vows to launch satellites at any time](#) (Yonhap, 08/09/2023)

[North Korean hackers moved \\$8.5M in stolen cryptocurrency, researchers say](#) (NK News, 08/09/2023)

In South Korea:

[ROK police investigating claims pastor molested 8 North Korean defector students](#) (NK News, 08/09/2023)

International:

[CTBTO chief urges N. Korea to take 'small step' in nuclear test moratorium](#) (Yonhap, 08/09/2023)

[N. Korea, Russia defend Moscow's war with Ukraine during showing of film over Nazi trials](#) (Yonhap, 08/09/2023)

[U.S. will continue to impose all existing sanctions on N. Korea: state dept.](#) (Yonhap, 08/09/2023)

[Virgil Griffith ignored warnings on crypto dealings with North Korea, FBI says](#) (NK News, 08/09/2023)

In North Korea:

- A North Korean propaganda outlet said Wednesday the country will launch satellites at any time, following its failed attempt to launch its first military spy satellite in late May. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's Lazarus Group moved 8.5 million dollars worth of stolen cryptocurrency across three blockchains earlier this month, according to investigators, in a likely bid to launder up to \$300 million in proceeds from recent attacks on crypto platforms. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Seoul police are investigating a South Korean pastor who runs an alternative school for North Korean defectors on charges of sexually assaulting eight youth and child escapees from the DPRK. (Ifang Bremer, Lina Park, [NK News](#))

International:

- The head of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) said Wednesday that he hopes to see North Korea take a "small step" in committing not to proceed with what would be its seventh nuclear test. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea and Russia reaffirmed their efforts for stronger ties earlier this week during a joint showing of a Russian film portraying post-World War II trials of Nazis, according to the North's state media, in what could be an event to defend Moscow's war with Ukraine. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States will continue to enforce all existing sanctions on North Korea, a state department spokesperson said Tuesday, amid concerns over growing military cooperation between North Korea and its two closest supporters -- China and Russia. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- U.S. cryptocurrency expert Virgil Griffith ignored explicit warnings from the FBI to cease dealings with North Korea ahead of his arrest for helping the country evade sanctions. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528002721/https://mailchi.mp/83673d70f248/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-vows-to-launch-satellites-at-any-time-nk-and-russia-defend-war-in-ukraine-during-joint-showing-of-a-nazi-trials-film>

Thursday, August 10, 2023

N. Korea's Kim calls for bolstering war preparations in 'offensive' way: KCNA

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un fires top general, orders North Korean military to 'gird for war'](#) (CNN, 08/10/2023)

[Kim Jong Un fires top military brass, orders troops to prepare for 'offensive' war](#) (UPI, 08/10/2023)

[North Korea urges citizens to safeguard leader portraits from incoming typhoon](#) (NK News, 08/10/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Kim Jong Un issues 'military action' plan against South Korea: State media](#) (NK News, 08/10/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim calls for bolstering war preparations in 'offensive' way: KCNA](#) (Yonhap, 08/10/2023)

International:

Nicaragua and North Korea to open embassies in each others' capitals: Managua (NK News, 08/10/2023)

NK resumes sports diplomacy to brand itself as 'normal state' (The Korea Times, 08/10/2023)

UN Security Council to meet on rights abuses in North Korea (Reuters, 08/10/2023)

U.S. will impose additional sanctions on N. Korea when necessary: state dept. (Yonhap, 08/10/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has fired his top general amid a shakeup of the country's military leadership and wants his army to "gird for a war," state media reported Thursday. (Brad Lendon, Yoonjung Seo, [CNN](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un sacked his top general while calling for the military to boost weapons production and increase combat drills in preparation for an "offensive" war, state-run media reported Thursday. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- North Korea's top newspaper ordered citizens to prioritize protecting propaganda statues, monuments and murals of the country's leaders from an incoming typhoon on Thursday, despite stating that nothing is more important than "the safety of the people." (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un convened military officials on Wednesday to discuss "offensive" battle plans and "major military actions" against South Korea, according to state media, while photos of the meeting show him pointing at a map of the South. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has called for preparing for a possible war in an "offensive" manner, the North's state media said Thursday, as South Korea and the United States plan to stage joint military drills later this month. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Nicaragua and North Korea will establish new embassies in each others' capitals, Managua has announced, a move that would elevate the two countries' friendship based on shared opposition to the U.S. to the highest level in over three decades. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea is resuming its sports diplomacy with the intention to participate in global sporting events, including the World Cup, after sealing off its borders for almost three years during the COVID-19 pandemic. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- The United Nations Security Council will meet publicly to discuss human rights abuses in North Korea next week, a move requested by the United States, Albania and Japan that is likely to anger Pyongyang and face opposition from China and Russia. (Michelle Nichols, [Reuters](#))
- The United States will continue to enforce its sanctions and impose new ones on North Korea if necessary, a state department spokesperson said Wednesday when asked about possible illegal exports of North Korean products from a joint industrial complex. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Myriam Aribaud, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528004459/https://mailchi.mp/70dbf7bfcaaf/hrnk-news-items-n-koreas-kim-calls-for-bolstering-war-preparations-in-offensive-way-kcna>

Friday, August 11, 2023

Past & Contemporary Dynamics of Gendered Defection among North Koreans

Top News:

[Past & Contemporary Dynamics of Gendered Defection among North Koreans](#) (HRNK YPWP, 08/10/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea put on alert against Typhoon Khanun: minor damage reported](#) (Yonhap, 08/11/2023)

[N. Korea to open border 'very soon' after yearslong closure: travel agency](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/11/2023)

[North Koreans ordered to protect portraits of Kim Jong-un as tropical storm Khanun looms](#) (The Guardian, 08/11/2023)

[North Korean TV pulls all-nighter covering Typhoon Khanun, warns of flooding](#) (NK News, 08/11/2023)

International:

[U.S. remains concerned about N. Korean provocations, will work with allies to ensure peace: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 08/11/2023)

[Rights groups call for UN action to protect North Korean escapees in China](#) (The Korea Times, 08/11/2023)

[Yoon hails importance of UNC as barrier to DPRK's 'communist' unification vision](#) (NK News, 08/11/2023)

[US requests UN Security Council meeting to discuss North Korea human rights](#) (NK News, 08/11/2023)

Top News:

- Previous studies have already addressed how gender roles have influenced individuals' decision to escape North Korea since the great famine in the late 1990s. However, the question of "What causes North Korean women to escape in much larger numbers than men?" requires further explanation. (Elizabeth Jean H.Kim, [HRNK YPWP](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea appeared to be on alert early Friday, airing rare overnight weather forecasts for Typhoon Khanun as it headed north after arriving on the Korean Peninsula the previous day. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea is expected to officially reopen its border "very soon" after years of lockdown, a travel agency specializing in tourism to North Korea announced on Friday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Koreans have been told to do everything possible to protect portraits of the Kim dynasty, as the country braces for heavy rain and strong winds caused by tropical storm Khanun. (Justin McCurry, [The Guardian](#))
- North Korean state media provided continuous updates on Typhoon Khanun throughout the night yesterday and this morning, dispatching reporters to hard-hit areas outside of the capital for the first time since 2020. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

International:

- The United States remains concerned about potential provocations by North Korea, a Pentagon spokesperson said Thursday, after the recalcitrant country noted that it may soon launch a space rocket. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- Human rights activists called for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to take immediate action to protect North Korean refugees in China amid signs of the resumption of Beijing's forcible repatriation of escapees. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol hailed the importance of the U.N. Command (UNC) in ensuring regional stability and acting as a barrier to North Korea's vision of unifying the Korean Peninsula under communism in a meeting with the multinational force's leadership Thursday. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The U.S. has requested a U.N. Security Council (UNSC) meeting next week to discuss North Korean human rights abuses in the Council's first meeting on the issue in more than five years. (Bryan Betts, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528004733/https://mailchi.mp/9d3507b90976/hrnk-news-items-past-contemporary-dynamics-of-gendered-defection-among-north-koreans>

Saturday, August 12, 2023

Family member appeals for early return of abductees

In North Korea:

[North Korea's overseas restaurants are fading away](#) (*The World*, 08/12/2023)

International:

[Family member appeals for early return of abductees](#) (NHK, 08/12/2023)

[Korea, U.S., Japan discuss joint military exercises and trilateral summits](#) (*The Dong-a Ilbo*, 08/12/2023)

[Pyongyang, Beijing and Moscow shift ties 70 years after Korean War](#) (*Nikkei Asia*, 08/12/2023)

[South Koreans rally in Seoul against Japanese plans to release treated nuclear wastewater into sea](#) (AP News, 08/12/2023)

[UN affirms concern over forced repatriation of North Koreans following criticism from rights groups](#) (ABC News, 08/12/2023)

[U.N. grants sanctions exemptions for WHO's humanitarian activities in N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 08/12/2023)

In North Korea:

- There is a mystique around North Korea, the so-called “Hermit Kingdom,” that inspires fascination around the globe. For years, North Korean officials have profited from that mystique by opening restaurants in Southeast Asia where curious customers could not just eat North Korean-style food, but also meet North Korean waitresses, while watching them sing and even dance. But now many of these overseas North Korean restaurants are closing. (Patrick Winn, [The World](#))

International:

- The brother of a Japanese woman abducted by North Korea exactly 45 years ago has made a renewed appeal for an early return of his sister and other abductees. ([NHK](#))
- Korea, the U.S., and Japan are finalizing the remaining details for formalizing trilateral summits and regular joint military exercises. The upcoming trilateral summit, scheduled to take place at Camp David in the U.S. on Friday (local time), is anticipated to encompass these particulars within the jointly issued statement. (Lee Sang-heon, [The Dong-a Ilbo](#))
- How the North and South Korean leaders spent the 70th anniversary of the Korean War armistice highlighted the diverging paths of the two countries on the last remaining front of the Cold War. (Hiroshi Minegishi, [Nikkei Asia](#))
- Anxious about Japan's impending release of treated nuclear wastewater from the tsunami-damaged Fukushima nuclear power plant, hundreds of South Koreans marched in their capital on Saturday. Protesters called for Tokyo to abandon the plans, and expressed anger toward Seoul for endorsing the discharge despite alleged food safety risks. (Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))
- The U.N. human rights office expressed grave concern over the forced repatriation of North Koreans from China and elsewhere after facing criticism from rights groups for its “unacceptable silence” on the issue. (Jamey Keaten, [ABC News](#))
- A U.N. Security Council panel has approved sanctions exemptions for the World Health Organization (WHO) allowing the delivery of tents into North Korea, its website showed Saturday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528004823/https://mailchi.mp/6d80b5581a6e/hrnk-news-items-family-member-appels-for-early-return-of-abductees>

Sunday, August 13, 2023

Two minor natural earthquakes strike near N. Korea's nuclear test site

In North Korea:

[Two minor natural earthquakes strike near N. Korea's nuclear test site: weather agency](#) (Yonhap, 08/13/2023)

International:

[Korea, US, Japan to discuss security cooperation at trilateral summit](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/13/2023)

[US and Japan could develop hypersonic missile interceptors together](#) (The Telegraph, 08/13/2023)

[Yoon to leave Thursday for trilateral summit at Camp David](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/13/2023)

In North Korea:

- Two minor natural earthquakes struck near North Korea's nuclear test site Sunday, the latest in a series of natural earthquakes to hit the region in recent months, South Korea's state weather agency said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- President Yoon Suk Yeol will depart Thursday for a landmark summit with the leaders of the United States and Japan at Camp David, Maryland, which aims to create a framework for trilateral security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The United States and Japan are expected to announce an agreement this week to jointly develop missile interceptors capable of shooting down hypersonic weapons from China, Russia and North Korea. (Louise Watt, [The Telegraph](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol will be leaving for the United States on Thursday to meet with President Joe Biden and his Japanese counterpart Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at Camp David. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528004930/https://mailchi.mp/9fd1b104ba04/hrnk-news-items-family-member-appeals-for-early-return-of-abductees-12236675>

Monday, August 14, 2023

North Korea Spotlights Missiles Ahead of US Summit With Allies

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un inspects short-range nuke and rocket factories to arm 'front lines'](#) (NK News, 08/14/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim calls for 'drastic boost' of missile production capacity: state media](#) (Yonhap, 08/14/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim slams officials as 'irresponsible' over typhoon damage](#) (Yonhap, 08/14/2023)

International:

[North Korea Spotlights Missiles Ahead of US Summit With Allies](#) (Bloomberg, 08/14/2023)

[S. Korea, US to stage 'realistic, tough' military exercise against NK threats](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/14/2023)

[WHO receives sanctions exemption to send disaster relief to North Korea](#) (NK News, 08/14/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un inspected factories producing short-range nuclear missiles, launch vehicles and rocket shells, calling for increased production to arm “frontline units” on the inter-Korean border, according to state media on Monday. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has called for a "drastic boost" of the country's missile production capacity, the North's state media said Monday, ahead of a key joint military exercise between South Korea and the United States next week. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has berated local officials as being "irresponsible" and "insensitive" over their failure to prevent damage from Typhoon Khanun that recently swept through the Korean Peninsula, state media said Monday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un called for the increased production of missiles as he toured plants making weapons to strike America's allies, just ahead of a summit among the leaders of Japan, South Korea and the US this week. (Sangmi Cha, Jon Herskovitz, [Bloomberg](#))
- South Korea and the United States are set to conduct "tough" yet defense-oriented military exercises simulating real-life scenarios, with the goal to strengthen the alliance's defense posture and ability to respond to the escalating missile and nuclear threats posed by North Korea. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has received a humanitarian exemption to send tents to North Korea as part of aid and relief efforts for natural disasters, as the DPRK tries to recover from recent floods and a typhoon. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Debby Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528004955/https://mailchi.mp/bc1b6fee0fb0/hrnk-north-korea-spotlights-missiles-ahead-of-us-summit-with-allies>

Tuesday, August 15, 2023

Kim Jong-un's furious crackdown as North Koreans found smoking paper with his face on

Top News:

[Kim Jong-un's furious crackdown as North Koreans found smoking paper with his face on](#) (The Mirror, 08/12/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong-un demands 'drastic boost in missiles and key weapons'](#) (The Telegraph, 08/14/2023)

[Overseas North Koreans face lengthy reeducation when borders open, defectors say](#) (NK News, 08/15/2023)

International:

[Korea, U.S. to begin Ulchi Freedom Shield exercise next week](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/14/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim, Russia's Putin exchange letters, vow stronger ties](#) (Reuters, 08/15/2023)

[Pyeongyang opposes UNSC meeting on N. Korea's human rights](#) (Yonhap, 08/15/2023)

[Russian military cooperation with North Korea doesn't pose threat, Shoigu says](#) (NK News, 08/15/2023)

[Summit to set protocol for trilateral ties](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/15/2023)

[US, Japan, South Korea to announce deeper defense cooperation at Camp David summit](#) (AP News, 08/14/2023)

[Yoon says Japan is partner sharing universal values, pursuing common interests](#) (Yonhap, 08/15/2023)

Top News:

- North Korea has unleashed its strangest crackdown yet, purging people for selling the regime newspaper after Kim Jong-un's photo was used to roll cigarettes. Greg Scarlatou, director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, said "very credible sources" had confirmed it was a custodial offence. He said: "Cigarette rolling paper is very scarce in North Korea, so people often use newspaper scraps to roll up their cigarettes. Over the years, there have been credible reports of people who were sent to a camp because they rolled up their tobacco in newspaper scraps containing pictures of the Kims." (Ryan Fahey, [The Mirror](#))

In North Korea:

- Kim Jong-un, the North Korean leader, has ordered a "drastic boost" in the manufacturing of missiles, rocket-launcher shells and other weapons. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- Months of "reeducation" sessions, or even forced labor, await thousands of overseas North Koreans when they return home for the first time in over three and a half years, two defectors told NK News. (James Fretwell, [NK News](#))

International:

- South Korea and the United States will soon conduct one of their biggest military exercises of the year to improve their ability to respond to North Korea's nuclear and missile threats. (Lee Sung-eun, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- North Korea leader Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin exchanged letters on Tuesday pledging to develop their ties into what Kim called a “long-standing strategic relationship,” Pyongyang’s state media KCNA said. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- Pyongyang on Tuesday opposed the United States’ request for a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) meeting to address human rights abuses in North Korea, calling the move “a violent infringement upon its dignity and sovereignty.” (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- Military cooperation between Russia and North Korea “does not post a threat to anyone,” Russian defense minister Sergei Shoigu said Tuesday, weeks after his high-profile visit to Pyongyang raised speculation that he sought to purchase DPRK arms for the war in Ukraine. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- The US, South Korea and Japan are expected to set up protocols to bolster three-way ties at a Camp David summit in Maryland on Friday, according to a media report. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The United States, Japan and South Korea are expected to announce plans for expanded military cooperation on ballistic missile defenses and technology development in the face of growing concern about North Korea’s nuclear program when the countries’ leaders gather at Camp David for a summit Friday, according to two senior Biden administration officials. (Aamer Madhani, [AP News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol said Tuesday that South Korea and Japan are now partners sharing universal values and pursuing common interests, and called for strengthening trilateral security cooperation with Japan and the United States to counter threats from North Korea. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Jody Chen, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528005112/https://mailchi.mp/9957c8e356df/hrnk-news-items-family-member-appeals-for-early-return-of-abductees-12236696>

Wednesday, August 16, 2023

North Korea Makes First Public Comments About Detained U.S. Soldier

In North Korea:

[‘Abuse and racism’ drove Travis King to seek asylum in North Korea: State media](#) (NK News, 08/16/2023)

[N. Korea claims U.S. Pvt. Travis King wants refuge in North or third country](#) (Yonhap, 08/16/2023)

International:

[Factbox: Travis King: What happened to other U.S. soldiers who defected to North Korea?](#) (Reuters, 08/16/2023)

[Joint defense initiatives to be unveiled at Camp David: report](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/16/2023)

[North Korea’s Kim, in letter to Putin, vows solidarity with Russia](#) (The Washington Post, 08/16/2023)

[North Korea Makes First Public Comments About Travis King, Detained U.S. Soldier](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 08/16/2023)

[South Korea calls on China to stop repatriating North Korean refugees](#) (UPI, 08/16/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has confirmed the status of U.S. soldier Travis King for the first time, releasing a statement in state media saying he “admits to illegally” crossing the inter-Korean border around one month ago and that he seeks to stay in the DPRK. (Colin Zwirko, Ifang Bremer, Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea claim U.S. soldier has expressed a willingness to seek refuge there or in a third country. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korea on Wednesday confirmed it is holding U.S. Army Private Travis King after he crossed the border from South Korea last month while on a tour, but did not elaborate on what his future might hold. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- The US, South Korea and Japan will roll out joint initiatives on defense and technology at a Camp David summit in Maryland on Friday, according to a report. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed to strengthen relations with Russia so the two countries could continue to “smash the imperialists’ arbitrary practices and hegemony,” according to a state media report. (Min Joo Kim, [The Washington Post](#))
- North Korea commented publicly for the first time on its nearly month-long detainment of a U.S. soldier, claiming the American serviceman had said he faced inhuman mistreatment and racial discrimination from the U.S. Army and sought haven in the Kim Jung Un regime. (Timothy W. Martin, [The Wall Street Journal](#))
- South Korean Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho and other officials urged Beijing on Wednesday not to repatriate thousands of North Korean escapees after borders are reopened, citing concerns that they will face imprisonment and torture. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))

Prepared by Tiana Lakhani, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528005059/https://mailchi.mp/9fc74d2d6d9b/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-makes-first-public-comments-about-detained-us-soldier>

Thursday, August 17, 2023

N. Korea preparing ICBM launch or other provocations for S. Korea-U.S.-Japan summit: spy agency

In North Korea:

[Demand for private education, English tutoring grows in NK](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/17/2023)

[N. Korean athletes, believed to be attending taekwondo event in Kazakhstan, arrive in Beijing](#) (Yonhap, 08/17/2023)

[N. Korean leader bolsters personality cult with use of title 'President': Seoul](#) (Yonhap, 08/17/2023)

[N. Korea preparing ICBM launch or other provocations for S. Korea-U.S.-Japan summit: spy agency](#) (Yonhap, 08/17/2023)

[North Korea backs use of 'physical force' against US at Moscow security forum](#) (NK News, 08/17/2023)

[North Korea slams US over planned Security Council meeting on DPRK human rights](#) (NK News, 08/16/2023)

International:

[Travis King: North Korea says US soldier fled because of racism in army](#) (BBC News, 08/16/2023)

[Trilateral summit to adopt statements on shared 'principles' and 'spirit'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/17/2023)

[U.S. continues to seek safe return of American soldier in N. Korea: Kirby](#) (Yonhap, 08/17/2023)

[U.S. designates 3 entities for brokering weapons deal between N. Korea, Russia](#) (Yonhap, 08/17/2023)

[S. Korea welcomes U.S. sanctions against arms trade between N. Korea, Russia](#) (Yonhap, 08/17/2023)

[Yoon departs for U.S. to attend summit with Biden, Kishida](#) (Yonhap, 08/17/2023)

In North Korea:

- Despite an official ban on private education, North Korea's tutoring market is expanding, with a particular focus on learning English, according to a survey conducted by South Korea's Unification Ministry. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- A group of North Korean athletes, who are believed to be attending an international taekwondo event in Kazakhstan this weekend, arrived in Beijing on Thursday, according to scenes witnessed by Yonhap News Agency. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has reduced his public activity in recent years but has accelerated his personality cult by using the title reserved for the country's late founder, South Korea's unification ministry said Thursday. Kim was referred to with the title "President" on 26 occasions in state media reports in the first seven months of this year, up from 23 in 2022, according to data from the ministry. The figure was also up from 16 occasions in 2021 and four in 2020. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea is preparing to carry out various military provocations, including the launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), on the occasion of the upcoming trilateral summit among South Korea, the United States and Japan or the South Korea-U.S. military exercise, a lawmaker said Thursday. (Kang Jae-eun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea slammed the U.S. on Tuesday for requesting a U.N. Security Council (UNSC) meeting to discuss DPRK human rights abuses, calling August "the most shameful month in the history of the U.N." The U.S., Japan and Albania requested the UNSC meeting on DPRK human rights last week. If it goes ahead, it will be the first UNSC session to discuss the issue in five years. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))

International:

- In Pyongyang's first time acknowledging Travis King's detainment, North Korea has said US soldier Travis King crossed into its territory last month because of "inhuman maltreatment and racial discrimination" in the army. (Jean Mackenzie and Derek Cai, [BBC News](#))

- During the upcoming U.S.-South Korea-Japan summit, the three countries are set to adopt at least two documents, the "Camp David Principles," with guidelines for trilateral cooperation, as well as the "Camp David Spirit," which contains their vision and implementation plans, Kim Tae-hyo, Korea's principal deputy national security adviser, said in a press briefing in Seoul Thursday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The United States is seeking and will continue to seek the safe return of a U.S. service member who crossed into North Korea last month, a White House official said Wednesday, dismissing the North's claim that the American soldier is seeking asylum in the reclusive country. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Controls (OFAC) on Wednesday imposed sanctions on three entities involved in illicit arms deals between North Korea and Russia, amid speculation that the countries may be seeking to bolster their illegal arms trade. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's foreign ministry on Thursday welcomed sanctions announced by the United States this week against three entities involved in illicit arms deals between North Korea and Russia. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol departed for the United States on Thursday to attend a trilateral summit with U.S. President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on ways to enhance security cooperation in the face of North Korea's nuclear threat. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gabrielle Drinkwine, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528005919/https://mailchi.mp/87f248ac5b8c/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-makes-first-public-comments-about-detained-us-soldier-12236744>

Friday, August 18, 2023

N. Korea Warns of Action Against U.S. Spy Plane's 'Intrusion'

In North Korea:

[Hundreds of North Koreans start marching practice for paramilitary parade](#) (NK News, 08/18/2023)

[N. Korean leader calls for efforts to minimize typhoon damage to crops](#) (Yonhap, 08/18/2023)

[N. Korea warns of action against U.S. spy plane's 'intrusion'](#) (Yonhap, 08/18/2023)

[No detection of suspected bombing attack near Pyongyang: Seoul spy agency](#) (Yonhap, 08/18/23)

[North Korean company shows off sanctioned tankers, boasts of illicit activities](#) (NK News, 08/18/2023)

[North Korea scrambled warplanes after U.S. spy aircraft approached - KCNA](#) (Reuters, 08/18/23)

International:

[At Camp David, US looks to unite Seoul and Tokyo against North Korean threats](#) (NK News, 08/18/2023)

[Security Council discusses North Korean human rights for first time in 5 years](#) (NK News, 08/18/2023)

[UNICEF granted sanctions exemption to send over \\$1 million in aid to North Korea](#) (NK News, 08/18/2023)

[U.S. prepared to deter N. Korean aggression, ensure regional stability: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 08/18/2023)

In North Korea:

- Hundreds of North Koreans appear to have begun marching training for a paramilitary parade scheduled to be held in the capital next month, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery. PlanetLabs satellite imagery shows what appear to be troops in lines and block formations at the Mirim military parade training complex in Pyongyang on Aug. 17. The base is a replica of Kim Il Sung Square, where North Korea regularly holds military and paramilitary parades. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has called for efforts to minimize damage to crops by the recent Typhoon Khanun, while mobilizing choppers and aircraft for recovery work in flood-hit regions, state media reported Friday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Friday accused the United States of flying a surveillance aircraft into its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) before being chased off by its warplanes earlier this week and threatened to take action to guard its sovereignty. The accusation by the spokesperson of the General Staff Department of the North's Korean People's Army came as the leaders of South Korea, the U.S. and Japan were set to meet for a trilateral summit at the Camp David presidential retreat in Maryland on Friday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's spy agency said Friday it has not detected the occurrence of a suspected terrorist bombing attack near Pyongyang but is monitoring related situations. Citing a source familiar with North Korea's situation, the Donga Ilbo, a local newspaper, reported that there were signs of a suspected terrorist attack involving an explosive in the vicinity of the North's capital one or two months earlier. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- A North Korean shipping company successfully concluded contracts that are banned under U.N. sanctions, a DPRK trade magazine boasts in its latest issue, while appearing to pose as the new owner of two sanctioned oil tankers. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's military said it had scrambled warplanes after a U.S. reconnaissance aircraft intruded into its economic zone off its east coast, state news agency KCNA reported on Friday. The incident, which occurred on Thursday, was "a dangerous military provocation" and North Korea was considering measures to deter future incursions, an unnamed spokesperson of the General Staff of the Korean People's Army said in the report. ([Reuters](#))

International:

- The leaders of the U.S., South Korea and Japan will convene at Joe Biden's presidential retreat on Friday, in an effort to solidify trilateral cooperation against North Korea and other security threats. Seoul has announced that the countries will release two statements following the summit at Camp David, one outlining shared values and another their plans to work together on issues like nuclear proliferation, supply chains and the war in Ukraine, including through the "establishment of specific consultative bodies." (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

- The U.N. Security Council (UNSC) held its first meeting on North Korean human rights in five years on Thursday. U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk, U.N. Special Rapporteur on DPRK human rights Elizabeth Salmon and North Korean defector Ilhyeok Kim testified about grave human rights abuses in the country during the session, while the 15 UNSC members and South Korea also delivered statements. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The U.N. Security Council (UNSC) has granted a sanctions exemption to UNICEF to send more than \$1 million in humanitarian aid to North Korea. The aid is focused on “health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene,” according to documents posted on the website of the UNSC’s 1718 Sanctions Committee this week. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- The United States will continue to work with its allies to deter any potential aggression by North Korea, a Pentagon spokesperson said Thursday, following reports that Pyongyang may be preparing to make various provocations, including a long-range missile test. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gloria Guo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528010215/https://mailchi.mp/fe995f65445c/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-makes-first-public-comments-about-detained-us-soldier-12236749>

Saturday, August 19, 2023

NK slams UN human rights meeting as US 'scheme'

In North Korea:

[NK slams UN human rights meeting as US 'scheme'](#) (Korea Times, 08/19/2023)

In South Korea:

[Korea to develop its own MQ-9 Reaper drone](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/18/2023)

International:

[Korea, Japan, U.S. commit to immediate consultations on common threats at trilateral summit](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/19/2023)

[Latest NK missile sparks new debate over possible Russian role](#) (Korea Times, 08/18/2023)

[US 'concerned' over reports of Russia-North Korea nuclear cooperation](#) (The Guardian, 08/18/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea slammed a recent United Nations meeting about its human rights record, asserting the United States used the international organization for a "scheme" against Pyongyang, state media KCNA reported Saturday. ([The Korea Times](#))

In South Korea:

- The South Korean army announced Friday to develop its own version of the U.S. combat drone MQ-9 Reaper as part of efforts to enhance defensive surveillance capabilities. The decision follows a month after North Korea showcased new aerial drones that bear a strong resemblance to the U.S. surveillance drone Global Hawk, during a military parade. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- The leaders of South Korea, the United States and Japan agreed to immediately consult with each other in the event of threats to their collective interests and security at their trilateral summit at Camp David on Friday. Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, U.S. President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida held a joint press conference speaking on the results of their historic standalone three-way summit at the American presidential retreat in Maryland, aimed at elevating their security and economic cooperation amid the rise of geopolitical tensions. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea's latest Hwasong-18 intercontinental ballistic missile — its first ICBM to use solid rocket fuel — has ignited new debate over a possible Russian role in the nuclear-armed state's dramatic missile development. A report published on Thursday by the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies argued that the Hwasong-18 ICBM is likely the result of technical cooperation sourced to Russia. ([The Korea Times](#))
- The United States is “concerned” about the national security implications of North Korea and Russia reportedly cooperating on nuclear missile technology, the Biden administration said, as the US welcomed the leaders of Japan and South Korea to Camp David on Friday for an unprecedented trilateral summit. (Léonie Chao-Fong, [The Guardian](#))

Prepared by Gabrielle Drinkwine, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528010654/https://mailchi.mp/7b3724ee61d5/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-makes-first-public-comments-about-detained-us-soldier-12236759>

Sunday, August 20, 2023

Beijing Rejects Seoul's Demand to Stop Repatriating North Korean Defectors

Top News:

[Beijing Rejects Seoul's Demand to Stop Repatriating North Korean Defectors](#) (VOA News, 08/18/2023)

In South Korea:

[Full-scale civil defense drill planned for Wednesday](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/20/2023)

International:

[Historic trilateral summit cements partnership in writing](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/20/2023)
[North Korean hackers targeted S. Korea-US military drills: police](#) (The Korea Times, 08/20/2023)
[Ulchi Freedom Shield exercise to begin on Monday](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/20/2023)

Top News:

- Beijing is pushing back on Seoul's demand that China stop repatriating North Koreans who have left their homeland and been detained as they attempt to make their way to a third country. China is detaining as many as 2,000 North Korean defectors who face severe punishment for fleeing the repressive Kim regime, South Korean Unification Minister Kim Yung Ho said Wednesday at a seminar in Seoul. (Christy Lee, [VOA News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea will hold a nationwide civil defense drill next week amid rising threats from North Korea. The 20-minute drill on Wednesday will be the country's first nationwide drill involving the public in over six years. Around 2,800 sirens will sound and 216 roads across the country will be restricted, according to the Ministry of the Interior and Safety. (Cho Jung-woo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- The leaders of South Korea, the United States and Japan agreed to immediately consult each other in the event of threats to their collective interests and security at their trilateral summit at Camp David on Friday. The leaders laid grounds for the institutionalization of their trilateral partnership, also agreeing to hold annual joint military exercises, to cooperate closely for stronger missile defense against North Korea and to regularize the trilateral summit, as well as lower-level talks. (Sarah Kim, [The Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korean hackers carried out cyberattacks throughout the last several months targeting combined military drills between South Korea and the United States, according to Gyeonggi Nambu Provincial Police Agency, Sunday. (Lee Hyo-jin, [Korea Times](#))
- South Korea and the United States are scheduled to commence a major combined military and civil exercise on Monday to strengthen their joint preparedness in the face of North Korea's advancing military and cyber threats. The allies' annual Ulchi Freedom Shield (UFS) exercise, which is set to kick off on Monday and last until Aug. 31, will involve over 58,000 South Korean and U.S. troops and feature various drills, including a computer simulation-based command post exercise, simultaneous large-scale field training and Ulchi civil defense drills involving different agencies across the South Korean government. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Gabrielle Drinkwine, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528010851/https://mailchi.mp/e5bc297d36f0/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-makes-first-public-comments-about-detained-us-soldier-12236762>

Monday, August 21, 2023

N. Korean leader inspects cruise missile test as S. Korea-U.S. military drills begin

In North Korea:

[North Korea conducts cruise missile launch from new naval corvette](#) (NK News, 08/21/2023)

[N. Korean leader inspects cruise missile test as S. Korea-U.S. military drills begin](#) (Yonhap, 08/21/2023)

In South Korea:

[Yoon says NK provocations will only strengthen trilateral partnership](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/21/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[South Korea launches government and military drills against North Korean threats](#) (NK News, 08/21/2023)

[S. Korean military denies NK report on 'strategic' cruise missile drills](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/21/2023)

[South questions accuracy of cruise missiles launched from North's new warship](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/21/2023)

International:

[Beijing lets North Korea state airline resume flights to China](#) (Reuters, 08/21/2023)

[High-level Russian defense official makes rare visit to North Korean Embassy](#) (NK News, 08/21/2023)

[North Korean airline says it will operate two flights from Russia this week](#) (NK News, 08/21/2023)

[North Korea boosts imports from China in July, exports sanctioned iron and steel](#) (NK News, 08/21/2023)

[North Korean hackers target wargames firm supplying US-ROK drills](#) (NK News, 08/21/2023)

[North Korean taekwondo team headlines opening ceremony of Kazakhstan competition](#) (NK News, 08/21/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. launch key joint military drills amid heightened tensions with N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 08/21/2023)

[South welcomes UNSC meeting on North's human rights](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/21/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un inspected the country's newest naval corvette and watched a strategic cruise missile test from the ship, according to state media on Monday, days after warning the U.S. about reconnaissance flights off the east coast. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has visited a navy unit and inspected a cruise missile test aboard a warship, Pyongyang's state media reported Monday, as South Korea and the United States began their annual joint military drills. (Kim Soo-yeon, Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- North Korea's provocations will only strengthen South Korea's trilateral cooperation with the United States and Japan, President Yoon Suk Yeol said Monday, urging full-fledged preparations against any military threats from the North. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea launched major government training on responding to North Korean threats on Monday, with President Yoon Suk-yeol calling for officials to focus on combating "fake news and propaganda" in wartime and defending critical infrastructure against attack. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The South Korean military on Monday refuted a belated report from North Korean state media that "strategic cruise missiles" were fired from a newly revealed naval corvette as part of its live-fire drills. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea's state media reported Monday that leader Kim Jong-un observed the launch of several cruise missiles from a new frigate during his inspection of a naval flotilla, but South Korean officials later cast doubts on the missiles' accuracy. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- Beijing has allowed North Korea's state carrier Air Koryo to resume flights to China more than three years after they stopped amid COVID-19 restrictions, the Chinese foreign ministry said on Monday. ([Reuters](#))
- A high-level Russian defense official recently attended an event at the North Korean Embassy in Moscow, DPRK state media reported on Sunday, in a move that one expert called the latest example of the two countries' efforts to boost military cooperation. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's state-run airline will carry out two flights from Russia's Far East to Pyongyang this week, Air Koryo and Vladivostok International Airport confirmed to NK News, in what would be the airline's first known passenger flights between the two countries since the start of the pandemic. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Shipments of plastics and raw materials likely for use in wigs helped drive a slight increase in North Korean imports from China in July, while the DPRK exported \$1.5 million in sanctioned iron and steel. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korean cybercriminals attacked a supplier to U.S.-ROK joint military drills earlier this year but failed to steal military-related data, South Korean police announced Sunday. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korean taekwondo athletes headlined the opening ceremony of the International Taekwon-Do Federation (ITF) World Championships in Kazakhstan over the weekend, in the first appearance by DPRK athletes at an overseas even since the start of the pandemic. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea and the United States kicked off major combined military drills Monday to bolster their joint readiness posture amid heightened tensions from North Korea's missile tests and hardening rhetoric against the allies. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Monday welcomed the first open meeting on North Korea's human rights by the United Nations Security Council in six years as an

opportunity to raise awareness on the issue and its link to international security. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528011215/https://mailchi.mp/869e624f89be/hrnk-news-items-n-korean-leader-inspects-cruise-missile-test-as-s-korea-us-military-drills-begin>

Tuesday, August 22, 2023

American Soldier Detained in North Korea Poses Unusually Challenging Test for U.S. & [Invitation] ICKS Annual Conference

Top News:

[American Soldier Detained in North Korea Poses Unusually Challenging Test for U.S.](#) (*The Wall Street Journal*, 08/22/2023)

[Invitation] [ICKS Annual Conference - Security Challenges on the Korean Peninsula in 2023: Celebrating 70 Years of the Alliance](#) (09/20/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea intends to launch satellite between Aug. 24 and 31: Kyodo](#) (*Yonhap*, 08/22/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim scolds premier for 'irresponsible' attitude over flood damage](#) (*Yonhap*, 08/22/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea calls on N. Korea to withdraw plan to launch satellite](#) (*Yonhap*, 08/22/2023)

[S. Korea issues maritime safety warnings over N.K. satellite launch plan](#) (*Yonhap*, 08/22/2023)

International:

[N. Korean airliner arrives in Beijing in 1st post-COVID-19 commercial flight](#) (*Yonhap*, 08/22/2023)

[N. Korea slams S. Korea-U.S. military drills, warns of outbreak of 'thermonuclear war'](#) (*Yonhap*, 08/22/2023)

[State Department renews ban on use of US passports for travel to North Korea](#) (*AP News*, 08/22/2023)

[U.S. will continue to counter N. Korean provocations, including space launch: Pentagon](#) (*Yonhap*, 08/22/2023)

Top News:

- Since then, King has likely faced harsh treatment by North Korean interrogators, who would first want to determine whether he was a U.S. spy, then proceed to intelligence-gathering inquiries about America's military posture, said Greg Scarlatoiu, the executive director of the

Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, based in Washington, D.C. (Timothy W. Martin and Dasl Yoon, [The Wall Street Journal](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea has notified Japan's coast guard of its intention to launch a satellite between Thursday and Aug. 31, a Japanese media report said Tuesday, as the secretive regime is preparing to put a spy satellite into orbit. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un berated the country's premier over his "irresponsible" attitude in not preventing damage to farmland from the recent typhoon, as Kim inspected a flooded area, the North's state media reported Tuesday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea's foreign ministry on Tuesday called on North Korea to abandon its plan to launch a satellite, as the North reportedly notified Japan of its plan to put a satellite into orbit in the coming days. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea on Tuesday issued a navigational warning for vessels over North Korea's planned launch of a satellite later this month. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- A flight operated by Air Koryo, North Korea's national carrier, arrived in Beijing on Tuesday, marking the resumption of commercial flights connecting the two countries after a hiatus of more than 3 1/2 years caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea denounced South Korea and the United States on Tuesday for staging their annual joint military exercise, warning that the drills could trigger an unprecedented "thermonuclear war" on the Korean Peninsula. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- The Biden administration is extending for another year a ban on the use of U.S. passports for travel to North Korea, the State Department said Tuesday. The ban was imposed in 2017 and has been renewed every year since. (Matthew Lee, [AP News](#))
- The United States will take all steps necessary to counter provocations by North Korea, a Pentagon spokesperson said Tuesday, amid reports that Pyongyang may be poised to launch a space rocket in the near future. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528011314/https://mailchi.mp/179734b66d74/hrnk-news-items-american-soldier-detained-in-north-korea-poses-unusually-challenging-test-for-us-invitation-icks-annual-conference>

Wednesday, August 23, 2023

N. Korea Joins China Trade Fair in Another Sign of Border Reopening & S. Korea Closely Monitoring

In North Korea:

[Food security prioritized in NK amid heavy rain: Unification Ministry](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/23/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea says it is monitoring full-fledged border reopening by N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 08/23/2023)

[South warns North over satellite launch, Pyongyang ups rhetoric](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/22/2023)

International:

[Challenge to S. Korea, U.S. or Japan will be considered 'challenge to all': White House official](#) (Yonhap, 08/22/2023)

[China continues open export of sanctioned goods to North Korea in July](#) (NK News, 08/22/2023)

[N. Korea joins China trade fair in another sign of border reopening](#) (Yonhap, 08/23/2023)

[U.S. envoy to Seoul says Russia dealing in 'military cooperation' with N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 08/23/2023)

[Yoon visits wartime bunker to monitor joint S. Korea-U.S. military exercise](#) (Yonhap, 08/23/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has been placing a high priority on stabilizing food security amid unfavorable weather conditions, while its trade with China has not fully recovered to pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels, South Korea's Unification Ministry said Wednesday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's unification ministry said Wednesday it is monitoring when North Korea will reopen its border with China in a full-fledged manner, as it has partially opened it following a yearslong closure over COVID-19. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea is urging the North to abandon its planned launch of a satellite in the direction of the Yellow and East China seas later this month. Seoul also issued a navigational warning for vessels Tuesday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- The leaders of South Korea, the United States and Japan agreed to commit to crisis consultation during their trilateral summit last week based on the recognition that "a challenge to any one of us is a challenge to all of us," a senior White House official said Tuesday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- China continued to openly provide banned goods to North Korea in July in apparent violation of the international sanctions regime, NK Pro analysis of trade data shows, while importing sanctioned ferrosilicon from its neighbor. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korea opened booths for visitors at a Chinese trade fair Wednesday, in another sign the North is reopening its border after more than three years of strict COVID-19 restrictions. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States ambassador to South Korea on Wednesday slammed Russia over alleged discussions with North Korea on military cooperation, amid signs of growing military ties between Pyongyang and Moscow. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))

- President Yoon Suk Yeol visited a key U.S.-controlled wartime command bunker complex on Wednesday to examine South Korean and U.S. troops engaging in an annual joint military exercise, according to his spokesperson. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Tessa Aguilar, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528011646/https://mailchi.mp/22b28624acfc/hrnk-news-items-american-soldier-detained-in-north-korea-poses-unusually-challenging-test-for-us-invitation-icks-annual-conference-12236776>

Thursday, August 24, 2023

N.Korea maintains active biological weapons program: DoD report & S.Korea, US, Japan seek sanctions after NK launch

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un demands more tractors to fix 'food problem' amid production issues](#) (NK News, 08/24/2023)

[N. Korea maintains active biological weapons program: DoD report](#) (Yonhap, 08/24/2023)

[N. Korea probably sees technical advance in spy satellite launch despite botched 2nd attempt](#) (Yonhap, 08/24/2023)

[N. Korea says 2nd attempt to launch spy satellite fails: state media](#) (Yonhap, 08/24/2023)

International:

[Korea-U.S.-Japan summit builds strong foundation for trilateral cooperation: Amb. Cho](#) (Yonhap, 08/25/2023)

[N. Korea says Japan should immediately retract discharge of treated radioactive water](#) (Yonahp, 08/24/2023)

[N. Korea slams S. Korea-U.S.-Japan summit as 'Asian version of NATO'](#) (Yonhap, 08/24/2023)

[North Korea says US driving Ukraine crisis toward nuclear disaster](#) (Reuters, 08/24/2023)

[Russian Embassy in North Korea may hire more staff amid growing ties: Ambassador](#) (NK News, 08/24/2023)

[S. Korea, US, Japan seek sanctions after NK launch](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/24/2023)

[US extends ban on citizens' travel to North Korea for seventh year](#) (NK News, 08/24/2023)

[U.S. sanctions co-founder of Tornado Cash for laundering stolen cryptocurrency for N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 08/24/2023)

[US says N. Korean satellite launch violates UNSC resolutions, calls on Pyongyang to engage in dialogue](#) (Yonhap, 08/24/2023)

[U.S. 'strongly condemns' N. Korea's latest space launch: White House](#) (Yonhap, 08/24/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un toured a tractor factory and called for enhanced farm machine production to help fix the nation's chronic "food problem," according to state media

on Thursday, less than a day before another failed military satellite launch underlined the DPRK's prioritization of defense spending. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

- North Korea continues to maintain an active biological weapons program and it likely is the only country in the world that continues to produce toxic agents that can cause highly infectious diseases, the U.S. Department of Defense said in a report. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's second failure to launch a spy satellite likely serves as a humiliating setback for its leader Kim Jong-un, but the country appears to have solved engine problems over a space rocket, given its vow to make a third attempt in October, experts said. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said Thursday its second attempt to launch a spy satellite has ended in failure, citing "an error in the emergency blasting system during the third-stage flight." (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The recently held three-way summit between the leaders of South Korea, Japan and the United States has built an unprecedentedly strong foundation for trilateral cooperation that will help develop their ties under any circumstances, South Korea's ambassador to the U.S. Cho Hyun-dong said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said Thursday that Japan should immediately halt the release of treated radioactive water from its crippled Fukushima nuclear power plant into the sea. (Park Sang-soo, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Thursday denounced the trilateral agreement among South Korea, the United States, and Japan as "the Asian version of NATO," and the U.S. scheme to encircle Russia and China. (Kim Sun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea accused the United States on Thursday of driving the Ukraine crisis toward a global nuclear disaster by supplying F-16 fighter jets to Kyiv's forces, saying Washington had no right to criticize Pyongyang's military cooperation with Russia. (Jack Kim and Soo-hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))
- Russia's ambassador to North Korea said his embassy in Pyongyang could expand in the near future as the two countries increase cooperation, in what an expert called an attempt to show to the rest of the world that Moscow is forging an anti-Western bloc. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Foreign Minister Park Jin and his US and Japanese counterparts agreed to look into individual sanctions on North Korea, following its failed second attempt Thursday to put a military reconnaissance satellite into orbit, during a phone call that took place hours after the launch. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The U.S. has extended a ban on American citizens entering North Korea for a seventh consecutive year, the State Department announced Tuesday. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- The U.S. Department of Treasury on Wednesday imposed sanctions on a co-founder of virtual currency mixer Tornado Cash for assisting a North Korean hacking group that has stolen hundreds of millions of dollars in cryptocurrency. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States called on North Korea to refrain from launching additional satellites Wednesday, stressing that North Korean space launch vehicles (SLVs) violate multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

- The United States "strongly condemns" North Korea's latest attempt to launch a spy satellite into space, the White House said Wednesday, calling it a "brazen violation" of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528011737/https://mailchi.mp/baa256bd3ca6/hrnk-news-items-nkorea-maintains-active-biological-weapons-program-dod-report-skorea-us-japan-seek-sanctions-after-nk-launch>

Friday, August 25, 2023

Cyber scams keep North Korean missiles flying; Seoul calls for abolition of 'K-pop ban' in North Korea

In North Korea:

['Abnormal flight' detected in second-stage flight of North's botched satellite launch: Defense minister](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/25/2023)

[Cyber scams keep North Korean missiles flying](#) (RFA, 08/25/2023)

[N. Korea internally tight-lipped on 2nd satellite launch failure](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/25/2023)

[North Korean hackers use open-source tools to attack internet and health sectors](#) (NK News, 08/25/2023)

[Second-stage rocket flight unsuccessful, contrary to NK's claims: Seoul](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/25/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Seoul calls for abolition of 'K-pop ban' in North Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 08/25/2023)

International:

[Camp David Agreement Seen Likely to Fuel China's Aggression in S. China Sea](#) (VOA, 08/25/2023)

[N. Korea's failed satellite launch is provocative, destabilizing: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 08/25/2023)

[N. Korea's premier sends congratulatory message to new Thai leader](#) (Yonhap, 08/25/2023)

[North Korean airline operates first flight to Vladivostok since pandemic began](#) (NK News, 08/25/2023)

[North Korean flight lands in Russia for first post-Covid foray](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/25/2023)

[Trump takes credit for saving Olympics, averting nuclear war with North Korea](#) (NK News, 08/25/2023)

In North Korea:

- An error may have occurred in the second stage of flight for the Chollima-1 space launch vehicle (SLV) launched by North Korea Thursday, Defense Minister Lee Jong-sup told lawmakers Friday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- A team of hackers enables Kim Jong Un's strategic ambitions, despite international sanctions. (Jaewoo Park and Hyung Jun You, [RFA](#))
- North Korea's state media, which is primarily meant for internal audiences, has not yet reported on its second failed attempt Thursday to launch a purported spy satellite into orbit. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea's Lazarus Group has deployed new forms of malware in its ongoing campaigns against internet infrastructure and the healthcare sector, utilizing a newer approach that relies more on open-source tools to launch attacks, according to a U.S. cybersecurity firm. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Contradicting North Korea's assertions, the second-stage flight of the country's space launch vehicle, which was carrying a purported spy satellite, exhibited anomalies during a second launch on Thursday, South Korean Defense Minister Lee Jong-sup said Friday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Nearly three years after the law came into force in North Korea to crack down on K-pop and other types of South Korean cultural content, Seoul released its first official message calling on Pyongyang to revoke what is also known as the "K-pop ban." (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- The Camp David trilateral security agreement between the United States, Japan and South Korea is likely to drive Beijing to be more aggressive in the South China Sea, analysts say. (Chetra Chap, [VOA](#))
- North Korea's failed attempt to launch a military satellite is a provocative action that destabilizes the region, a Pentagon spokesperson reiterated Thursday, after the White House condemned the launch as a direct violation of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean Premier Kim Tok-hun has sent a congratulatory message to Thailand's new prime minister, Srettha Thavisin, state media reported Friday, marking his first public activity since the North's leader Kim Jong-un scolded him over recent flood damage. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- A North Korean passenger plane flew from Pyongyang to Vladivostok on Friday morning, the first such flight to the Russian Far East city since the outbreak of COVID-19. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- A commercial flight operated by North Korean state-owned flag carrier landed at Vladivostok International Airport in Russia Friday for the first time in over three and a half years. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Donald Trump claimed the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics would not have happened if it weren't for him, in an interview with political talk show host Tucker Carlson on Wednesday. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528012001/https://mailchi.mp/8cd2cd372c77/hrnk-news-items-cyber-scams-keep-north-korean-missiles-flying-seoul-calls-for-abolition-of-k-pop-ban-in-north-korea>

Saturday, August 26, 2023

US Accuses Russia, China of Covering for North Korea at UN; N. Korean plane arrives in Vladivostok for 1st time in over 3 years

International:

[Another N. Korean airliner arrives in Beijing following resumption of Pyongyang-Beijing air route](#) (Yonhap, 08/26/2023)

[Defiant North Korea tells UN its spy satellite program is its 'legitimate right as a sovereign state'](#) (CNN, 08/25/2023)

[N. Korean plane arrives in Vladivostok for 1st time in over 3 years: report](#) (Yonhap, 08/25/2023)

[Security Agreement Could Prompt Chinese Retaliation Against S. Korea](#) (VOA, 08/25/2023)

[The US and allies clash with North Korea, China and Russia over failed satellite launch and tensions](#) (AP News, 08/25/2023)

[US Accuses Russia, China of Covering for North Korea at UN](#) (VOA, 08/25/2023)

[U.S. calls for UNSC action against N. Korean satellite launch, says China, Russia's opposition is 'troubling'](#) (Yonhap, 08/26/2023)

International:

- Another flight operated by Air Koryo, North Korea's national carrier, arrived in Beijing on Saturday, marking the resumption of regular passenger flights connecting the two countries after they were halted for more than three years due to the pandemic. (Park Boram, [Yonhap](#))
- In a defiant speech to the UN Security Council, North Korea insisted its efforts to launch a spy satellite into space are transparent and within "its legitimate right as a sovereign state." (Richard Roth, Pierre Meilhon, Heather Chen, [CNN](#))
- A flight operated by Air Koryo, North Korea's national carrier, arrived in Russia's far eastern city of Vladivostok on Friday, a Russian news agency reported, marking the resumption of a commercial flight connecting the two countries after more than three years of COVID-19 restrictions. (Woo Jae-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- China's discontent over security and economic agreements that Seoul forged with Washington and Tokyo at a Camp David summit leaves open a possibility it could respond with coercive economic and military measures against South Korea, experts say. (Christy Lee, [VOA](#))
- The United States and its allies clashed Friday with North Korea, Russia and China over Pyongyang's failed attempts to launch a spy satellite and who is responsible for escalating tensions on the Korean Peninsula. (Edith M. Lederer, [AP News](#))
- The United States on Friday accused China and Russia of blocking a unified U.N. Security Council response to North Korea's missile launches, including Thursday's attempt by Pyongyang to put a spy satellite in space. ([VOA](#))

- The United States' envoy to the United Nations called on the U.N. Security Council to condemn North Korea's recent failed satellite launch on Friday, while insisting that China and Russia's refusal to hold North Korea accountable for its actions is encouraging the recalcitrant country to continue making provocations. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528012223/https://mailchi.mp/257b784ae8d3/us-accuses-russia-china-of-covering-for-north-korea-at-un-n-korean-plane-arrives-in-vladivostok-for-1st-time-in-over-3-years>

Sunday, August 27, 2023

North Koreans begin heading home after entry ban lifted; NK edges towards full border reopening amid economic concerns

In North Korea:

[N.K. allows citizens abroad to return in official reopening of border following pandemic closure](#) (Yonhap, 08/27/2023)

[North Korea allows citizens stranded abroad by Covid to return home for first time since 2020](#) (The Telegraph, 08/27/2023)

[North Korean citizens returning home for first time since 2020: State media](#) (NK News, 08/27/2023)

[North Koreans begin heading home after entry ban lifted](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/27/2023)

[NK edges towards full border reopening amid economic concerns](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/27/2023)

[This country is finally reopening after Covid. But it still requires a one-week quarantine](#) (CNN, 08/27/2023)

[Worsening food shortage forces Pyongyang to reopen borders](#) (The Korea Times, 08/27/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has lifted an entry ban imposed on its citizens staying abroad over COVID-19 concerns, state media reported Sunday, reopening its border following more than three years of its stringent virus restrictions. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea is finally allowing stranded citizens to return home more than three years after closing its borders in the coronavirus pandemic. (Louise Watt, [The Telegraph](#))
- North Korea has officially reopened its borders to citizens residing abroad after they were closed for nearly four years, state media announced Sunday in the first announcement on the matter to domestic readers. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has lifted an entry ban imposed on its overseas nationals at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, state media reported Sunday. (Sarah Kim, Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea is gradually opening its tightly closed borders to neighbors like China and Russia amid concerns of an economic crisis in one of the world's most isolated nations. (Son Ji-hyoung, [The Korea Herald](#))

- North Korea has announced it will allow its citizens living abroad to return home in an easing of its coronavirus-era border controls. But it will still require them to do a one-week quarantine. (Irene Nasser, [CNN](#))
- North Korea on Sunday approved the return of its citizens from abroad after over three years of stringent COVID-19 lockdowns, taking a big step toward aligning with global efforts to "live with the virus," according to analysts. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528012439/https://mailchi.mp/b7785b7d2531/hrnk-news-items-north-koreans-begin-heading-home-after-entry-ban-lifted-nk-edges-towards-full-border-reopening-amid-economic-concerns>

Monday, August 28, 2023

Salmón "Attempts Dialogue with China on Repatriating North Korean Escapees"

Top News:

[Salmón "Attempts Dialogue with China on Repatriating North Korean Escapees"](#) (RFA, 08/16/2023)

*This press briefing has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[N. Korea apparently reopens its border due to economic difficulties: Seoul](#) (Yonhap, 08/28/2023)

In South Korea:

[Coast Guard investigating body of woman found at sea](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/28/2023)

[Gov't considers relocating bust of independence fighter from defense ministry](#) (Yonhap, 08/28/2023)

[Online vendors sued over Kim Jong-un T-shirts](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/28/2023)

International:

[Allied field exercises begin as civil defense drills end](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/28/2023)

[N. Korea criticizes European countries for sending F-16 jets to Ukraine](#) (Yonhap, 08/28/2023)

[N. Korean workers return home from China by road for 1st time since pandemic](#) (Yonhap, 08/28/2023)

[North Korea decries Japan's 'unethical' water release from Fukushima nuke plant](#) (NK News, 08/28/2023)

[Russia says North Koreans 'volunteered' for recovery work in storm-hit Far East](#) (NK News, 08/28/2023)

[Speculation mounts over Yoon-Xi summit at upcoming multilateral events](#) (The Korea Times, 08/28/2023)

[Top generals of S. Korea, Australia discuss responses to NK's nuclear, missile threats](#) (Yonhap, 08/28/2023)

[US calls out Russian, Chinese inaction over North Korean satellite launch at UN](#) (NK News, 08/28/2023)

Top News:

- Salmón attended a meeting hosted by the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK) on the 15th, stating, "I want to amplify the voices of North Korean people through the Security Council's public meeting." (Seo Hye-jun, [RFA](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea apparently has decided to reopen its border after more than three years of its tight virus curbs due largely to economic challenges from its border closure, South Korea's unification ministry said Monday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- An unidentified woman's body was found at sea near Gyodongdo, an island of Incheon bordering North Korea along the coastline. (Park Ye-eun, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The government is considering relocating a bust of revered independence fighter Hong Beom-do from outside the defense ministry headquarters due to his past record of collaborating with Soviet communist forces, officials said Monday. (Kang Jae-eun, [Yonhap](#))
- An online vendor has become embroiled in legal action for selling T-shirts featuring a smiling image of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, in a case highlighting the polarized perspectives of South Koreans towards their northern neighbor. (Moon Ki Hoon, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- The ongoing joint South Korea-U.S. exercise entered its second, military-focused phase on Monday, following the conclusion of the Ulchi civil defense exercise the previous week. (Micheal Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea criticized a recent decision by the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway for providing F-16 fighters to Ukraine in its fight against Russia as an "anti-peace act," the North's state media said Monday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- More than 300 North Koreans returned home Monday from a Chinese border city, multiple sources said, following Pyongyang's announcement to reopen its borders for its citizens abroad for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has condemned Japan's release of treated radioactive water from the damaged Fukushima nuclear power plant into the Pacific Ocean, in a move that one expert said aimed to show solidarity with China and Russia. (Ifang Bremer and Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))
- North Korean "volunteers" in the Russian Far East joined disaster relief efforts after a typhoon hit the region, Russian authorities have announced, raising questions about the possible hiring of DPRK citizens in violation of international sanctions. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Speculation is growing over a possible summit between President Yoon Suk Yeol and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping during a series of multilateral diplomatic events in the coming months. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))

- The top generals of South Korea and Australia held talks Monday, during which they discussed responses to North Korea's nuclear and missile threats, regional security and bilateral military cooperation, Seoul officials said. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. slammed China and Russia at a U.N. Security Council (UNSC) meeting on Friday for failing to condemn North Korea's second attempt to put a military spy satellite into orbit, while the DPRK defended the launch as its "legitimate right." (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))

Salmón "Attempts Dialogue with China on Repatriating North Korean Escapees"

August 16, 2023

Editor Jung Min-ho, Web Team Kyung-ha

https://www.rfa.org/korean/news_indepth/elizabethsalmon-08162023165018.html

Anchor: Elizabeth Salmón, UN Special Rapporteur on North Korean Human Rights, announced she will represent the voices of North Korean residents at the UN Security Council meeting on North Korean human rights, which is being held for the first time in six years.

Salmón urged not just international consensus on North Korean human rights issues but also consistent leadership from various countries to address these problems.

Reporter Seo Hye-jun had a direct conversation with Salmón, who is celebrating her first year in office.

The United States, Japan, South Korea, and Albania requested a UN Security Council meeting on North Korean human rights on the 10th. It has been about six years since a public meeting on North Korean human rights was held at the UN Security Council, back in 2017. The meeting will include representatives from 15 Security Council member countries, including China and Russia, which have been supportive of North Korea. Elizabeth Salmón, UN Special Rapporteur on North Korean Human Rights, was invited to this meeting.

Salmón attended a meeting hosted by the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK) on the 15th, stating, "I want to amplify the voices of North Korean people through the Security Council's public meeting."

She emphasized, "New thinking and approaches are needed," pointing out that discussing security issues like North Korea's nuclear problem without addressing human rights has not been successful.

Salmón then spoke to Radio Free Asia (RFA), urging UN Security Council nations, including South Korea and the United States, to consistently engage with North Korean human rights issues.

"Need for international community's consensus, leadership, and consistency on North Korean human rights issues."

[Reporter] Given that a public UN Security Council meeting on North Korean human rights is being held for the first time in six years, what do you see as the Security Council's role concerning North Korean human rights?

[Elizabeth Salmón] That's a very difficult question. I am trying to view it positively. I think this meeting is a positive step as it is a public forum to discuss North Korea's human rights situation. Moreover, I hope that this meeting not only shares my concerns about the situation in North Korea but also proposes several specific ways to improve it. I also hope that human rights issues are perfectly correlated with peace and security issues, as they are two sides of the same coin in my view.

[Reporter] With the South Korea-U.S.-Japan summit just a day away, what aspects are you emphasizing?

[Elizabeth Salmón] A strong international consensus on North Korean human rights issues is necessary. Leadership and consistency are needed, and we must cooperate on this issue. Of course, the United States, South Korea, and Japan all have strong stances on North Korean human rights, but other international communities should also speak out. We need to collect diverse opinions and approaches, cooperate with as many different countries as possible, and strive for mutual understanding. I am really glad to have the opportunity to discuss this issue at the Security Council and to amplify the voices of North Korean people, especially women and girls.

[Reporter] China's UN Mission has already expressed opposition, claiming this meeting will "aggravate confrontation and hostility." Will you also converse with Chinese or North Korean representatives at the UN?

[Elizabeth Salmón] My predecessors already tried to contact North Korea, and North Korea's official stance is that they do not recognize our mission. So, direct contact is not possible. However, I see other ways of indirectly engaging or speaking about North Korea's human rights situation. For example, Catalina Devandas Aguilar, who was the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, visited North Korea in 2017. She subsequently produced an excellent report with very specific and diverse recommendations. So, even if it's not through the North Korean Human Rights Special Rapporteur, other Special Rapporteurs on violence against women and girls, for instance, can also engage North Korea in dialogue. Another example could be to follow up on North Korean policies related to the rights of disabled persons. So, I believe efforts can be made in these other areas.

"Efforts to Establish Dialogue Channel with China Regarding Forced Repatriation of North Korean Escapees"

[Reporter] Recently, there have been concerns that China is planning to forcibly repatriate about 2,000 North Korean defectors detained during the COVID-19 pandemic as the North Korea-China border reopens. Is there any immediate action that can be taken on this issue?

[Elizabeth Salmón] As I mentioned in my previous report, I have warned not just China but other countries as well. The warning was to avoid forcibly deporting people who are at risk of torture or abuse. This is a general obligation under Article 3 of the UN Convention Against Torture. This principle applies not just to refugees but also to economic or illegal migrants. So, we hope that these warnings will have some effect, and I believe that we can avoid this difficult situation if countries cooperate.

[Reporter] Have you had an opportunity to discuss this issue with Chinese authorities?

[Elizabeth Salmón] Yes, we are trying to establish channels of dialogue. Several UN bodies, such as the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Committee Against Torture, and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, are also voicing their concerns on this issue. Through the cooperation of these various bodies, the concerns and voices on this issue will be emphasized and expected to influence future policies.

[Reporter] I heard that you had a meeting with Julie Turner, the nominee for the U.S. Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights, during your visit to the U.S. What discussions did you have related to North Korean human rights, and where do you see opportunities for collaboration?

[Elizabeth Salmón] It was very good. We have different positions, as you know. She is to be the U.S. government's Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights, while I represent the UN. We have some common approaches to the topic, but we also have different perspectives. We will each do our part, but I think we can be very successful in creating synergies by sharing opinions.

[Reporter] What differing views did you have?

[Elizabeth Salmón] We have a common interest in improving the human rights situation in North Korea. I am focused on women and girls, and I think the nominee Turner also has a very good stance on this issue. During my mission, I intend to use a 'two-track' approach that includes not only 'accountability' for those responsible for human rights abuses in North Korea but also 'engagement' for humanitarian aid. In other words, one track may emphasize 'accountability,' while the other may prefer 'engagement.' Each has their own jurisdiction and role that fits their position. Because I know well that what I am doing represents the UN, I have a duty to listen to everyone's words and amplify the voices of North Korean people. That is how I fulfill my role as a Special Rapporteur, and I will do my best for that.

[Reporter] Since starting your term last year, you've written two reports on North Korean human rights. What have you learned, and where do you see the potential for progress?

[Elizabeth Salmón] That's a very interesting question. I started my term last August, so it's been almost a year now. During the first 12 months, I submitted reports to the UN General Assembly and the Human Rights Council in Geneva, with the second report focusing on the situation of women and girls. What I have learned so far is that there are many strong voices on this issue. We are not fighting this battle alone. Excellent civil organizations are active not only in Korea and the United States but also in other countries. In addition, North Korean defectors are raising strong voices, sharing their experiences and lessons. I am very encouraged by the fact that this issue can be viewed from various angles. For example, in Geneva, I had meetings to engage other South American countries in improving the human rights situation in North Korea. In such situations, it is very important to apply specific topics to the North Korean situation and involve other actors. For example, in South America, there are horrifying memories related to enforced disappearances. So when talking about enforced disappearance issues related to North Korea, they can relate, as it is not different from their past experiences. Therefore, what I want to say is that we need to specify certain topics to involve other countries in discussing North Korean issues. So, I intend to solve the problem in this way, emphasizing specific situations and trying to involve other countries by forming a consensus.

This is Hye-jun Seo from RFA

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528012922/https://mailchi.mp/eca7473440a8/hrnk-news-items-salmn-attempts-dialogue-with-china-on-repatriating-north-korean-escapees>

Tuesday, August 29, 2023

"And the Truth Shall Set You Free" by Nick Miller

Top News:

[And the Truth Shall Set You Free](#) (HRNK Insider, 08/28/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea's Kim visits navy command, calls for bolstering naval forces](#) (Yonhap, 08/29/2023)

[North Korea: Country eases Covid rules to let in citizens stuck abroad](#) (BBC, 08/28/2023)

In South Korea:

[South Korea slashes funding for unification ministry in new budget proposal](#) (NK News, 08/29/2023)

[Unification ministry seeks 28 pct cut in 2024 budget for inter-Korean cooperation fund](#) (Yonhap, 08/29/2023)

International:

[South Korea teams up with Japan, U.S. for missile defense drill against North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/29/2023)

[South, U.S. and Japan chide North for satellite tests at UN](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 08/29/2023)

Top News:

- The Biden administration's policy of openly disseminating intelligence to U.S. allies and the public regarding the war in Ukraine should be maintained to keep everyone aware of the atrocities occurring in Ukraine. This also helps shine a much-needed light on the actions that the North Korean regime continues to take to support Russia, thus violating numerous UN sanctions that have already been imposed. (Nick Miller, [HRNK Insider](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un called for bolstering naval forces as he visited the country's navy command, while denouncing South Korea, the United States and Japan for stepping up their trilateral military cooperation, according to the North's state media Tuesday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea will start allowing in citizens who have been locked out for almost four years due to pandemic border controls, state media KCNA said. Returning individuals will be

subject to a seven-day quarantine under medical supervision at dedicated facilities. (Derek Cai, [BBC](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's unification ministry has requested a more than 40% reduction in its budget for economic cooperation projects with North Korea, under a proposal to cut the ministry's overall budget by the largest amount in the past decade. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- South Korea's unification ministry said Tuesday it requested a 27.9 percent decrease in its budget for cooperative projects with North Korea next year amid frosty inter-Korean relations and the government's belt-tightening stance. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- South Korea, the United States and Japan conducted a joint missile defense exercise in international waters south of the Korean Peninsula on Tuesday in response to North Korea's failed launch of a spy satellite last week. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Representatives of South Korea, the United States and Japan condemned North Korea for its satellite tests at a UN session on space threats in Geneva on Monday. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528013109/https://mailchi.mp/c8f17308c726/hrnk-news-items-salmon-attempts-dialog-ue-with-china-on-repatriating-north-korean-escapees-12236828>

Wednesday, August 30, 2023

S. Korea ready to become most vocal 'speaker' over N. Korea's human rights: minister

In North Korea:

[Is North Korea preparing crown princess Kim Ju-ae as successor?](#) (The Korea Times, 08/30/2023)

[N. Korea's advancement of ballistic missiles may be result of 'external help' from other nations](#) (Yonhap, 08/30/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Seoul urged not to give up on abductees in North Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 08/30/2023)

[S. Korea ready to become most vocal 'speaker' over N. Korea's human rights: minister](#) (Yonhap, 08/30/2023)

International:

[Chinese ships appears to join race to recover North Korean space rocket wreckage](#) (NK News, 08/30/2023)

[FM, U.S. Strategic Command chief discuss extended deterrence against N. Korea's threats](#) (Yonhap, 08/30/2023)

[Mearsheimer: North Korean nukes a 'force for stability' on Korean Peninsula](#) (NK News, 08/30/2023)

[Missile warning operations for allies priority for US Space Forces Korea](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/30/2023)

[Obscure new group offers \\$5M bounty for 'critical info' on North Korea](#) (NK News, 08/30/2023)

[Outcome of S. Korea, U.S., Japan summit represents strong commitment of equal, powerful countries: Campbell](#) (Yonhap, 08/30/2023)

[Seoul downplayed military value of North Korea's spy satellite: Missile expert](#) (NK News, 08/30/2023)

[S. Korean trade chief, U.S. senator discuss economic security, key industries](#) (Yonhap, 08/30/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. hold joint air drills, involving B-1B strategic bomber](#) (Yonhap, 08/30/2023)

[U.S. remains open to dialogue with N. Korea: White House](#) (Yonhap, 08/30/2023)

[U.S. Space Force looks to boost allied tracking of North Korea missiles](#) (Reuters, 08/30/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea again directed the media spotlight on Kim Ju-ae, the daughter of leader Kim Jong-un, running a video footage of its navy commander saluting the presumed 10-year-old, rekindling a debate over whether the North is preparing to make her the rightful heir to the regime. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea is likely to have steadfastly advanced its ballistic missile program, particularly in its rocket engine technology, due to "external help" from other countries, an Israeli expert said Wednesday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea acceded to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (U.N. Enforced Disappearance Convention) this January. The groups called on the National Assembly to examine two related bills — one for the protection of victims and their families and the other for the punishment of such crimes — as they have been temporarily put aside for months. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea's unification minister said Wednesday the government is willing to play the role of the most vocal "speaker" in efforts to make the international community aware of North Korea's dismal human rights situations. (Kim Son-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Chinese vessels have been active around splashdown locations for the space rocket that North Korea launched last week, NK Pro analysis shows, in what experts said may be an effort to recover debris from the DPRK launch vehicle and the spy satellite it failed to put in orbit. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- South Korea's top diplomat on Wednesday met with the head of a United States' military unit in charge of overseeing Washington's nuclear arsenal to discuss the U.S. extended deterrence against North Korean missile and nuclear threats, Seoul's foreign ministry said. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- A leading American political scholar stated that North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons is irreversible and a "force for stability" on the Korean Peninsula on Wednesday, citing the

lack of direct conflict between nuclear powers the U.S. and Soviet Union during the Cold War. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

- The newly established United States Space Forces Korea has taken up the vital role of being the watchful eye and strategic compass of the US military and South Korea, the deputy commander said Wednesday. The essential responsibility is carried out through the operation of cutting-edge space assets, which facilitate the adept tracking of adversary activities in times of peace and the precise identification and targeting of an enemy in the event of contingencies. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- An Obscure new organization called March of Liberty has offered rewards up to \$5 million for “critical information related to North Korea” to “emancipate” the country’s citizens, in a campaign that appears to imitate a U.S State Department counterintelligence program. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The outcome of the historic trilateral summit held at Camp David earlier this month represents the strong commitment of three equal and powerful countries that are focused on promoting peace and security throughout their shared region, a senior White House official said Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- An aerospace specialist from Israel called on South Korean authorities to disclose images of the North Korean military spy satellite that Pyongyang failed to put in orbit in May, stating that Seoul has downplayed its significance as a strategic asset. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- South Korea’s Trade Minister Ahn Duk-geun met with Sen. Todd Young (R-IN) on Wednesday and discussed ways to enhance bilateral ties regarding advanced industries and overall economic security, Ahn’s office said. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the United States staged combined air drills, involving at least one U.S. B-1B strategic bomber, Wednesday, Seoul’s defense ministry said, as part of the allies’ annual joint military drills. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States remains open to dialogue with North Korea, a White House spokesperson said Tuesday, after North Korea’s reclusive leader called U.S. President Joe Biden and his South Korean, Japanese counterparts “gang bosses.” (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. and South Korean militaries want to more closely integrate their systems for tracking North Korean missile launches, an effort that may soon see more cooperation with Japan as well, U.S. Space Force officials said on Wednesday. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528013311/https://mailchi.mp/6c54018117c/hrnk-news-items-s-korea-ready-to-become-most-vocal-speaker-over-n-koreas-human-rights-minister>

Thursday, August 31, 2023

AI IN THE SHADOWS: NORTH KOREA'S CYBER STRATEGY AND OUR DATA PRIVACY

Top News:

[AI IN THE SHADOWS: NORTH KOREA'S CYBER STRATEGY AND OUR DATA PRIVACY](#) (HRNK YPWP, 08/30/2023)

[Chairs seeks meeting with UN High Commissioners to avert North Korean refugee crisis](#) (Congressional Executive Commission on China, 08/30/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea conducts military command drill aimed at occupying S. Korean territory](#) (Yonhap, 08/31/2023)

[N. Korea fires 2 short-range ballistic missiles into East Sea: S. Korean military](#) (Yonhap, 08/31/2023)

[N.Korea fires ballistic missiles after US sends bombers](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/31/2023)

[N. Korea to hold key parliamentary meeting on Sept. 26](#) (Yonhap, 08/31/2023)

[NK holds military drills simulating occupation of S. Korea](#) (The Korea Herald, 08/31/2023)

[North Korea adopts law to 'revitalize' tourism after years of border closures](#) (NK News, 08/31/2023)

[North Korea launches ballistic missiles toward the sea after US flies bombers during drills](#) (AP News, 08/31/2023)

[North Korea launches missiles as U.S.-S. Korea conclude annual exercise](#) (UPI, 08/31/2023)

[North Korea says it simulated nuclear attacks on South Korea and rehearsed occupation of its rival](#) (AP News, 08/31/2023)

[North Korea says it simulated nuclear strike on South](#) (BBC, 08/31/2023)

[North Korea simulates invasion in 'scorched earth' nuclear strike drill](#) (The Telegraph, 08/31/2023)

International:

[N. Korea in active negotiations with Russia for arms deal: White House](#) (Yonhap, 08/31/2023)

[Russia says it will deepen ties with North Korea, doesn't confirm Putin-Kim letter exchange](#) (Reuters, 08/31/2023)

[UN rapporteur closely watching signs of China deporting NK defectors](#) (The Korea Times, 08/31/2023)

[US, ROK train for counterattacks into North Korea as joint military drills end](#) (NK News, 08/31/2023)

Top News:

- Beyond financial institutions and corporate entities, North Korea's hacking operations have breached personal devices, thereby gaining unauthorized access to private information, and have even infiltrated healthcare systems, as evidenced by an incident involving the U.K.'s National Health Service. Such transgressions not only threaten our individual privacy and security, but also have wider implications for the integrity and resilience of our increasingly digital society. Furthermore, the potential integration of artificial intelligence into North Korea's cyber arsenal could significantly exacerbate these threats. (Tiana Lakhani, [HRNK YPWP](#))
- The Chairs of the bipartisan and bicameral Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) today released a letter to United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk and the High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi requesting a meeting on the dire situation of North Korean refugees in the People's Republic of China. Representative Christopher Smith (R-NJ) and Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR) seek the meeting to discuss steps that can be taken by the international community to avert an impending human rights and humanitarian crisis on the North Korea-PRC border, where there are reportedly thousands of asylum-seekers awaiting repatriation. ([Congressional-Executive Commission on China](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea has launched a military command post drill involving the scenario of occupying South Korean territory, state media reported Thursday, in response to Seoul and Washington's combined military exercise. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has fired two short-range ballistic missiles into the East Sea, South Korea's military said Thursday, in apparent protest against combined South Korea-U.S. military drills. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea fired two ballistic missiles toward the waters off its east coast late Wednesday night in an apparent protest against the ongoing regular military exercises conducted by South Korea and the US. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea plans to convene a key parliamentary meeting next month to mainly discuss organizational matters, state media said Thursday, amid speculation that its leader Kim Jong-un could replace the country's premier over flood damage. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has publicly launched military exercises that involve simulating the occupation of the entirety of South Korean territory through armed attacks in case of contingencies in the presence of the country's leader, Kim Jong-un, its state-run Korean Central News Agency reported Thursday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea adopted a new law on “revitalizing” and “expanding” the tourism industry on Wednesday, in a sign that the country may be gearing up to allow in foreign tourists after over three years of pandemic border closures. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea launched two short-range ballistic missiles toward the sea on Wednesday night, its neighbors said, hours after the U.S. flew long-range bombers for drills with its allies in a show of force against the North. (Hyung-jin Kim, Mari Yamaguchi, [AP News](#))
- North Korea launched two ballistic missiles late Wednesday as part of what Pyongyang called a tactical nuclear strike drill it held in response to exercises conducted by South Korea and the United States involving at least one strategic bomber. (Darryl Coote, [UPI](#))
- North Korea said Thursday its latest missile launches simulated “scorched earth” nuclear strikes on South Korea and that it’s also been rehearsing an occupation of its rival’s territory in the event of conflict. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- North Korea says it has fired two short-range ballistic missiles to simulate nuclear strikes on military targets in South Korea. (George Wright, [BBC](#))
- North Korea said it had conducted a simulated “scorched-earth” nuclear strike on South Korea and rehearsed invading its neighbour as it accused Seoul and Washington of planning their own preemptive nuclear attack. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))

International:

- A group of Russian officials recently trip to North Korea, indicating a potential arms deal between the two countries, a U.S. National Security Council (NSC) official said Wednesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- Russia said on Thursday it intended to develop ties with North Korea, while not confirming a statement by the White House that Russian President Vladimir Putin had exchanged letters with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. ([Reuters](#))
- Elizabeth Salmon, the U.N. special rapporteur for human rights in North Korea, said she has been closely monitoring China for any signs of a resumption in the forced repatriations of North Korean escapees as the two countries ease border restrictions. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

- The U.S. and South Korea's large-scale Ulchi Freedom Shield (UFS) military exercises drew to a close on Thursday, following a second week of field training that included artillery firing drills on responding to North Korean attack. (Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240625150631/https://mailchi.mp/f8e567b35541/hrnk-news-items-ai-in-the-shadows-north-koreas-cyber-strategy-and-our-data-privacy>

9. SEPTEMBER

Friday, September 1, 2023

Not healthy looking Kim. Greg Scarlatoiu, director of The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea

Top News:

[Not Healthy looking Kim. Greg Scarlatoiu, director of The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, @GordonGChang, Gatestone, Newsweek, The Hill](#) (*The John Batchelor Show*, 08/30/2023)
[One People, One Harmony \[A Performance and Lecture by Hyung Joon Won\]](#) (HRNK, 08/31/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korean embassies to open doors for events for first time during pandemic](#) (NK News, 09/01/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea imposes unilateral sanctions on N. Korean firm, 5 individuals linked to WMD financing](#) (Yonhap, 09/01/2023)
(Yonhap, 09/01/2023)

International:

[UN lawmakers call for meeting with UN on China's repatriation of North Koreans](#) (NK News, 09/01/2023)
[US and South Korea practice precision bombing of North Korean military target](#) (NK News, 09/01/2023)
[US, ROK and Japan impose sanctions on North Korean satellite and drone programs](#) (NK News, 09/01/2023)
[U.S. committed to deterring N. Korean aggression: Pentagon](#) (Yonhap, 09/01/2023)
[U.S. imposes sanctions on two individuals, one entity for funding N. Korea's illegal weapons program](#) (Yonhap, 09/01/2023)

Top News:

- HRNK Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu discusses recent reports that Kim Jong-un's personal security has been tightened. ([The John Batchelor Show](#))
- On Monday, July 24, 2023, HRNK hosted Mr. Won Hyung-joon, a renowned South Korean violinist, at the DACOR Bacon House for a performance and lecture. The video recording of this event is now available to view on HRNK's YouTube Channel. ([HRNK](#))

In North Korea:

- Multiple North Korean diplomatic missions are hosting receptions to mark the 75th anniversary of the country's founding this month, multiple informed sources told NK News, in what appears to be a concerted effort to revive public events in the wake of prolonged inactivity during the pandemic. (Chad O'Carroll, Joe Smith, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea on Friday imposed unilateral sanctions on a North Korean company and five individuals involved in illicit financing for weapons of mass destruction programs, Seoul's foreign ministry said. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- U.S. lawmakers have formally requested a meeting with the U.N. to address the situation of North Korean refugees in China, amid concerns that they could soon be forcibly repatriated to the DPRK. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The U.S. and South Korean air forces conducted joint precision strike drills on Thursday, in an exercise that one expert described as a show of force against North Korea. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- The U.S., South Korea and Japan all announced independent sanctions against North Korea-linked individuals and entities in recent days, in response to Pyongyang's efforts to develop satellites and drones. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The United States is committed to deterring aggression by North Korea, a Pentagon spokesperson said Thursday, after Pyongyang said it has conducted a military exercise on occupying South Korea. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) imposed sanctions Thursday on two individuals including a North Korean national and one entity in Russia for helping to finance North Korea's illegal weapons development program. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528034426/https://mailchi.mp/abae81753c8/hrnk-news-items-ai-in-the-shadows-north-koreas-cyber-strategy-and-our-data-privacy-12236886>

Saturday, September 2, 2023

Kim Jong Un's Secret Soldiers, the hackers; N. Korea fires several cruise missiles into Yellow Sea

Top News:

[Kim Jong Un's Secret Soldiers, the hackers](#) (RFA, 08/22/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea fires several cruise missiles into Yellow Sea: JCS](#) (Yonhap, 09/02/2023)

In South Korea:

[NSC convenes emergency meeting after N. Korea's missile launch](#) (Yonhap, 09/02/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Negative Security Assurance and Nuclear Diplomacy: Implications for the Complete Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula](#) (38 North, 09/01/2023)

International:

[U.N. rapporteur for North Korean human rights to visit Seoul next week](#) (Yonhap, 09/01/2023)

Top News:

- In a three-part series, Radio Free Asia investigates the dark world of North Korea's illicit cyber activities. Part 1 focuses on the DPRK's hacking methods and their behavior patterns in cyberspace. ([RFA](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea fired several cruise missiles toward the Yellow Sea on Saturday, Seoul's military said, days after South Korea and the United States wrapped up their major joint military drills. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) announced the North's launch took place at around 4 a.m. but did not elaborate further, pending an analysis. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- The presidential National Security Council (NSC) held an emergency meeting Saturday after North Korea fired several cruise missiles toward the Yellow Sea, according to a presidential official. The NSC meeting was led by Deputy National Security Adviser Lim Jong-deuk to discuss the readiness posture, the official said. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- This article examines North Korea's perspectives on CDKP, based on its public statements and past agreements, with a particular focus on negative security assurance (NSA). It is clear that issues such as the role of US extended deterrence and even US nuclear doctrine will be core challenges to establishing a credible NSA for North Korea, which can have further regional implications. Understanding those tensions and whether they can be realistically addressed in practice will be critical to the success of any future negotiations. (Hyuk Kim, [38 North](#))

International:

- U.N. special rapporteur for North Korea's human rights will visit South Korea next week to meet Seoul officials as well as defectors from the reclusive regime, the foreign ministry said Friday. Elizabeth Salmon is expected to arrive here Monday for a nine-day stay to meet foreign, unification and justice officials, along with North Korean defectors, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (Kang Yoon-seung, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528034721/https://mailchi.mp/afb3aala3e59/hrnk-news-items-kim-jong-uns-secret-soldiers-the-hackers-n-korea-fires-several-cruise-missiles-into-yellow-sea>

Sunday, September 3, 2023

Whack a Mole Part 2: Cryptocurrency Heist; NK conducted 'simulated tactical nuclear attack'

Top News:

[Whack a Mole Part 2: Cryptocurrency Heist](#) (RFA, 08/23/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim's visits to naval facilities show direction of North Korea's nuclear strategy: experts](#) (*The Korea Times*, 09/03/2023)

[N. Korea conducted 'simulated tactical nuclear attack': KCNA](#) (*Yonhap*, 09/03/2023)

In South Korea:

[Unification ministry considers fine on lawmaker for attending pro-N. Korea group's event in Japan](#) (*Yonhap*, 09/03/2023)

International:

[Lawmakers' alliance adopts resolution against China's forced deportation of North Korean defectors](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 09/03/2023)

Top News:

- In a three-part series, Radio Free Asia investigates the dark world of North Korea's illicit cyber activities. Part 2 focuses on the main reason behind North Korea's illicit cyber activity: money. North Korea managed to exploit cryptocurrency industries weak security

infrastructure, and managed to steal over a \$1 billion. Our Department of Justice labeled them as the “world’s leading bank robbers”. ([RFA](#))

In North Korea:

- While reporting on its latest drill for a "tactical nuclear attack," Sunday, Pyongyang released photos of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un inspecting a ship engine factory. Analysts told The Korea Times that this move, consistent with his recent messages highlighting the importance of naval power, suggests the trajectory of the North's long-term nuclear weapons strategy, namely building a submarine equipped with submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) or a nuclear-capable submarine. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea has conducted a drill for a "simulated tactical nuclear attack," state media said Sunday, a day after the North fired cruise missiles following major joint exercise between South Korea and the United States. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- The unification ministry said Sunday it will consider slapping a fine on independent lawmaker Youn Mee-hyang for attending a pro-North Korea group's event in Japan without government authorization. Youn participated in an event Friday in Tokyo, organized by the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan to commemorate Korean victims of the Kanto Massacre in the wake of the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake. (Park Boram, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The Inter-parliamentary Alliance on China agreed to join efforts to stop China from forcibly repatriating North Korean defectors detained there over a summit in Prague, the Czech Republic. In a resolution adopted on the last day of the three-day summit, the Alliance's member lawmakers said they would resolve to “press (their) governments to make diplomatic efforts to the People’s Republic of China, urging them to cease repatriating North Korean defectors.” (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528034812/https://mailchi.mp/206560688d23/hrnk-news-items-whack-a-mole-part-2-cryptocurrency-heist-nk-conducted-simulated-tactical-nuclear-attack>

Monday, September 4, 2023

Whack a Mole Part 3: Are you a North Korean worker?

Top News:

[Whack a Mole Part 3: Are you a North Korean worker?](#) (RFA, 08/23/2023)

In North Korea:

[Ex-N. Korean ambassador to China returns home amid eased COVID-19 border controls](#) (Yonhap, 09/04/2023)

In South Korea:

[Lawmaker under fire for attending pro-North Korea event](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/04/2023)

[South Korea warns the North to stop nukes program or risk regime instability](#) (RFA, 09/04/2023)

[South seeks to track and freeze North's crypto assets](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/04/2023)

International:

[North Korean military drills with China and Russia would be 'appropriate': Envoy](#) (NK News, 09/04/2023)

[Russian, Chinese officials likely to attend another North Korean military parade this week](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/04/2023)

[Russian defense chief proposed maritime drill with NK, China: NIS](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/04/2023)

[U.N. rapporteur for North Korean human rights arrives in Seoul](#) (Yonhap, 09/04/2023)

Top News:

- In a three-part series, *Radio Free Asia* investigates the dark world of North Korea's illicit cyber activities. In part 3, RFA reveals the “moles” behind North Korea's illicit cyber activities: North Korean hackers and IT workers. ([RFA](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea's former ambassador to Beijing, known to be staying in China due to pandemic-related border controls, has recently returned to Pyongyang as the reclusive country resumed flights last month, officials at the South Korean Embassy in Beijing confirmed Monday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- The South Korean government plans to submit a bill to track and freeze North Korean cryptocurrency and virtual assets used to fund Pyongyang's illicit weapons programs, multiple government sources said Sunday. (Hyun Il-Hoon, Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's President Yoon Suk Yeol has issued a fresh warning to North Korea Monday, urging Pyongyang to halt its nuclear program if it wants to avoid regime instability. (Jeong-Ho Lee, [RFA](#))
- South Korean Rep. Youn Mee-hyang, formerly with the Democratic Party of Korea, has come under scrutiny for attending an event organized by a North Korea-affiliated group based in Japan last week. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- North Korean participation in military exercises with China and Russia would be an "appropriate" response to U.S.-led naval and aerial drills around the Korean Peninsula, according to Russia's ambassador to the DPRK. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Representatives from China and Russia are expected to be present at a large-scale North Korean paramilitary parade later this week in a sign of the three countries' continuing efforts to deepen cooperation. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korean intelligence agency believes Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu proposed a joint maritime drill with North Korea and China during his visit to Pyongyang about a month ago. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The U.N. special rapporteur for North Korea's human rights arrived in Seoul on Monday for a nine-day visit to meet with Seoul officials and defectors from the reclusive regime over Pyongyang's dismal human rights situation. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Debby Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528035113/https://mailchi.mp/30271b4deff4/hrnk-news-items-whack-a-mole-part-3-a-re-you-a-north-korean-worker>

Tuesday, September 5, 2023

Potential Kim-Putin summit raises possibility of arms deal

In North Korea:

[North Korea, the original Hermit Kingdom, slowly reopens after covid](#) (The Washington Post, 09/05/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim likely flaunting daughter at military events to elicit loyalty: Seoul](#) (Yonhap, 09/05/2023)

In South Korea:

[Lawmaker Yoon Mee-hyang denies contact with pro-North group](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/05/2023)

[Mudslinging marks raucous first day of parliamentary interpellation](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/05/2023)

International:

[Kim Jong Un Has Many Reasons to Meet With Vladimir Putin](#) (The Washington Post, 09/05/2023)

[North Korea Finds New Leverage in the Ukraine War](#) (NY Times, 09/05/2023)

[Seoul says N. Korea should seek int'l norms-based cooperation amid report of possible Kim-Putin summit](#) (Yonhap, 09/05/2023)

[Potential Kim-Putin summit raises possibility of arms deal](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/05/2023)

[Yoon seeks firmer international alliance at summits](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/05/2023)

[What to make of reports that Kim Jong Un will visit Russia for Summit with Putin](#) (NK News, 09/05/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un was a master of social distancing long before the covid-19 pandemic, as head of a totalitarian state that has exerted tight control on its contacts with the outside world for seven decades. But even by Kim's standards, the last 3½ years have been extraordinary. (Min Joo Kim, [The Washington Post](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has mainly brought his daughter, Ju-ae, to military-related events in an apparent bid to highlight his feats in the military sector and elicit the loyalty of the armed services, South Korea's unification ministry said Tuesday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- Controversial independent Rep. Yoon Mee-hyang denied that the event she attended in Japan last week of commemorating the massacre of ethnic Koreans during the 1923 Great Kanto earthquake was organized by a pro-North Korea group. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Rival parties clashed over a series of issues including Fukushima and allegations of political maneuvering during the first day of parliamentary questioning of Yoon Suk Yeol government officials Tuesday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- North Korea stands to gain more in aid, diplomatic showmanship, as U.S. officials expect a meeting between the two leaders next week. (Timothy W. Martin, Dasl Yoon, [The Washington Post](#))
- Kim Jong Un is likely to seek missile and warhead technology in an expected visit to Russia, and he is already getting a public embrace he has long sought. (Choe Sang-Hun, [NY Times](#))
- North Korea needs to seek cooperation with other nations in a way that does not hurt international norms and peace, South Korea's unification ministry said Tuesday, in response to a report that the leaders of the North and Russia may meet next week for talks on a possible arms agreement. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea is looking closely into momentum for tighter ties between North Korea and Russia ahead of their potential "leader-level talks" over the North getting technology to advance its nuclear arsenal in return for supplying Moscow with weapons to support its war in Ukraine. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol embarked on a journey to the ASEAN and G-20 summits on Tuesday, eyeing a fortified international stance against North Korea's nuclear

advancements, and fostering deeper economic and security cooperation with ASEAN member states. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))

- In the coming days, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un could take his biggest diplomatic step since the outbreak of COVID-19 and travel to Russia to meet Vladimir Putin for discussions on arms sales and military cooperation. (Arius Derr, Chad O'Carroll, Joe Smith, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Tiana Lakhani, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528035245/https://mailchi.mp/31ee7bcd8388/hrnk-news-items-whack-a-mole-part-3-are-you-a-north-korean-worker-12236913>

Wednesday, September 6, 2023

In North Korea:

[Air Koryo flights appear halted after brief resumption](#) (Yonhap, 09/06/2023)

In South Korea:

[Ex-N. Korean diplomat named special adviser to Seoul's unification minister](#) (Yonhap, 09/06/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Humanitarian aid does not help 'peaceful unification' with North Korea: Minister](#) (NK News, 09/06/2023)

International:

[Ex-North Korean ambassador to China returned home after decade abroad: Seoul](#) (NK News, 09/06/2023)

[Korea designated as 'lead nation' at MSPO in Poland](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/06/2023)

[N. Korea will pay a price if it provides weapons to Russia: NSA Sullivan](#) (Yonhap, 09/06/2023)

[Ukraine war: Kim Jong Un 'to visit Putin for weapons talks'](#) (BBC News, 09/05/2023)

[U.N. rapporteur urges collective efforts to gather information on N. Korea amid 'ever-stricter isolation'](#) (Yonhap, 09/06/2023)

[Yoon calls for int'l unity for N. Korea's denuclearization](#) (Yonhap, 09/06/2023)

[Yoon says S. Korea seeks to revive trilateral mechanisms with Japan, China](#) (Yonhap, 09/06/2023)

[Yoon urges immediate halt to attempts to seek military cooperation with N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 09/06/2023)

In North Korea:

- Air Koryo flights between Pyongyang, Beijing and Vladivostok appear to have stalled again after resuming last month for the first time since the pandemic. The latest recorded flight from Pyongyang to Beijing on Air Koryo, the state-run airline of North Korea, was on Aug. 29, according to a VOA report Wednesday. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho on Wednesday appointed former North Korean diplomat, Ko Young-hwan, who defected to South Korea as his special adviser, citing his expertise in information analysis on the North. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Humanitarian aid to North Korea has not been helpful in achieving the broader goal of “peaceful unification,” South Korea’s unification minister Kim Yung-ho said during a plenary session Tuesday. “So far, the humanitarian aid provided to North Korea has had limitations in achieving the goal of peaceful unification based on a liberal democratic order – through transforming North Korea in the right direction – that our government aims for,” Kim said, responding to a lawmaker’s question about DPRK humanitarian aid. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- North Korea’s top envoy to China for more than a decade returned home late last month, according to Seoul’s foreign ministry, after he was marooned in Beijing for more than two years despite leaving his post. DPRK flag carrier Air Koryo operated multiple flights from Aug. 22 to and from Beijing, and one of the flights carried former Ambassador Ji Jae Ryong, the foreign ministry told NK News on Tuesday. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Korea’s defense companies gathered in Poland for this year’s International Defense Industry Exhibition (MSPO), one of the largest trade fairs for military equipment in Europe, as it eyes growth opportunities in the region. (Shin Ha-nee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The top U.S. national security adviser urged North Korea not to provide any lethal weapons to Russia on Tuesday, saying it will pay a price if it decides to do so. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said there were no indications that the North has provided large amounts of weapons to Russia but that negotiations toward that end between the two countries are “actively advancing.” (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea’s leader Kim Jong Un plans to travel to Russia this month to meet President Vladimir Putin, a US official has told the BBC’s US partner CBS. The two leaders will discuss the possibility of North Korea providing Moscow with weapons to support its war in Ukraine, the official said. (George Wright & Jean Mackenzie, [BBC News](#))
- The U.N. special rapporteur for North Korea’s human rights on Wednesday called for the need to “multiply” sources of reliable information on the reclusive country as the regime dives into an “ever-stricter isolation” from the outside world. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol urged the international community Wednesday to respond firmly to North Korea’s nuclear and missile threats in order to achieve its complete denuclearization, his office said. Yoon issued the call during a South Korea-ASEAN summit in Jakarta, which brought together leaders from the 10 member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

- President Yoon Suk Yeol said Wednesday that South Korea plans to work closely with Japan and China to revive trilateral cooperation mechanisms in the near future, including a three-way summit. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol on Wednesday urged an immediate halt to any attempts to seek military cooperation with North Korea, amid reports Russia and the North are eyeing arms and defense technology trade. Yoon made the remark after The New York Times reported that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un may travel to Vladivostok in Russia next week to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin and discuss a possible arms deal. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gabrielle Drinkwine, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528035559/https://mailchi.mp/788529e89e5f/hrnk-news-items-whack-a-mole-part-3-are-you-a-north-korean-worker-12236914>

Thursday, September 7, 2023

How one activist helps North Koreans grow their own food

Top News:

[How one activist helps North Koreans grow their own food](#) (NK News, 08/23/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korea publicly executes 9 people for running beef smuggling ring](#) (RFA, 09/05/2023)

In South Korea:

[Defector-lawmaker gets called 'commie' by opposition colleague at Assembly](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/07/2023)

[Police open probe into lawmaker for attending pro-N.Korea group's event](#) (Yonhap, 09/07/2023)

International:

[ASEAN statement on North Korea highlights bloc's passive approach: Experts](#) (NK News, 09/07/2023)

[Chinese delegation to visit Pyongyang for celebrations of N. Korea's founding anniversary](#) (Yonhap, 09/07/2023)

[N. Korea will face 'repercussions' if it provides weapons to Russia: Kirby](#) (Yonhap, 09/07/2023)

[N. Korean leader may choose unexpected route for upcoming meeting with Putin: NIS](#) (Yonhap, 09/07/2023)

[North Korea hackers going after Russian targets, Microsoft says](#) (Reuters, 09/07/2023)

[Russian embassy in North Korea welcomes first new personnel since pandemic](#) (NK News, 09/07/2023)

[S. Korean leader tells Chinese PM that NK shouldn't be 'obstacle' in bilateral ties](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/07/2023)

[Yoon says N. Korea's nuclear program is existential threat to Indo-Pacific](#) (Yonhap, 09/07/2023)

Top News:

- NK News podcaster Jacco Zwetsloot recently interviewed [Helping Hands Korea's](#) (HHK) founder, Tim Peters. The podcast highlights 27 years of HHK's aid initiatives: underground railroad rescues of N. Korean escapees from China; caring for children born to victims of sex trafficking in China; and providing food and medical aid to the vulnerable inside N. Korea, including persecuted religious believers. The interview reveals a plethora of challenges inherent in providing meaningful aid to the most vulnerable within the autocratic "Secret State" of the DPRK while adapting to a continually shifting humanitarian/human rights landscape. The interview begins at 19:30 at the following link. ([NK News](#))

In North Korea:

- A crowd of 25,000 people were forced to gather at the airport in Hyesan, North Korea, and made to watch the day's spectacle: nine people executed by firing squad. Their crime? Beef smuggling. The nine people operated an illegal beef distribution ring that bought and sold about 2,100 government-owned cows, slaughtered them, and distributed the meat to markets and businesses, including a restaurant in the capital Pyongyang, residents told Radio Free Asia. (Kim Jieun, [RFA](#))

In South Korea:

- Ruling People Power Party Rep. Tae Yong-ho, who defected from North Korea about six years ago before he was elected to the National Assembly in 2020, was publicly insulted by a Democratic Party of Korea lawmaker during Thursday's plenary session of the National Assembly. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Police on Thursday began an investigation into independent lawmaker Youn Mee-hyang accused of attending a pro-North Korea group's event in Japan without notifying the government in a possible violation of the National Security Law. (Yoo Cheong-mo, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Southeast Asian leaders reiterated their willingness to play a "constructive role" in resolving a long-running diplomatic impasse over Pyongyang's nuclear and missile activities, but experts say the bloc's passive approach reflects North Korea's decreasing relevance in the region. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- A Chinese delegation will visit North Korea to attend events to celebrate the 75th founding anniversary of the North Korean regime, Pyongyang's state media said Thursday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea will face repercussions from the United States and other countries should it provide weapons to Russia that can kill innocent people in Ukraine, a White House official said Wednesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un may opt for an unexpected route when he travels to Russia for a meeting with President Vladimir Putin, according to South Korea's spy agency Thursday. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean hackers targeted Russian diplomats and successfully breached a Russian aerospace research institute earlier this year, Microsoft Corp (MSFT.O) said in a blog post published Thursday. (Raphael Satter, [Reuters](#))
- A new batch of Russian diplomats arrived in Pyongyang for the first time in nearly four years, Moscow's embassy in North Korea announced late Thursday via its Facebook page. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- During a pivotal meeting with Chinese Premier Li Qiang at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit held in the Indonesian city of Jakarta, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol advocated for sustained diplomacy and collaboration between Korea and China, undeterred by escalating tensions surrounding the North Korean nuclear issue. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said Thursday that North Korea's nuclear and missile development poses an existential threat to the Indo-Pacific region and called for the strict implementation of U.N. sanctions on the regime. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Jody Chen, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528035919/https://mailchi.mp/ca797a38b9a9/hrnk-news-items-whack-a-mole-part-3-are-you-a-north-korean-worker-12236917>

Friday, September 8, 2023

that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is likely to travel to Russia to meet with its president, Vladimir Putin.

Top News:

[If Kim Jong Un Travels To Russia Is A New Arms Deal In The Works?](#) (1945, 09/08/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea holding paramilitary parade to mark key anniversary: source](#) (Yonhap, 09/08/2023)

[North Korea takes another step toward perfecting second-strike capability: experts](#) (The Korea Times, 09/08/2023)

[N. Korea unveils new 'tactical nuclear attack submarine'](#) (Yonhap, 09/08/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea deplors N. Korea's launch of nuclear attack submarine](#) (Yonhap, 09/08/2023)

International:

[America's retired North Korea intelligence officer offers a parting message on the nuclear threat](#) (AP News, 09/08/2023)

[North Korea's Lazarus behind \\$41 million crypto theft from betting platform: FBI](#) (NK News, 09/08/2023)

[N. Korea-Russia partnership may benefit both but will have limits: former intelligence officer](#) (Yonhap, 09/08/2023)

Top News:

- North Korea and Russia have made headlines in recent days with reports that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is likely to travel to Russia to meet with its president, Vladimir Putin. The expected meeting would follow a recent visit to North Korea by Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu. During his trip, Shoigu toured North Korean arms factories. This has led many to opine that if Kim visits Russia, one of the key issues under discussion will be continued arms sales to the Russians for the prosecution of their war against Ukraine. (Bruce E. Bechtol Jr., [1945](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea was staging a paramilitary parade in Pyongyang on Saturday to mark the 75th anniversary of the regime's founding day, an informed source said. The event began at midnight following a pre-parade ceremony held Friday night, the source said, without elaborating. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea revealed its first submarine designed to launch "tactical nuclear weapons" from underwater, Friday, as the regime is redoubling efforts to perfect its second-strike capability — an ability to respond to a nuclear attack with nuclear retaliation. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea has launched a newly built "tactical nuclear attack submarine" capable of carrying out an underwater nuclear attack, with leader Kim Jong-un vowing to "further strengthen the state nuclear deterrence," the North's state media said Friday. The launching ceremony for the submarine, held Wednesday, was attended by the North Korean leader ahead of the country's 75th founding anniversary, which falls on Saturday, according to the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's unification ministry on Friday condemned North Korea's launch of a "tactical nuclear attack submarine," saying the North's "futile" attempt to build weapons would only undermine the country's livelihood affairs. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The founder of North Korea's ruling dynasty, an isolationist totalitarian leader named Kim Il Sung, was still building some of the country's first nuclear facilities when Syd Seiler arrived on the Korean Peninsula as a young U.S. military intelligence officer. Now Seiler is freshly retired after decades of advising presidents, military commanders and diplomats, making reported secret trips to North Korea and serving as a lead negotiator on talks to contain its nuclear program. And he has a parting message to American leaders: Don't be discouraged. (Ellen Knickmeyer, [Reuters](#))
- The FBI attributed a \$41 million cryptocurrency heist earlier this week to North Korea's Lazarus Group, the cybercrime syndicate behind a recent wave of multi-million dollar thefts. The U.S. intelligence agency stated in a press release Wednesday that the group moved funds stolen from online casino and betting platform Stake.com into 33 virtual currency addresses linked to Bitcoin, Ethereum, Binance Smart Chain (BSC) and Polygon networks. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea and Russia may be seeking to improve their relations since it may offer benefits to both but the level of their cooperation, especially in advanced military technology such as nuclear weapons, will likely be limited, a former U.S. intelligence officer on North Korea said Thursday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gloria Guo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528040129/https://mailchi.mp/c825c35eff17/hrnk-news-items-whack-a-mole-part-3-a-re-you-a-north-korean-worker-12236932>

Saturday, September 9, 2023

N. Korean leader attends paramilitary parade to mark key anniversary

In North Korea:

[N. Korean leader attends paramilitary parade to mark key anniversary](#) (Yonhap, 09/09/2023)

In South Korea:

[DP leader questioned over illegal money transfers to N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 09/09/2023)

International:

[Yoon, Biden meet on margins of G20 summit](#) (Yonhap, 09/09/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea staged a paramilitary parade in Pyongyang on Saturday to mark the 75th anniversary of the regime's founding day, with leader Kim Jong-un in attendance, the North's state media said. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- Opposition leader Lee Jae-myung appeared before prosecutors Saturday for questioning over allegations that he was involved in a company's alleged illegal money transfers to North Korea. (Kim Na-young, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and U.S. President Joe Biden met briefly on the sidelines of the Group of 20 (G20) summit in New Delhi, just weeks after their trilateral summit with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in the U.S., Yoon's office said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Debby Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528040234/https://mailchi.mp/0780f32dffbb/hrnk-news-items-n-korean-leader-attends-paramilitary-parade-to-mark-key-anniversary>

Sunday, September 10, 2023

‘The Sister’ Review: North Korea’s Sibling Dynasty

Top News:

[‘The Sister’ Review: North Korea’s Sibling Dynasty](#) (Wall Street Journal, 09/08/23)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea's Kim touts patriotism on key anniversary](#) (Yonhap, 09/10/2023)

In South Korea:

[Interrogation paused over opposition leader's health](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/10/2023)

International:

[No word on N. Korean leader's possible visit as Russia kicks off economic forum](#) (Yonhap, 09/10/2023)

[North Korea's Kim Jong Un has photo session, but quiet amid talk of Russia visit](#) (Reuters, 09/10/2023)

[Russia is turning to old ally North Korea to resupply its arsenal for the war in Ukraine](#) (AP News, 09/10/2023)

[Yoon pledges \\$2.3 billion to Ukraine for war recovery at G20](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/10/2023)

Top News:

- Those who would benefit most from reading “The Sister” are the 25 million citizens of North Korea, who are taught to worship the Kim family but know next to nothing about it. Here’s a subversive thought: One of the radio stations that broadcasts into the North—Voice of America, perhaps, or an escapee-run station in Seoul—could broadcast excerpts from the book. If North Koreans knew the truth about the family that has oppressed them for 70 years, who knows what they might be inspired to accomplish. (Melanie Kirkpatrick, [Wall Street Journal](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has called patriotic people the “best assets” of the state as he marked the country’s founding anniversary with a paramilitary parade, the North’s state media reported Sunday. ([Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- The prosecution’s interrogation of Democratic Party of Korea Chairman Rep. Lee Jae-myung as a suspect behind private sector money transfers to North Korea was paused Saturday after eight hours, owing to Lee’s health issues following nearly two weeks of an ongoing hunger strike. (Son Ji-hyung, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- Russia kicked off an economic forum in Vladivostok on Sunday, but there was no word from both Moscow and Pyongyang on a possible visit by North Korean leader Kim Jong-un for a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the forum. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un attended a photo session with participants celebrating the 75th anniversary of the country’s founding but stayed away from other events amid reports that he would soon leave for a trip to Russia. (Jack Kim, [Reuters](#))
- After a year and a half of fighting in Ukraine, Russia needs to replenish its supplies of ammunition for what could be a long war of attrition. Along with ramping up its domestic arms production, Moscow is turning to an old ally with a vast arsenal — North Korea. ([AP News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol pledged \$300 million in short-term aid for Ukraine next year and another \$2 billion in mid- to long-term support for its war recovery efforts during the Group of 20, or G20, summit in New Delhi on Sunday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Angela Yoon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240528040339/https://mailchi.mp/cd034b167848/hrnk-news-items-the-sister-review-north-koreas-sibling-dynasty>

Monday, September 11, 2023

North Korea's Kim to visit Russia for talks with Putin; North Korea's Kim to visit Russia for talks with Putin

In North Korea:

[N. Korean leader has photo session with paramilitary parade participants](#) (Yonhap, 09/11/2023)

In South Korea:

[Former North Korean footballer Jong Tae-se takes celebrity coaching job seriously](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/11/2023)

[S. Korea's defense ministry sees 'possibility' of Kim-Putin summit in Russia](#) (Yonhap, 09/11/2023)

International:

[Arms deal between Kim and Putin could prompt Seoul to expand support for Kyiv](#) (The Korea Times, 09/11/2023)

[Britain's King Charles III congratulates N. Korea's Kim on key anniversary](#) (Yonhap, 09/11/2023)

[Heavy security spotted at Vladivostok train station amid speculation of N.K. leader's visit](#) (Yonhap, 09/11/2023)

[In Russia's Pacific port, residents await North Korea's Kim Jong Un](#) (Reuters, 09/11/2023)

[Kim-Putin's Vladivostok bromance may risk global security, from Europe to Asia](#) (RFA, 09/11/2023)

[Kim departs for potential summit with Putin](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/11/2023)

[Kim Jong Un: North Korea leader reportedly heading to Russia to meet Putin](#) (BBC, 09/11/2023)

[Kim Jong Un to visit Russia at Vladimir Putin's invitation](#) (CNN, 09/11/2023)

[Kim to meet with Putin in first overseas trip since 2019](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/11/2023)

[Kremlin confirms Kim Jong-un visit to Russia to meet Putin](#) (The Guardian, 09/11/2023)

[Kremlin: North Korea's Kim to visit Russia at Putin's invitation](#) (Reuters, 09/11/2023)

[Kremlin: North Korea's Kim to Visit Russia in Coming Days](#) (VOA, 09/11/2023)

[N. Korean leader to 'soon' visit Russia for summit with Putin: KCNA](#) (Yonhap, 09/11/2023)

[N. Korean leader's special train appears to have departed for Russia: officials](#) (Yonhap, 09/11/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim expected to visit Russia's Far East within a few days: Russian media](#) (Yonhap, 09/11/2023)

[North Korea-Russia summit to talk arms deal would be 'huge mistake': VP Harris](#) (NK News, 09/11/2023)

[North Korea's Kim Jong Un to meet Putin in Russia in 'coming days'](#) (The Washington Post, 09/11/2023)

[North Korea's Kim to visit Russia for talks with Putin](#) (Reuters, 09/11/2023)

[North Korean leader Kim Jong Un to visit Russia in coming days: Kremlin](#) (NK News, 09/11/2023)

[Seoul to push for visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/11/2023)

[The Russian and North Korean leaders are set to meet. Why, and why now?](#) (The Washington Post, 09/11/2023)

[Trains, boats and planes: How Kim Jong Un travels abroad](#) (BBC, 09/11/2023)

[Unification minister meets U.N. rapporteur for N. Korea's human rights](#) (Yonhap, 09/11/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has had a photo session with participants of a paramilitary parade to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the country's founding, state media said Monday, amid speculation about his possible trip to Russia for talks with President Vladimir Putin. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- Former North Korean footballer Jong Tae-se, now manager of celebrity squad FC Wonder Woman, trains harder than ever to be a role model to his players. (Song Ji-hoon, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's defense ministry said Monday it sees the "possibility" of a summit between North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and Russian President Vladimir Putin, amid speculation about Kim's possible trip to Russia. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un is expected to arrive in Russia as early as Tuesday to seal a possible arms deal with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Experts here said the meeting will prompt South Korea to expand support for Ukraine, escalating tensions in Northeast Asia. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has received a congratulatory message from Britain's King Charles III on the occasion of the North's founding anniversary, Pyongyang's state media said Monday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- Security measures appeared to have been strengthened at the rail station in Russia's far eastern city of Vladivostok on Monday amid speculation that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un could visit Russia this week for talks with President Vladimir Putin. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- In Russia's Pacific port, residents said they were anticipating a visit by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un that the United States fears could lead to more weapons supplies for Russia's military in Ukraine. ([Reuters](#))
- Kim will "soon visit the Russian Federation at the invitation of the President of the Russian Federation, Comrade Vladimir Putin," North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said late Monday. (Lee Jeong-ho, [RFA](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has embarked on a train journey on Monday, government sources confirmed to The Korea Herald, strongly indicating the possibility of a forthcoming meeting with President Vladimir Putin in Russia. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

- North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un has reportedly started his journey to Vladivostok for a summit with Russia's President Vladimir Putin. (Derek Cai, [BBC](#))
- Kim Jong Un will travel to Russia at the invitation of his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, Pyongyang and Moscow said on Monday, amid warnings from the United States that the two leaders could strike an arms deal. (Jake Kwon, Gawon Bae, Jessie Yeung, Brad London, [CNN](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un will soon meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Pyongyang and Moscow confirmed on Monday evening. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un, will visit Russia in the coming days at the invitation of Vladimir Putin, the Kremlin has confirmed, amid concerns in the west that Pyongyang plans to provide weapons to Moscow to use in the war against Ukraine. (Pjotr Sauer, [The Guardian](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un will visit Russia in the coming days at the invitation of President Vladimir Putin, the Kremlin said on Monday. ([Reuters](#))
- The Kremlin said Monday that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un would visit Russia in the coming days at the invitation of President Vladimir Putin. ([VOA](#))
- A special train believed to be carrying North Korean leader Kim Jong-un appears to have departed for Russia, a South Korean government official said Monday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- A special train believed to be carrying North Korean leader Kim Jong-un appears to have departed for Russia, South Korean government officials said Monday, amid concerns that Pyongyang and Moscow could advance arms negotiations. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un is expected to visit Russia's Far East in a few days, a Russian media report said Monday, amid news reports that Kim may soon travel to Russia for a summit with President Vladimir Putin. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris said it would be a "huge mistake" for North Korea to exchange military support with Russia. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- Weapons deals are expected to be top of the agenda as North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is set to arrive in Russia for a meeting with President Vladimir Putin, while Moscow looks to replenish its depleted stockpiles in its war against Ukraine. (Michelle Ye Hee Lee, Catherine Belton, [The Washington Post](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un will soon visit Russia to meet President Vladimir Putin, the two countries confirmed on Monday, a potentially landmark summit amid Moscow's deepening isolation over the war in Ukraine. (Soo-hyang Choi, Ju-min Park, [Reuters](#))
- DPRK leader Kim Jong Un is set to visit Russia in the coming days at Vladimir Putin's invitation, the Kremlin's press service and North Korean state media reported late Monday. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- South Korea will work toward a visit to Seoul by Chinese President Xi Jinping by seeking "diplomatic solutions," said National Security Adviser Cho Tae-yong following President Yoon Suk Yeol's bilateral talks with China's premier in Jakarta last week. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin are expected to meet in Vladivostok this week, their first summit since 2019, amid warming relations between the two countries. (Michelle Ye Hee Lee, Min Joo Kim, Catherine Belton, [The Washington Post](#))

- North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un is reportedly on his way to Russia's port city Vladivostok via bulletproof train to meet President Vladimir Putin. (Shreyas Reddy, Alistair Coleman, Kelly Ng, [BBC](#))
- Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho on Monday met with the U.N. special rapporteur for North Korea's human rights and vowed close cooperation to improve Pyongyang's dismal rights records. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603054754/https://mailchi.mp/c9d4a8ed4a28/hrnk-news-items-north-koreas-kim-to-visit-russia-for-talks-with-putin-north-koreas-kim-to-visit-russia-for-talks-with-putin>

Tuesday, September 12, 2023

Kim arrives in Russia, poised for high-stakes summit with Putin amid arms deal concerns

In North Korea:

[North Korea's last remaining satellite to burn up in atmosphere soon: Experts](#) (NK News, 09/12/2023)

[N. Korea may test fire SLBM following launch of tactical nuclear submarine: Beyond Parallel](#) (Yonhap, 09/11/2023)

[The Sleeper Has Awakened: Six Key Takeaways From the Rollout of North Korea's "Tactical Nuclear Attack Submarine"](#) (38 North, 09/11/2023)

[What Kim Jong Un's Russia visit could mean for the North Korean economy](#) (North Korean Economy Watch, 09/12/2023)

International:

[Can North Korea's ammunition offer Russia support in Ukraine war?](#) (Reuters, 09/12/2023)

[Don't sidestep human rights in North, UN rapporteur urges](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/12/2023)

[In desperation, N. Korea, Russia turn to one another for mutual assistance rivaling U.S.-S. Korea cooperation](#) (Yonhap, 09/12/2023)

[Kim arrives in Russia, poised for high-stakes summit with Putin amid arms deal concerns](#) (The Korea Times, 09/12/2023)

[Kim's entourage suggests military focus for Putin summit](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/12/2023)

[Kim Jong Un arrives in Russia to meet Putin amid economy, security concerns](#) (RFA, 09/11/2023)

[Kim Jong-un en route to Russia for summit with Vladimir Putin](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/12/2023)

[Kim Jong-un flanked by military cadre enters Russia amid US warning](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/12/2023)

[Kim Jong Un's train speeds past Vladivostok en route to presumed Putin summit](#) (NK News, 09/12/2023)

[Kim Jong Un: Who is with North Korea's leader on trip to Russia?](#) (Reuters, 09/12/2023)

[Military officials join Kim Jong Un for trip to Russia as Putin summit looms](#) (NK News, 09/12/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim arrives in Russia for rare summit with Putin](#) (Yonhap, 09/12/2023)

[UN rapporteur asks China not to forcibly deport North Korean escapees](#) (The Korea Times, 09/12/2023)

[U.N. rapporteur 'extremely concerned' of forced repatriation of N.K. defectors after border reopening](#) (Yonhap, 09/12/2023)

[UN rights expert pins hopes on NK's border easing](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/12/2023)

[UN working to confirm forced repatriations of North Koreans, special envoy says](#) (NK News, 09/12/2023)

[White House urges N. Korea not to provide weapons to Russia](#) (Yonhap, 09/11/2023)

[Yoon's office calls on Russia to 'act responsibly' ahead of Kim-Putin summit](#) (Yonhap, 09/12/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea's first-ever satellite is likely to soon fall out of orbit and disintegrate in the atmosphere after over a decade in space, experts assessed this week. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korea may test fire a submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) to show the effectiveness of its new tactical nuclear submarine launched earlier this month, a U.S. monitor said Monday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- On September 8, North Korean media announced that “a Korean-style tactical nuclear attack submarine” had been rolled out of a construction hall at the Sinpho South Shipyard into the water two days before (Van H. Van Diepen, [38 North](#))
- Early this morning local time, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un arrived in the Russian town of Vladivostok. There, he is scheduled to meet with Russian president Vladimir Putin. Aside from the geopolitical situation and their political ties, the two are expected to discuss expanding North Korean weapons exports to Russia. (Bejamin Katzeff Silberstein, [North Korean Economy Watch](#))

International:

- If North Korea provides artillery rounds and other weapons to Russia for the war in Ukraine, it could help Kremlin forces stretch their dwindling stocks of ammunition but would be unlikely to change the course of the conflict, military analysts say. (Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- A visiting United Nations official on Tuesday called for the inclusion of human rights in future talks regarding North Korea, saying the issue should not be sidestepped in discussions about the regime's wide-ranging violations of international law. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Both facing growing isolation, North Korea and Russia are turning to one another for a mutually beneficial partnership, purportedly surrounding weapons, rivaling that of South Korea and the United States, which have advanced their security and economic ties. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un arrived in Russia early Tuesday morning for a possible summit with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, according to South Korea's defense ministry, amid speculations that the two leaders may strike a major arms deal. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un arrived in Russia on his armored train early Tuesday, according to South Korea's Defense Ministry, and is expected to hold a summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin soon in what could be a symbolic occasion to strengthen military cooperation between the two countries. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un arrived in Russia's far east on Tuesday to meet his fellow leader of the authoritarian world, the Russian President Vladimir Putin. (Lee Jeong-Ho, [RFA](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and Russian President Vladimir Putin were set to hold a summit in Russia soon, according to both countries, which could be an occasion to strengthen military cooperation between the two countries. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, publicly flanked by a cadre of key military officers, has entered Russia via his armored private train following a lengthy journey from Pyongyang for a high-stakes summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the Russian Far East. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is headed to Russia with top military officials for his first trip outside the country since 2019, state media reported on Tuesday, ahead of a possible summit with Russian leader Vladimir Putin to discuss weapons trade and joint military exercises. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- Top military commanders, arms industry officials and diplomats accompanied North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on his trip to Russia, hinting at a potentially defence-heavy agenda for meetings with President Vladimir Putin. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's private train appeared to barrel past Vladivostok on Tuesday en route to a possible summit with Vladimir Putin, according to Russian state media, in a sign that their meeting may not take place in the Far East city as widely expected. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un arrived in Russia early Tuesday, an official at South Korea's defense ministry said, as Kim is set to hold a rare summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin, with concerns growing over a possible arms deal between Pyongyang and Moscow. (Lee Minji, Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Elizabeth Salmon, the U.N. special rapporteur for human rights in North Korea, asked Beijing not to forcibly deport North Korean escapees, Tuesday, saying all member countries should comply with the principle of non-refoulement. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- The U.N. special rapporteur for North Korea's human rights on Tuesday expressed concern over the increased risk of forced repatriations of defectors to the North following the country's eased COVID-19 border controls. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's recent decision to slowly lift border shutdowns could help the isolated country re-engage with United Nations bodies on human rights, a UN rights expert said Monday on the last day of her trip to Seoul that started Monday last week. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

- The U.N. special envoy for North Korean human rights said the U.N. is “analyzing multiple sources” to determine if China is forcibly repatriating North Koreans detained in the country as the DPRK opens its borders. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The White House called on North Korea not to provide any weapons to Russia on Monday, ahead of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's widely anticipated meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The office of President Yoon Suk Yeol called on Russia on Tuesday to "act responsibly" as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council as North Korean leader Kim Jong-un traveled to Russia to meet with President Vladimir Putin. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603055555/https://mailchi.mp/bc2f8eef321f/hrnk-news-items-kim-arrives-in-russia-poised-for-high-stakes-summit-with-putin-amid-arms-deal-concerns>

Wednesday, September 13, 2023

Kim, Putin hold summit at Vostochny spaceport amid arms deal concerns

In North Korea:

[N. Korea fires 2 short-range ballistic missiles into East Sea ahead of Kim-Putin summit](#) (Yonhap, 09/13/2023)

[North Korea starts rebuilding major airbase in latest sign of air force revival](#) (NK News, 09/13/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea to hold massive military parade for 1st time in decade](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/13/2023)

[Yoon replaces defense, culture, gender equality ministers](#) (The Korea Times, 09/13/2023)

International:

[A timeline of the complicated relations between Russia and North Korea](#) (AP News, 09/13/2023)

[Britain urges North Korea not to sell arms to Russia](#) (Reuters, 09/13/2023)

[China says Kim-Putin talks are about their own ties](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/13/2023)

[Kim Jong Un meets Putin in Russia as missiles launch from North Korea](#) (Reuters, 09/13/2023)

[Kim Jong Un's train travel has a storied history. His father and grandfather did the same thing](#) (AP News, 09/13/2023)

[Kim Jong Un's trip to Russia provides window into unique North Korean and Russian media coverage](#) (AP News, 09/13/2023)

[Kim Jong Un: Who is with North Korea's leader on trip to Russia?](#) (Reuters, 09/13/2023)

[Kim, Putin hold summit at Vostochny spaceport amid arms deal concerns](#) (Yonhap, 09/13/2023)

[Kim tells Putin N. Korea supports Russia's 'sacred fight' against West](#) (Yonhap, 09/13/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim, Putin set for summit in Russia amid concerns over arms deal](#) (Yonhap, 09/13/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim pledges support for Putin at Russia's spaceport summit](#) (Yonhap, 09/13/2023)

[N. Korea to send 191 athletes to Hangzhou Asian Games: organizers](#) (Yonhap, 09/13/2023)

[North Korean Leader Vows 'Unconditional Support' for 'All Decisions' by Putin](#) (VOA, 09/13/2023)

[Putin talks military cooperation with Kim as North Korean leader endorses Russia's war on Ukraine](#) (CNN, 09/13/2023)

[Resolution pushed to urge China not to repatriate North Koreans](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/13/2023)

[Russia and North Korea to launch joint construction projects: Russian governor](#) (NK News, 09/13/2023)

[Russia promises to help North Korea build satellites](#) (The Korea Times, 09/13/2023)

[Russia's Lavrov says situation has changed since North Korea was hit by U.N. sanctions](#) (Reuters, 09/13/2023)

[U.S. defense, commerce officials due in Seoul amid potential N. Korea-Russia arms deal](#) (Yonhap, 09/13/2023)

[U.S. will not hesitate to take action if N. Korea provides weapons to Russia: state dept.](#) (Yonhap, 09/13/2023)

[Vostochny Cosmodrome: What is Russia's space launch facility in Amur?](#) (Reuters, 09/13/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles into the East Sea on Wednesday, South Korea's military said, in an apparent show of force ahead of its leader Kim Jong-un's summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has started to rebuild another major airbase north of Pyongyang, in the latest sign that leader Kim Jong Un seeks to develop air force capabilities after decades of stagnation. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea will hold a large-scale military parade for the first time in 10 years to showcase its strategic weapons as part of an Armed Forces Day event later this month, the Ministry of Defense said Wednesday. (Lee Jaeun, [The Korea Herald](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol on Wednesday named ruling People Power Party (PPP) lawmaker Shin Won-sik, former culture minister Yoo In-chon and former ruling party emergency committee member Kim Haeng as new defense, culture and family ministers, respectively. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has met President Vladimir Putin. at a cosmodrome in Russia's Far East. It was the two isolated leaders' second meeting. Their governments have not confirmed an agenda, but U.S. officials say Putin may ask for artillery and other ammunition for his war in Ukraine. (Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))
- Britain on Wednesday urged North Korea to end talks over the sale of arms to Russia, as North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin met for a rare summit. ([Reuters](#))
- The Chinese Foreign Ministry said Wednesday that the talks between North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and Russian President Vladimir Putin have to do with their own ties, adding that the Beijing-Pyongyang relationship remains friendly. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin met for a rare summit on Wednesday at which they discussed military matters, the war in Ukraine and possible Russian help for the secretive Communist state's satellite programme. (Guy Faulconbridge and Soo-hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))
- In a vast and elaborate complex on the edge of the North Korean capital, they sit frozen in time: two luxurious train carriages designed specifically for two supreme leaders — father and son, the predecessors of the man who is now in the middle of his own unusual railway diplomacy in Russia. (Ted Anthony, [AP News](#))
- The world is largely relying on North Korean and Russian media for information about the unusual train journey of leader Kim Jong Un to meet with President Vladimir Putin at a space facility. (Foster Klug and Emma Burrows, [AP News](#))
- Top military commanders, arms industry officials and diplomats accompanied North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on his trip to Russia, hinting at a potentially defence-heavy agenda for meetings with President Vladimir Putin. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and Russian President Vladimir Putin held their rare talks at Russia's Vostochny space center Wednesday amid concerns that the two isolated leaders may advance an arms negotiation and bolster military cooperation. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un told Russian President Vladimir Putin that Pyongyang supports Moscow's "sacred fight" against the West as the two isolated leaders held a rare summit in Russia on Wednesday, amid concerns that they may advance an arms negotiation and bolster military cooperation. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and Russian President Vladimir Putin were set to hold a rare summit in Russia, with the two isolated leaders expected to advance an arms negotiation and bolster military cooperation. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un on Wednesday pledged to throw his full support behind Russian President Vladimir Putin as the two isolated leaders held a rare summit at Russia's rocket launch facility, as concerns grow over a possible arms deal between Pyongyang and Moscow. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea will send 191 athletes in 18 sports at the upcoming Asian Games in China, data showed Wednesday. (Yoo Jee-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Russian President Vladimir Putin met Wednesday with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un at Russia's most advanced spaceport amid warnings from the U.S. and South Korea against a potential arms transfer. (Nike Ching, [VOA](#))

- Vladimir Putin has said Russia is considering and discussing some military cooperation with North Korea, following a summit at which that country's leader Kim Jong Un appeared to endorse Moscow's war on Ukraine. (Helen Regan, Gawon Bae, Larry Register, Simone McCarthy and Anna Chernova, [CNN](#))
- South Korea's ruling party is preparing a resolution to stop the possible forced repatriation of more than 2,600 North Korean defectors detained in China. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Pyongyang and Moscow plan to kick-start joint projects across a range of areas, including tourism and construction, a Russian regional chief announced late Tuesday, after talks with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un upon his arrival in the Russian Far East. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and Russian President Vladimir Putin held a summit, Wednesday, at the Vostochny Cosmodrome, a space station in Russia's far eastern Amur region, where Pyongyang received assurances of Moscow's assistance in satellite technology. (Kang Seung-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Wednesday the geopolitical climate had changed completely since the United Nations imposed sanctions on North Korea, and he accused the West of breaking pledges on humanitarian support for Pyongyang. ([Reuters](#))
- Ranking U.S. officials from the departments of defense and commerce will soon travel to South Korea for talks on ways to enhance the countries' joint deterrence against North Korea's evolving nuclear threats, they said Tuesday. (Byun Dun-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States will not hesitate in taking any necessary action should North Korea agree to provide weapons to Russia, a state department spokesperson said Tuesday. (Byun Duk-kun, [Yonhap](#))
- President Vladimir Putin met North Korea's Kim Jong Un, possibly at Russia's most modern space rocket launch site, on Wednesday amid the forests of the eastern Russia. ([Reuters](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240625132937/https://mailchi.mp/f575172633fb/hrnk-news-items-kim-putin-hold-summit-at-vostochny-spaceport-amid-arms-deal-concerns>

Thursday, September 14, 2023

King Charles slammed for Kim Jong-un message as he ignited human rights row

Top News:

[King Charles slammed for Kim Jong-un message as he ignited human rights row](#) (Daily Star, 09/12/2023)

In South Korea:

[Controversial general-turned-lawmaker nominated as South Korean defense minister](#) (NK News, 09/14/2023)

[S. Korea aware Russia using N. Korean weapons in Ukraine: presidential official](#) (Yonhap, 09/14/2023)

[S. Korea closely monitoring possible joint military drills between N. Korea, Russia](#) (Yonhap, 09/14/2023)

[S. Korea warns against violation of U.N. resolutions over possible N. Korea-Russia arms deal](#) (Yonhap, 09/14/2023)

[Unification minister voices 'deep' concerns about possible N. Korea-Russia arms deal](#) (Yonhap, 09/14/2023)

[Yoon to use U.N. address to send message about N.K.-Russia military exchanges](#) (Yonhap, 09/14/2023)

International:

[How Kim Jong Un could bolster air force by visiting Russian aviation factory](#) (NK News, 09/14/2023)

[Kim invites Putin to N. Korea: Putin accepts: state media](#) (Yonhap, 09/14/2023)

[Kim Jong-un invites Putin to North Korea after summit brings ties to 'a new level'](#) (The Guardian, 09/14/2023)

[Kim Jong Un: The US wants to engage North Korea but doesn't know how](#) (BBC, 09/14/2023)

[Kim-Putin summit highlights strategic push to expand cooperation](#) (Yonhap, 09/14/2023)

[North Korean hackers continue to attack critical US infrastructure: Pentagon](#) (NK News, 09/14/2023)

[N. Korean leader's train apparently en route to Russia's Khabarovsk after summit with Putin](#) (Yonhap, 09/14/2023)

[North Korea says Putin accepted invite to Pyongyang as Kim continues Russia tour](#) (NK News, 09/14/2023)

[No sign of Kim Jong Un on his Russian travels as Seoul expresses concern over meetings with Putin](#) (AP News, 09/14/2023)

[Putin accepts Kim's invite to N.Korea](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/14/2023)

[Putin accepts Kim's invitation to North Korea, U.S. warns of arms deals](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/14/2023)

[Putin 'gratefully' accepts Kim invite to visit North Korea](#) (Reuters, 09/14/2023)

[Putin may visit North Korea, as Kim boasts of 'unbreakable' bilateral ties](#) (RFA, 09/14/2023)

[Putin offers assistance to North's satellite program](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/14/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. to hold defense talks on deterrence against N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 09/14/2023)

[U.S. concerned about burgeoning defense cooperation between N. Korea, Russia: White House](#) (Yonhap, 09/14/2023)

Top News:

- King Charles has found himself at the centre of a human rights row after sending "good wishes" to North Korea's Kim Jong-un... Greg Scarlatou, executive director of the

Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), which documents the atrocities of the Kim regime, called it a “huge mistake”. (Michael Havis, Charles Wade-Palmer, [Daily Star](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol nominated a retired three-star lieutenant general turned congressman known for his hawkish views North Korea to serve as defense minister this week. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- South Korea has long been aware that North Korea-provided weapons have been used by Russia in its ongoing war with Ukraine, the presidential office said Thursday. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's defense ministry said Thursday it is closely monitoring the possibility of North Korea and Russia conducting joint military drills, after North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and Russian President Vladimir Putin held a rare summit. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's foreign ministry on Thursday warned that a potential arms deal between Pyongyang and Moscow would violate U.N. Security Council resolutions, a day after North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and Russian President Vladimir Putin held a summit. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho on Thursday expressed his "deep" concerns about military cooperation and a possible arms deal between North Korea and Russia, as the leaders of the two isolated countries held a rare summit this week. (Lee Minji, Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol is expected to use his upcoming address at the U.N. General Assembly to send a message about military exchanges between North Korea and Russia, a senior official said Thursday. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is set to visit aviation factories in the Russian Far East this week following his summit with Vladimir Putin, in a move that experts say could be part of the DPRK's efforts to modernize its outdated combat aircraft fleet. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has invited Russian President Vladimir Putin to visit his country during their summit at Russia's spaceport, and Putin accepted the offer, Pyongyang's state media reported Thursday, as the two isolated countries seek to bolster ties. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- Kim Jong-un invited President Vladimir Putin to visit North Korea during their meeting in Russia on Wednesday, Pyongyang's state media reported, amid warnings that Kim was poised to offer the Kremlin artillery shells and other munitions for the war in Ukraine. (Justin McCurry, [The Guardian](#))
- For decades, the West - and Washington particularly - has asked itself the question: how do you solve a problem like North Korea? (Laura Bicker, Anthony Zurcher, [BBC](#))
- The latest summit between the leaders of North Korea and Russia has served as a defining moment for the two isolated countries to advance military cooperation and expand their ties, spawning concerns that a new Cold War framework could be highlighted on the Korean Peninsula, experts say. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea continues to increase cyber attacks on U.S. government departments, critical infrastructure and private businesses, according to a report from the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), an assessment that one expert said reflects increasing recognition of the importance of cyberspace since Russia's invasion of Ukraine. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's special train appears to be moving toward Russia's Far Eastern city of Khabarovsk on Thursday, a day after his rare summit with President Vladimir Putin, according to sources. (Choi Kyong-ae, [Yonhap](#))
- Russian leader Vladimir Putin accepted an invitation by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un to visit Pyongyang, according to a DPRK state media report on meetings between the two in Russia the previous day. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un was expected to tour a Russian plant that builds fighter jets and visit the country's Pacific Fleet, but his exact whereabouts remained uncertain Thursday following a summit at which he expressed unconditional support for Moscow. (Kim Tong-hyung, Dasha Litvinova, [AP News](#))
- Russian President Vladimir Putin has accepted an invitation from North Korean leader Kim Jong-un to visit North Korea, following their high-stakes summit where they mutually committed to strengthening their alignment against perceived "imperialists' military threats." (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Russian President Vladimir Putin has accepted an invitation from North Korean leader Kim Jong-un during a reception held on Wednesday. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Russian President Vladimir Putin accepted Kim Jong Un's invitation to visit North Korea, stoking U.S. concerns that a revived Moscow-Pyongyang axis could bolster Russia's military in Ukraine and provide Kim sensitive missile technology. (Hyonhee Shin, Guy Faulconbridge, [Reuters](#))
- Russian President Vladimir Putin may pay a reciprocal visit to North Korea to crow about the "unbreakable strategic partnership" between Moscow and Pyongyang, on the back of the united front that both had pledged against democracies spanning from Asia to Europe. (Lee Jeong-Ho, [RFA](#))
- Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed his intentions to help develop North Korea's satellite program in his summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un at a spaceport in Russia's Far East Wednesday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea and the United States will hold regular defense talks on deterrence against North Korean nuclear and missile threats in Seoul next week, Seoul's defense ministry said Thursday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States is concerned about growing defense cooperation between North Korea and Russia, a National Security Council (NSC) official said Wednesday, adding the U.S. will take appropriate steps if necessary to counter any potential arms deal between the two countries. (Byun Duk-kun, Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603055850/https://mailchi.mp/55033aa64771/hrnk-news-items-king-charles-slammed-for-kim-jong-un-message-as-he-ignited-human-rights-row>

Friday, September 15, 2023

Kim Jong Un to stay in Russia for several days; Pentagon warns N. Korea's arms support would prolong Ukraine war

In South Korea:

[L-SAM and U.S. troops to appear at large-scale military parade on Sept. 26](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/14/2023)

International:

[Allies say Kim-Putin will pay price for military cooperation](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/15/2023)

[IAEA chief rules out Russia engaging in nuclear weapons technology trade with N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 09/15/2023)

[Kim and Putin have not signed any agreements during visit, Kremlin says](#) (The Telegraph, 09/15/2023)

[Kim Jong Un-Putin talks: What do the optics tell us?](#) (BBC, 09/15/2023)

[Kim Jong-un's tour underscores how Moscow could exacerbate the North Korean threat](#) (New York Times, 09/15/2023)

[Kim-Putin military cooperation may pose potential setback for China](#) (RFA, 09/15/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim inspects factory producing modern fighter jets in Russia's Far East](#) (Yonhap, 09/15/2023)

[North Korea's Kim Jong Un to stay in Russia for several days](#) (BBC, 09/14/2023)

[Pentagon warns N. Korea's arms support would prolong Ukraine war](#) (Yonhap, 09/15/2023)

[President Yoon to address North-Russia issue at UN](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/14/2023)

[Putin and Kim Jong-un exchange rifles as North Korean leader continues Russia tour](#) (The Guardian, 09/15/2023)

[South Korea, U.S. strengthen deterrence against North amid weapons deal concerns](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/15/2023)

[US extends ban on civilian planes entering North Korean airspace for five years](#) (NK News, 09/15/2023)

[US, ROK demand Russia 'act responsibly,' shun North Korea military cooperation](#) (NK News, 09/15/2023)

[US sanctions Russian tied to Wagner Group for assisting North Korean arms sales](#) (NK News, 09/15/2023)

[U.S. working to 'expose and counter' Russian arms deal with North Korea](#) (UPI, 09/15/2023)

[What Do Weapons Sales to Russia Mean for North Korea's Economy?](#) (38 North, 09/14/2023)

International:

- Senior South Korean Foreign and Defense Ministry officials and their US counterparts said Friday North Korea and Russia will pay the price for military cooperation because it violates United Nations Security Council resolutions, urging Moscow to live up to its role as a permanent UNSC member. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The head of the IAEA said Friday he cannot conceive Russia engaging in trade of nuclear weapons technology with North Korea, amid growing concerns over their military cooperation following a recent bilateral summit. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- No agreements have been signed during Kim Jong Un's ongoing visit to Russia, the Kremlin said on Friday. ([The Telegraph](#))
- The optics of Kim Jong Un and Vladimir Putin's date in eastern Russia clearly underscore a relationship that is being strengthened in wartime. (Frances Mao, [BBC](#))
- Kim Jong-un on Friday toured Russian military-related facilities producing the off-limits technology he would like to obtain for his isolated nation, as Moscow tempts the North Korean leader whose ammunition stocks the United States says Russia covets for the war in Ukraine. (Paul Sonne and Choe Sang-Hun, [New York Times](#))
- Kim's high-profile visit this week has pressured the allies to intensify their multilateral security cooperation in the region, a development which experts noted, may see China emerging as the most disadvantaged nation. (Lee Jeong-ho, [RFA](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un on Friday inspected an aircraft plant that produces advanced fighter jets in Russia's Far East, according to Russian news agencies, after a rare summit with President Vladimir Putin earlier this week. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's leader Kim Jung Un has unexpectedly extended his visit to Russia, where he was meeting President Vladimir Putin for a suspected arms deal. (Mattea Bubalo, [BBC](#))
- The U.S. Department of Defense warned North Korea Thursday that its arms support to Russia would not only prolong the war in Ukraine but also be tantamount to "directly" joining the killing of innocent Ukrainians. (Song Sang-Ho, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol will be attending the UN General Assembly in New York on Monday accompanied by first lady Kim Keon Hee. This marks Yoon's first appearance at the UN since South Korea returned as a two-year nonpermanent member of the UN Security Council. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Kim Jong-un has visited a factory that builds advanced fighter jets, as his tour of Russia moves into its third day and the Kremlin revealed he and Vladimir Putin had exchanged gifts of rifles during their summit this week. (Justin McCurry, [The Guardian](#))
- South Korea and the United States vowed to elevate their deterrence against North Korea, the allies announced in a joint statement after defense talks Friday. (Park Eun-Jee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The U.S. has extended its ban on civilian aircraft entering North Korean airspace for five more years over safety concerns about missile launches and other military activities, the Department of Transportation announced Thursday. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- Senior U.S. and South Korean officials condemned North Korean military cooperation with Russia on Friday, following a meeting to discuss the use of "military and economic measures" to deter DPRK attack. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

- The U.S. has designated a Russian man for his alleged role in facilitating North Korean munitions sales to Russia, part of a sweeping set of new sanctions targeting the Kremlin's war effort in Ukraine. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The United States is trying to impede Russian attempts to acquire weapons for its war against Ukraine from North Korea, a senior defense official said Friday, as Kim Jong Un continued a visit to Russia amid reports of a potential arms deal. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- Heavily increased arms exports to Russia would boost the North Korean economy in the short- to medium-term but is not a remedy for its ailing economy. (Benjamin Katzeff Silberstein, [38 North](#))

Prepared by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603060046/https://mailchi.mp/241ef750202c/kim-jong-un-to-stay-in-russia-for-several-days-pentagon-warns-n-koreas-arms-support-would-prolong-ukraine-war>

Saturday, September 16, 2023

N. Korea's Kim meets Russian defense minister, inspects nuclear-capable bombers, warship

International:

[Athletes depart North Korea to compete in 2023 Asian Games in China](#) (AP News, 09/16/2023)

[Kim Jong Un says Russian aircraft can 'overwhelm' external threats: State media](#) (NK News, 09/16/2023)

[N. Korean athletes arrive in Hangzhou for Asian Games: reports](#) (Yonhap, 09/16/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim 'deeply impressed' with Russia's modern aviation technology: KCNA](#) (Yonhap, 09/16/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim meets Russian defense minister, inspects nuclear-capable bombers, warship](#) (Yonhap, 09/16/2023)

[North Korean arms for Russia probably wouldn't make a big difference in the Ukraine war, Milley says](#) (AP News, 09/16/2023)

[North Korea's Kim inspects Russian nuclear-capable bombers, hypersonic missiles](#) (Reuters, 09/16/2023)

[North Korea's Kim Jong Un inspects Russian bombers and a warship on a visit to Russia's Far East](#) (AP News, 09/16/2023)

[U.S. to seek further action over N.K. provocations, int'l law violations: NSA Sullivan](#) (Yonhap, 09/16/2023)

International:

- North Korea sent a group of athletes to China to compete in the 2023 Hangzhou Asian Games, state media reported Saturday, as the DPRK continues to normalize international travel after nearly four years of isolation. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un was "deeply impressed" with Russia's fighter jet production capacity and believes they can help "overwhelm" external threats to the Kremlin, DPRK state media on Saturday. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- A group of North Korean athletes has reportedly arrived in the eastern Chinese city of Hangzhou to participate in the upcoming Asian Games. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea leader Kim Jong-un said he was "deeply impressed" with the advanced state of Russian aerospace and aviation technology as he visited an aircraft plant during his ongoing visit to Russia this week, Pyongyang's state media said Saturday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un met with Russia's Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and inspected Russia's nuclear-capable bombers, missiles and a warship Saturday after he arrived in Russia's far eastern city of Vladivostok, Russian media reported. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea may be able to boost Russia's supply of artillery munitions for the war in Ukraine, but that is not likely to make a big difference, the top American military officer said as he arrived in Norway for NATO meetings that began Saturday and will focus in part on the conflict. (Lolita C. Baldor, [AP News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un inspected Russian nuclear-capable strategic bombers, hypersonic missiles and warships on Saturday, accompanied by President Vladimir Putin's defence minister. (Guy Faulconbridge, [Reuters](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un inspected Russia's nuclear-capable bombers, hypersonic missiles and an advanced warship from its Pacific fleet on Saturday as he continued a trip in Russia's Far East that has sparked Western concerns about an arms alliance that could fuel President Vladimir Putin's war on Ukraine. (Kim Tong-hyung and Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- The United States will press for further action over North Korea's provocations and other breaches of international law, a senior U.S. official said Friday, after a recent summit between Pyongyang and Moscow deepened concerns about a potential arms deal between them. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603060154/https://mailchi.mp/51c762e4d50c/hrnk-news-items-n-koreas-kim-meets-russian-defense-minister-inspects-nuclear-capable-bombers-warship>

Sunday, September 17, 2023

Kim Jong-un heads home with drone gifts from Russia; Yoon criticizes North Korea-Russia military cooperation

International:

[Kim Jong-un heads home with drone gifts from Russia](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 09/17/2023)

[Kim Jong-un's parting gifts revealed as he heads home after Russia tour](#) (*The Telegraph*, 09/17/2023)

[Kim Jong-un returns home after Russia trip underscoring ties with Putin](#) (*The Guardian*, 09/17/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim holds talks with Russian defense minister on strengthening military cooperation: state media](#) (*Yonhap*, 09/17/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim leaves Russia on armored train to return home: Russian media](#) (*Yonhap*, 09/17/2023)

[North Korea's Kim heads home after week-long visit to Russia](#) (*Reuters*, 09/17/2023)

[North Korea's Kim heads home from Russia's Far East](#) (*Reuters*, 09/17/2023)

[North Korean leader Kim Jong Un gifted bulletproof vest and drones as he leaves Russia](#) (*CNN*, 09/17/2023)

[Russia gifts drones and supplies to North Korea in likely sanctions violation](#) (*NK News*, 09/17/2023)

[Russia unlikely to provide high-level arms tech to North Korea](#) (*The Korea Times*, 09/17/2023)

[Yoon criticizes North Korea-Russia military cooperation](#) (*Korea JoongAng Daily*, 09/17/2023)

International:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un was on his way back to Pyongyang on Sunday, wrapping up a six-day trip to the Russian Far East that focused on military cooperation with Moscow amid blistering criticism from the international community for defying sanctions. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The Kremlin gave North Korean leader Kim Jong-un five explosive drones and a bulletproof vest as he concluded his six-day visit to the country, according to Russian state media. (Harriet Barber, [The Telegraph](#))
- The North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un, was on his way home from Russia on Sunday, ending a six-day trip that triggered global concerns about weapons transfer deals between the two countries locked in separate standoffs with the west. ([The Guardian](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has held talks with Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu on strengthening bilateral military cooperation and exchange, state media reported Sunday. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
North Korean leader Kim Jong-un left Russia on his armored train Sunday to return home following a six-day visit to the country, Russian media said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un was heading home by train on Sunday, Russian news agencies reported, after a week-long visit to Russia that included talks with President Vladimir Putin on closer military and other cooperation. (Park Ju-min, [Reuters](#))
- A train with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on board has left the railway station in Russia's Far Eastern city of Artyom bound for home, wrapping up his visit to Russia, Russian news agencies reported on Sunday. ([Reuters](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un received body armor and drones as parting gifts as he wrapped up a trip to Russia that has alarmed the West. (Amarachi Orie, Darya Tarasova, Duarte Mendonca and Jake Kwon, [CNN](#))

- Russia reportedly gifted drones, military uniforms and bulletproof vests to North Korea, according to state-run TASS on Sunday, likely violating U.N. Security Council (USNC) sanctions in the process. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The recent burgeoning military cooperation between North Korea and Russia has sparked concerns about the potential transfer of nuclear weapons technologies from Moscow to Pyongyang, but that is unlikely to happen, according to analysts, Sunday. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol in an interview published Sunday called the military cooperation between North Korea and Russia "illegal and unjust," as North Korean leader Kim Jong-un held talks with Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu in Vladivostok Saturday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603060448/https://mailchi.mp/12aed32601db/hrnk-news-items-kim-jong-un-heads-home-with-drone-gifts-from-russia-yoon-criticizes-north-korea-russia-military-cooperation>

Monday, September 18, 2023

Yoon warns against Russia-North Korea military cooperation, China's Wang Yi heads to Russia as Kim Jong-un wraps up visit

International:

[Yoon seeks global backing against NK after Kim-Putin talks](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 09/18/2023)

[North Korea's Kim Jong Un heads home after Russian journey that raised concern about weapons deals](#) (*Associated Press*, 09/17/2023)

[South Korea's Yoon warns against Russia-North Korea military cooperation and plans to discuss at UN](#) (*Associated Press*, 09/17/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim heads home after 'successful' visit to Russia: state media](#) (*Yonhap*, 09/18/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. nearing completion to revise joint deterrence strategy against N.K. threats](#) (*Yonhap*, 09/18/2023)

[Rifle, fur hat, drones: North Korea's Kim returns with gifts from Russia](#) (*Reuters*, 09/18/2023)

[China's Wang Yi heads to Russia as North Korea's Kim wraps up visit](#) (*Radio Free Asia*, 09/18/2023)

[China sends top envoy Wang Yi to Russia for security talks](#) (*BBC*, 09/18/2023)

['Free North Korean detainees': Activists target Hangzhou Asian Games](#) (*The Korea Times*, 09/18/2023)

[High-level defense talks discuss North's growing threats](#) (*Korea JoongAng Daily*, 09/18/2023)

International:

- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol left for the 78th United Nations General Assembly on Monday to seek international support against North Korea's recent summit with Russia. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is on his way home Sunday from Russia, ending a six-day trip that triggered global concerns about weapons transfer deals between the two countries locked in separate standoffs with the West. (Kim Tong-hyung, Hyung-jin Kim, and Elise Morton, [AP News](#))
- South Korea's president said the international community "will unite more tightly" to cope with deepening military cooperation between Russia and North Korea, as he plans to raise the issue with world leaders at the U.N. General Assembly this week. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has left the Far Eastern city of Vladivostok for home after "successfully" completing a visit to Russia that will open up a "new chapter" in their bilateral relations, Pyongyang's state media reported Monday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the United States are nearing completion of work to revise their joint deterrence strategy against North Korea's evolving military threats, Seoul officials said Monday, as the allies held key regular defense talks there. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is heading home on Monday, most likely with gifts from his Russian hosts including a rifle, a cosmonaut's glove, and military drones - which on their own are a violation of U.N. sanctions. ([Reuters](#))
- Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Monday began a four-day trip to Russia during which both sides could shore up their strategic ties, a day after Beijing's ally and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un concluded a six-day visit to Russia's Far East. (Lee Jeong-ho and Elaine Chan, [RFA](#))
- China's top diplomat Wang Yi is visiting Russia for security talks, as Moscow seeks continued support for its war on Ukraine. His visit comes after Vladimir Putin met North Korea's Kim Jong Un amid US fears they could strike an arms deal. (Tessa Wong, [BBC](#))
- Human rights advocates are joining international efforts to step up pressure on Beijing ahead of the Asian Games in Hangzhou to cease its practice of forcibly repatriating North Korean escapees. They hope to use the sports event as a platform to raise awareness about the issue. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- Defense officials from South Korea and the United States met in Seoul on Monday for talks designed to bolster deterrence against North Korea's advancing nuclear weapons and missile threats. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Mohona Ganguly, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603060756/https://mailchi.mp/3d296b274909/hrnk-news-items-yoon-warns-against-russia-north-korea-military-cooperation-chinas-wang-yi-heads-to-russia-as-kim-jong-un-wraps-up-visit>

Tuesday, September 19, 2023

**N. Korea kicks off Asian Games campaign with first soccer match in four years;
NK hackers stole \$70M from Hong Kong crypto exchange**

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un back in North Korea after 'new chapter' opened with Russia](#) (UPI, 09/19/2023)

[Mosaic of N. Korean leader erected in Pyongyang as part of personality cult](#) (Yonhap, 09/19/2023)

[North Korean hackers stole \\$70M from Hong Kong crypto exchange, researchers say](#) (NK News, 09/19/2023)

[N. Korea's food shortages probably improved on crop harvest, imports: unification ministry](#) (Yonhap, 09/19/2023)

[N. Korean leader returns home after trip to Russia: state media](#) (Yonhap, 09/19/2023)

In South Korea:

[Foreign Ministry summons Russian envoy to protest over cooperation with the North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/19/2023)

[S. Korean foreign ministry summons Russian envoy over N.K. ties](#) (Yonhap, 09/19/2023)

[South Korean pastor charged with molesting six North Korean defector students](#) (NK News, 09/19/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[South could face North in Asiad women's football tournament](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/19/2023)

[South Korea Presidents clash over North Korea policy](#) (RFA, 09/19/2023)

International:

[North Korea kicks off Asian Games campaign with first soccer match in four years](#) (NK News, 09/19/2023)

[N. Korea shut down Chinese Taipei to kick off men's football tournament](#) (Yonhap, 09/19/2023)

[US, ROK discuss how conventional and nuclear forces will counter North Korea](#) (NK News, 09/19/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un returned home after a six-day visit to Russia and a summit with President Vladimir Putin that "opened a new chapter" in the relationship between the two countries, state media reported on Tuesday. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- A mosaic mural depicting North Korean leader Kim Jong-un was erected at an elite school in Pyongyang, state media reported Tuesday, as North Korea has been bolstering its leader's personality cult. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- Cybercriminals from North Korea's Lazarus Group are likely responsible for the recent theft of at least \$70 million worth of cryptocurrency. Elliptic attributed last Tuesday's attack on

Hong Kong-based cryptocurrency exchange CoinEx to the prominent syndicate after confirming that the attackers transferred some of the stolen assets using a bridge that Lazarus previously employed. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

- North Korea's food situation may have improved, compared with the first half of the year, on the back of an increase in crop harvest and imports, South Korea's unification ministry said Tuesday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- Leader Kim Jong-un has crossed back into North Korea after a trip to Russia that "opened a new chapter" for the development of the bilateral relations between the two nations, Pyongyang's state media reported Tuesday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- First Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Chang Ho-jin summoned Russian Ambassador to South Korea Andrey Borisovich Kulik to the Foreign Ministry headquarters to convey the South Korean government's serious concerns regarding discussions of arms trades and military cooperation between Moscow and Pyongyang during North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's visit to Russia last week, the ministry said in a statement. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The South Korean foreign ministry summoned the top Russian envoy to the country Tuesday to lodge a complaint over Moscow's discussions of arms deals and military cooperation with North Korea. (Kang Yoon-seung, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean prosecutors have formally charged a local pastor with molesting six North Korean defector students who attended his private "international school," with authorities looking into the possibility of additional cases of abuse. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The South Korean women's football team may face North Korea in the Hangzhou Asian Games after a sudden bracket change was announced on Monday. (Paik Jihwan, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The ongoing political debate over diplomacy with North Korea is set to gain momentum, as Yoon's Defense Minister nominee Shin Won-sik has opined about his inclination to scrap the inter-Korean military deal last week. (Lee Jeong-ho, [RFA](#))

International:

- North Korea kicked off its Asian Games campaign with a men's soccer match against Chinese Taipei, marking the nation's return to competitive international soccer after four years away. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea defeated Chinese Taipei 2-0 to kick off the Asian Games men's football competition in China on Tuesday, marking the reclusive country's return to the international sporting scene with an easy win. (Yoo Jee-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- U.S. and South Korean defense officials met in Seoul this week to discuss how conventional ROK forces will coordinate with American nuclear forces to deter and defend against North Korean attack. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603060914/https://mailchi.mp/630462eef516/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-kicks-off-asia-n-games-campaign-with-first-soccer-match-in-four-years-nk-hackers-stole-70m-from-hong-kong-crypto-exchange>

Wednesday, September 20, 2023

UK Election Candidates from North Korea: Timothy Cho, Jihyun Park; NK escapees tell how nuclear tests ruined their health

Top News:

[UK Election Candidates from North Korea: Timothy Cho, Jihyun Park](#) (Radio Free Asia, 09/13/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea's Kim arrives in Pyongyang after Russia trip: state media](#) (Yonhap, 09/20/2023)

[North Korea 'mobilizes' students to fight yearly 'corn battle'](#) (Radio Free Asia, 09/19/2023)

[North Korean escapees tell how nuclear tests ruined their health, hometown](#) (The Korea Times, 09/20/2023)

In South Korea:

[New industry minister vows efforts to boost exports, nuclear power industry](#) (Yonhap, 09/20/2023)

[S. Korea observed military dealings between N. Korea, Russia months before Kim-Putin summit: official](#) (Yonhap, 09/20/2023)

[Yoon's office slams ex-president's national security remarks](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/20/2023)

International:

[Australian wife of Korean War veteran to be buried beside husband](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/20/2023)

[Biden condemns N. Korea's defiance of UNSC resolutions, remains committed to diplomacy](#) (Yonhap, 09/20/2023)

[Russia Embassy denies military deal between Moscow, Pyongyang](#) (Yonhap, 09/20/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. discuss potential Pyongyang-Moscow space cooperation in tabletop exercise](#) (Yonhap, 09/20/2023)

[U.S. official voices concerns over N. Korean detainees in China at risk of repatriation](#) (Yonhap, 09/20/2023)

[Yoon to urge unity against North-Russia arms deals at UN](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/20/2023)

[Yoon, U.N. chief discuss N. Korea, Ukraine](#) (Yonhap, 09/20/2023)

Top News:

- Timothy Cho once was a homeless man in North Korea, and Jihyun Park was a victim of human trafficking in China as she was escaping North Korea. RFA followed these two North Korean defectors, who are now British citizens running for local elections in the UK, on their goal-driven journey. (Jung-min Noh, Jamin Anderson, Hye-jun Seo, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has arrived in Pyongyang after traveling to Russia for his summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin, the North's state media reported Wednesday. Kim arrived in Pyongyang on Tuesday evening after completing "immortal external revolutionary activities" that will be recorded in the history of strengthening friendly relations between North Korea and Russia, according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea is tapping its students to serve as free labor during the corn harvest this fall and searching them after each shift to make sure they aren't stealing from the fields, residents of the country told Radio Free Asia. (Son Hyemin, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- North Korea's human rights and development of nuclear weapons are closely related issues, said Lee Shin-wha, ambassador for international cooperation on North Korean human rights. She said, in cooperation with the unification ministry, she would look more into human rights abuses connected to the regime's nuclear program. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's new Industry Minister Bang Moon-kyu on Wednesday vowed all-out effort to prop up exports as a key economic growth engine and to restore the ecosystem of the country's nuclear power generation industry, his office said. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea began observing military dealings between North Korea and Russia "several months" before the two countries' leaders met in Russia's Far East last week to discuss a suspected arms deal, a South Korean presidential official said Tuesday (U.S. time). (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- The Yoon Suk Yeol government criticized former President Moon Jae-in's recent claim that liberal administrations had a better track record with national security than conservative ones. Referring to Moon's remarks, a high-ranking presidential official told reporters in New York on Tuesday night during Yoon's trip to attend the UN General Assembly that "a situation that is outwardly peaceful as a result of subservience is not peace." (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- The Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs said Wednesday that it will bury the Australian wife of an Australian Korean War veteran next to her husband at the UN Memorial Cemetery in Busan. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- U.S. President Joe Biden on Tuesday condemned North Korea's continued violation of U.N. Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, but reiterated his commitment to diplomacy to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

- The Russian Embassy in Seoul on Wednesday dismissed reports that Moscow and Pyongyang discussed military cooperation at last week's bilateral summit. The embassy stressed Russia "consistently adheres to all the international commitments it has undertaken, including those related to the development of mutually beneficial relations with our good neighbor and long-standing partner, North Korea." (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean and U.S. defense officials discussed possible space cooperation between Pyongyang and Moscow during a bilateral tabletop exercise on space this week, Seoul's defense ministry said Wednesday. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.S. diplomat expressed concerns Tuesday over North Korean detainees in China who are at the risk of torture if repatriated, calling on Beijing to comply with the international principle of non-refoulement. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol will use the UN General Assembly as a platform to urge a united response from the international community to possible military transactions between North Korea and Russia, his office said Tuesday evening. This follows North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and Russian President Vladimir Putin's summit last week, seen as an occasion to strengthen military cooperation between the two countries, possibly in violation of UN Security Council resolutions. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol met with U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Tuesday (local time) and expressed his wish to continue working with the global body to deter North Korea's provocations and improve its human rights conditions, his office said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603061036/https://mailchi.mp/4ed4774307aa/hrnk-news-items-uk-election-candidates-from-north-korea-timothy-cho-jihyun-park-nk-escapees-tell-how-nuclear-tests-ruined-their-health>

Thursday, September 21, 2023

North Korean Guitarist in the UK: Yeyong Emily Jeon; Seoul imposes sanctions over illegal arms deals with Pyongyang

Top News:

[North Korean Guitarist in the UK: Yeyoung Emily Jeon](#) (RFA, 09/21/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korea-China trade hits four-month high as DPRK eases COVID controls](#) (NK News, 09/21/2023)

In South Korea:

[National Assembly clears way for DP leader's arrest](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/21/2023)

[Seoul could reconsider ties with Moscow, top diplomat warns](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/21/2023)

[S Korea assembly approves opposition leader arrest amid polarization](#) (RFA, 09/21/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[From friend to foe: N.K. athletes of 2018 joint Korean teams return as rivals to S. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 09/21/2023)

[S Korea sanctions more firms, N Korea individuals as tensions rise](#) (RFA, 09/21/2023)

[S. Korea slaps sanction on NK defense minister](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/21/2023)

[S. Korea offers to return remains of presumed N. Korean man found dead on western island](#) (Yonhap, 09/21/2023)

[Seoul sanctions North Korean officials for suspected arms sales to Russia](#) (NK News, 09/21/2023)

[South Korea Hits North Korean Illegal Weapons Trade with New Sanctions](#) (VOA, 09/21/2023)

[South Korea says it 'will not stand idly by' if North Korea receives Russian help on nuclear weapons](#) (CNN, 09/21/2023)

International:

[2 U.S. lawmakers table bill on sanctions against N. Korea's support for Russia's war in Ukraine](#) (Yonhap, 09/21/2023)

[Hyundai's Staria minivans escort North's Kim Jong-un while in Russia](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/21/2023)

[Kim Jong-un's car escorted by Hyundai van in Russia](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/21/2023)

[N. Korea sends delegation of sports officials for Asian Games in Hangzhou](#) (Yonhap, 09/21/2023)

[Rights experts from 17 countries demand release of North Korean escapees in China](#) (The Korea Times, 09/21/2023)

[Russia-NK military ties could lead to sanctions, Seoul says](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/21/2023)

[Russia-North Korea Ties: Will Putin-Kim Romance Last?](#) (VOA, 09/21/2023)

[Russian military aid to North Korea would be 'direct provocation,' Yoon tells UN](#) (NK News, 09/21/2023)

[Seoul imposes sanctions over illegal arms deals with Pyongyang](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/21/2023)

[South Korea's Yoon tells UN that Russia helping North Korea would be 'direct provocation'](#) (Reuters, 09/21/2023)

[US striving to stop NK's potential weapons support to Russia 'wherever we can': Blinken](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/21/2023)

[U.S. watching closely for possible N. Korea-Russia arms trade: senior U.S. official](#) (Yonhap, 09/21/2023)

[Yoon condemns NK-Russia military cooperation as 'direct provocation' to Seoul](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/21/2023)

[Yoon: Seoul will not 'stand idly by' if Russia, North Korea make arms deal](#) (UPI, 09/21/2023)

[Yoon warns at UN that arms deal between North, Russia will be a 'direct provocation'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/21/2023)

Top News:

- Yeyoung Jeon fell in love with the charm of guitar when she was 10 years old in North Korea. She settled in the UK in 2008. As someone who did not want to accept her identity as a North Korean defector, she isolated herself from the North Korean community. But when she realizes that all other North Korean defectors have hurtful experiences, she explores her identity and reaches out to the people that share the memories from her homeland. (Jung-min Noh, Jamin Anderson, Hye-jun Seo, [Radio Free Asia](#))

In North Korea:

- Official trade between North Korea and China rose to the highest level in four months in August, as goods related to wig production continued to lead bilateral exchange. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- The National Assembly passed a motion allowing the arrest of Democratic Party (DP) leader Lee Jae-myung during a heated plenary session on Thursday afternoon, marking the first time that the legislature has given its consent to the arrest of the leader of a major political party. The gravest of the allegations against Lee is that he violated international sanctions and committed bribery through a third party by asking underwear company Ssangbangwool to illegally transfer \$8 million to North Korea. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea will have to reconsider its relations with Russia should there be a weapons deal between the Eurasian power and North Korea, a top diplomat told lawmakers Thursday. “Any military transaction between Russia and North Korea would violate the UN Security Council resolutions, and South Korea will not stand by such a deal,” Vice Foreign Minister Chang Ho-jin said at a meeting of the National Assembly’s foreign affairs committee meeting that day. (Ester Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea’s National Assembly passed a motion to arrest its opposition leader for bribery on Thursday, as the progressive opposition bloc’s approval ratings sank to new lows and with just a few months before the general election in April. A divisive political climate in South Korea may thwart efforts to sustain crucial policies on North Korea and China. (Lee Jeong-ho, [RFA](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The unified Korean delegation grabbed four medals, including a gold medal in the women's dragon boat in 2018. But at this year's Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, the Koreas will compete separately. And a few members of joint teams from either side of the border will be back wearing their own national flags. (Yoo Jee-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea on Thursday imposed unilateral sanctions on companies and North Korean individuals, including the North’s defense minister – a move aimed at curbing Pyongyang’s nuclear ambitions that pose threats to the United States and its regional allies. (Lee Jeong-ho, [RFA](#))

- The South Korean government on Thursday handed out the world's first unilateral sanction on North Korea's defense minister, who had accompanied North Korean leader Kim Jong-un on his recent trip to Russia. The financial sanctions also targeted other individuals and entities allegedly involved in illicit arms and financial transactions with third party countries, most notably Russia. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea's unification ministry said Thursday it has discovered the body of a presumed North Korean man found dead on the country's western island earlier this month and wishes to return it to the North. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea has unilaterally sanctioned North Korea's defense chief, nine other individuals, and two organizations for their alleged involvement in arms sales with Russia and other countries, the development of the DPRK's nuclear and missile programs, and illegal financial transactions. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- South Korea Thursday imposed new sanctions on 10 individuals and two entities for involvement in illegal financial transactions related to North Korea's nuclear program and arms trade with three countries, including Russia. (Nike Ching, [VOA](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol warned on Wednesday that his country and its allies "will not stand idly by" if North Korea receives Russian help to boost its weapons of mass destruction – just days after the leaders of the two nuclear-armed nations held a closely watched summit. (Heather Law, Jessie Yeung, [CNN](#))

International:

- U.S. lawmakers Reps. Gerry Connolly (D-VA) and Joe Wilson (R-SC) have introduced a bill calling for the expansion of sanctions against North Korea's support for Russia's war in Ukraine, a congressional website showed Wednesday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Four Hyundai Motor's Staria minivans were seen serving as security cars for North Korean leader Kim Jong-un during his visit to Russia earlier in the month. North Korean broadcasters rarely reveal unedited footage with the logos of South Korean companies, preferring instead to edit or blur out the symbols. (Sarah Chea, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korean state-run media on Wednesday broadcast a documentary that featured North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's motorcade in Russia, notably escorted by vans manufactured by South Korea's auto giant, Hyundai Motor. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea has sent a delegation of sports officials to the upcoming Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, state media said Thursday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- Dozens of human rights organizations and experts from 17 countries have demanded Beijing release North Korean detainees and grant them refugee status in a joint letter to Xi Jinping, China's top leader, ahead of the Asian Games in Hangzhou. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea will consider imposing unilateral sanctions as a viable course of action should concrete evidence of illicit military cooperation between North Korea and Russia be confirmed, Seoul's vice foreign minister said Thursday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Warming relations between North Korea and Russia could last as long as the war in Ukraine continues, making Pyongyang either disposable or expandable to Moscow, depending on its need for ammunition and interest in overturning the U.S.-led international order, experts said. (Christy Lee, [VOA](#))

- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol condemned possible Russian assistance for North Korea's nuclear program as a "direct provocation," in his speech at the U.N General Assembly on Wednesday. He warned that Seoul and its allies would respond to military cooperation between Moscow and Pyongyang. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- South Korea levied fresh unilateral sanctions on individuals and entities involved in North Korea's illegal weapons trade with Russia and other countries Thursday, hours after the president warned against weapons deals between Pyongyang and Moscow at the United Nations. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said on Wednesday that if Russia helped North Korea enhance its weapons programs in return for assistance for its war in Ukraine, it would be "a direct provocation" and Seoul and its allies would not stand idly by. (Hyonhee Shin, David Brunnstrom, Grant McCool, [Reuters](#))
- The United States is trying to stop North Korea's potential arms support to Russia "wherever we can," Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Wednesday, as last week's summit between the two isolated regimes deepened concerns about their military cooperation. ([The Korea Times](#))
- The United States is closely monitoring possible arms trade between North Korea and Russia, a senior U.S. official said Thursday, after last week's summit between their leaders raised concerns of military cooperation. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- The Russian Embassy in South Korea said on its Facebook page that Yoon's remarks to the UN General Assembly Wednesday "cause deep regret." The embassy accused Yoon of joining a propaganda effort started by Washington and echoed by US and South Korean media to discredit Russia-North Korea collaboration. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol warned during an address to the United Nations General Assembly that Seoul and its allies will not "stand idly by" if Russia gives North Korea technical assistance with its nuclear and missile programs. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol warned that an arms deal between North Korea and Russia would be a "direct provocation" against the South, addressing the UN General Assembly in New York on Wednesday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603061150/https://mailchi.mp/c399f6c987de/hrnk-news-items-north-korean-guitarist-in-the-uk-yeyong-emily-jeon-seoul-imposes-sanctions-over-illegal-arms-deals-with-pyongyang>

Friday, September 22, 2023

Open Letter on China's Forcible Repatriation on North Korean Refugees, N. Korea holds politburo meeting to discuss Kim-Putin summit

Top News:

[Open Letter on China's Forcible Repatriation on North Korean Refugees](#) (09/21/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un calls for relationship with Russia to reach 'new high level' after trip](#) (UPI, 09/22/2023)

[Kim Jong Un discusses next steps for Russia cooperation at politburo meeting](#) (NK News, 09/22/2023)

[N. Korea holds politburo meeting to discuss Kim-Putin summit: KCNA](#) (Yonhap, 09/22/2023)

[North Korea's Kim sets forth steps to boost Russia ties as US and Seoul warn about weapons deals](#) (AP News, 09/21/2023)

[North Korea's powerful politburo discusses follow-up steps to Kim's Russia visit | Reuters](#) (Reuters, 09/21/2023)

In South Korea:

[Activist launches anti-regime leaflets toward North Korea to mark Freedom Week](#) (NK News, 09/22/2023)

[Kim Jong-un's rejection of Russia's food assistance irritates North Korean defectors](#) (Korea Times, 09/22/2023)

[N.K. rights groups hold rally against repatriation of defectors in front of Chinese Embassy](#) (Yonhap, 09/22/2023)

[Unification minister calls for cooperation with U.S. against N. Korea's suspected arms deal with Russia](#) (Yonhap, 09/22/2023)

[S. Korea calls on Russia to 'transparently explain' its dealing with N. Korea amid suspected arms supply agreement](#) (Yonhap, 09/22/2023)

International:

[Biden rebukes Russia for turning to N. Korea, Iran for more arms](#) (Yonhap, 09/22/2023)

[N. Korea beat Kyrgyzstan for 2nd straight win in men's football, inch closer to knockouts](#) (Yonhap, 09/22/2023)

[Prime minister to meet with Xi on sidelines of Hangzhou Asian Games](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/22/2023)

[Russian Embassy voices 'deep regret' over Yoon's warning on growing Pyongyang-Moscow ties](#) (Yonhap, 09/21/2023)

Top News:

- The official slogan of the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 is “Heart to Heart, @Future.” As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, we will not only win our freedom for ourselves, we will so appeal to your heart and conscience that we will win you in the process, and our victory will be a double victory. In this regard, we urge you to officially end the policy of forcible repatriation of North Korean escapees and to implement the procedure for the individualized determination of refugee status. (09/21/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un ordered steps to be taken to raise his country's relationship to a "new high level" with Russia, state media reported Friday, days after returning from a visit that has sparked international concern about a potential arms deal. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un convened a politburo meeting with his top political and military officials to discuss "expanding" cooperation with Russia in accordance with agreements made during his nine-day trip to the country, according to state media on Friday. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un held a politburo meeting with top officials to discuss the outcome of his latest summit meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin and called for thorough follow-up measures, state media reported Friday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un ordered unspecified steps to further develop relations with Russia after his recent visit to the country as his foreign rivals warn that any cooperation on military weapons would be dangerous and bring consequences. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un discussed follow-up measures to his recent visit to Russia during the first formal meeting of the ruling Workers' Party's powerful politburo since his return, state media KCNA said on Friday. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))

In South Korea:

- A high-profile defector activist said his organization launched balloons carrying anti-regime leaflets toward North Korea on Wednesday to mark North Korea Freedom Week, despite Seoul's repeated calls for activists to exercise "restraint." (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Kim's turning down of Russia's humanitarian to provide wheat to help relieve the North's reportedly acute food shortages drew the ire of North Korean defectors living in South Korea who are all too familiar with the food crisis in the North. (Kang Hyun-kyung, [Korea Times](#))
- Civic groups on North Korea's human rights on Friday staged a rally in front of the Chinese Embassy in Seoul, urging Beijing not to send defectors back to their reclusive country amid apparently eased border controls. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho expressed concerns Friday over North Korea's suspected arms deal with Russia and called for strengthened efforts between Seoul and Washington to protect international norms during his meeting with the U.S. ambassador in Seoul. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's foreign ministry on Friday called on Russia to "transparently explain" its recent dealings with North Korea amid growing speculation of an arms supply deal at last week's bilateral summit. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- U.S. President Joe Biden slammed Russia on Thursday for seeking more weapons from Iran and North Korea for use in its war in Ukraine, reiterating such an arms transfer would flout U.N. Security Council resolutions. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea defeated Kyrgyzstan 1-0 for their second straight victory in men's football at the Asian Games on Thursday, stepping closer to the knockouts with the possibility of a showdown against South Korea looming. (Yoo Jee-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Prime Minister Han Duck-soo is expected to meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the opening ceremony of the Hangzhou Asian Games in China over the weekend. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The Russian Embassy in Seoul on Thursday expressed "deep regret" over President Yoon Suk Yeol's speech condemning military cooperation between Pyongyang and Moscow at the United Nations and accused him of joining Washington's "propaganda campaign." (Hwang Jang-jin, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Katie Choi, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603061352/https://mailchi.mp/ab3e8506b75a/hrnk-news-items-open-letter-on-china-s-forcible-repatriation-on-north-korean-refugees-n-korea-holds-politburo-meeting-to-discuss-kim-putin-summit>

Saturday, September 23, 2023

Exhibition for soldiers highlights North Korea's human rights abuses

In South Korea:

[Exhibition for soldiers highlights North Korea's human rights abuses](#) (Korea Times, 09/23/2023)

International:

[Allies vow stern measures against Russia-N. Korea arms deal](#) (Yonhap, 09/23/2023)

[South Korea, US and Japan to take tough measures against Russia-North Korea arms deal](#) (The New Voice of Ukraine, 09/23/2023)

[US, South Korea, Japan raise concerns over Russia-North Korea military cooperation](#) (Reuters, 09/22/2023)

In South Korea:

- A special exhibition highlighting the human rights violations in North Korea is being held for service members, the Ministry of Unification said, Friday. In collaboration with the military and human rights organizations, the ministry launched the project last week, which will continue until April in 2024. (Jung Min-ho, [Korea Times](#))

International:

- The top diplomats from South Korea, the United States and Japan have agreed to take stern measures against a potential arms deal between Russia and North Korea, Seoul's foreign ministry said Saturday. (Park Sang-soo, [Yonhap](#))
- Top diplomats from South Korea, the United States and Japan have agreed to take tough measures against a possible arms deal between Russia and North Korea, South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported on Sept. 23, citing the foreign ministry in Seoul. South Korean Foreign Minister Park Jin met with his U.S. counterpart, Antony Blinken, and his Japanese counterpart, Yoko Kamikawa, in New York on Sept. 22 to discuss the Russia-North Korea arms deal. ([The New Voice of Ukraine](#))
- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and South Korean, Japanese counterparts expressed "serious concern" over the discussion of military cooperation between Russia and North Korea, including possible arms trade, South Korea's Foreign Ministry said on Saturday. (Joyce Lee, [Reuters](#))

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603061902/https://mailchi.mp/4ed67497cfcc/hrnk-news-items-open-letter-on-chinas-forcible-repatriation-on-north-korean-refugees-n-korea-holds-politburo-meeting-to-discuss-kim-putin-summit-12237>

Sunday, September 24, 2023

In letter to Xi, N. Korean leader highlights close bilateral ties with Beijing

International:

[In letter to Xi, N. Korean leader highlights close bilateral ties with Beijing](#) (Yonhap, 09/24/2023)

[Russian FM to visit Pyongyang next month as follow-up to Kim-Putin summit](#) (Yonhap, 09/24/2023)

[Russian top diplomat to visit NK, accuses US of fueling tensions on Korean Peninsula](#) ([The Korea Herald](#), 09/24/2023)

International:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has sent a letter to Chinese President Xi Jinping, reaffirming his commitment to advancing "close cooperation" with Beijing in line with the "requirements of the new era," state media reported Sunday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Russia's top diplomat said Saturday he will visit North Korea next month as part of follow-up measures to the rare summit between their leaders earlier this month. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov announced plans for an October visit to Pyongyang following the North Korea-Russia summit earlier this month, intensifying speculation about increased military cooperation between the two nations. (Son Ji-hyoung, [The Korea Herald](#))

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603062018/https://mailchi.mp/929f201adbdb/hrnk-news-items-open-letter-on-chinas-forcible-repatriation-on-north-korean-refugees-n-korea-holds-politburo-meeting-to-discuss-kim-putin-summit-12237>

Monday, September 25, 2023

N.K. slams Yoon's warning against Pyongyang-Moscow military cooperation as 'hysterical remarks'

In North Korea:

[Famous North Korean ferry makes rare visit to port nearest to Russia](#) (NK News, 09/25/2023)

[North Korea Allows Foreigner Entry for First Time Since 2020](#) (Bloomberg, 09/25/2023)

[North Korean launchpad busy despite Putin's vow to help launch DPRK satellites](#) (NK News, 09/25/2023)

In South Korea:

[Defense minister nominee calls for scrapping inter-Korean military accord](#) (Yonhap, 09/25/2023)

[Lawmakers to submit resolution urging China to free N. Korean escapees](#) (The Korea Times, 09/25/2023)

[Opposition leader to attend court hearing on arrest warrant](#) (Yonhap, 09/25/2023)

[Seoul prepares for first major military parade in ten years](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/25/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N.K. slams Yoon's warning against Pyongyang-Moscow military cooperation as 'hysterical remarks'](#) (Yonhap, 09/25/2023)

[North Korean shooters snub South Koreans on podium](#) (Reuters, 09/25/2023)

International:

[Prime minister hopeful 'shuttle diplomacy' with China will begin](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/25/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. stage joint naval drills in East Sea amid N.K. threats](#) (Yonhap, 09/25/2023)

[Trilateral talks open on Korea-Japan-China meeting](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/25/2023)

In North Korea:

- A famous North Korean ferry that once carried passengers from Japan to the DPRK has made a rare appearance at the country's port closest to Russia, NK News analysis shows, which experts said may signal an intent to use the vessel to transport goods or people between the two countries. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

- North Korea appears to be allowing entry for foreigners for the first time since it shut its borders at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020, opening up a source of revenue that once provided the country with hard currency. (Jon Herskovitz, [Bloomberg](#))
- The launchpad at North Korea's Sohae spaceport has appeared active in recent weeks, in a sign of plans to carry out a planned spy satellite launch in October despite Russian leader Vladimir Putin's vow to help the DPRK put satellites into orbit. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Defense Minister nominee Shin Won-sik said Monday that a landmark inter-Korean military tension reduction agreement should be discarded as it is a "wrong" accord that has weakened the military's combat power amid North Korea's continued military provocations. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- A group of South Korean lawmakers will propose a resolution urging the Chinese government to follow the principle of non-refoulement in handling North Korean escapees, while seeking support from top U.N. leaders to pressure Beijing to abide by international laws. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- Opposition leader Lee Jae-myung will attend an upcoming court hearing on his arrest warrant on corruption charges, his party said Monday. The former DP presidential candidate has been accused of breach of trust, bribery and other charges stemming from his time as mayor of Seongnam, south of Seoul, years ago in connection with a scandal-ridden land development project and his alleged involvement in a company's illegal cash remittance to North Korea. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- For the first time in a decade, Seoul citizens will witness a large-scale military parade, with tanks and armed forces marching across the city center Tuesday amid escalating tensions with North Korea. (Moon Ki Hoon, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea on Monday lambasted South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol for making "hysterical" remarks after he warned against possible military cooperation between Pyongyang and Moscow last week. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- Three North Korean marksmen refused to join their South Korean rivals in a group photo of medal winners at the Hangzhou Asian Games after narrowly missing out on gold in a men's team shooting competition on Monday. (Martin Quin Pollard, Dylan Martinez, [Reuters](#))

International:

- Prime Minister Han Duck-soo told President Yoon Suk Yeol in a Cabinet meeting Monday that he and the Chinese leader discussed hopes for "shuttle diplomacy" to unfold between South Korea and China following their recent meeting. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea and the United States kicked off a combined naval exercise in the East Sea on Monday to reinforce readiness against growing military threats from North Korea, the Navy said. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

- Two-day working- and senior-level talks among South Korea, Japan and China kicked off on Monday, as the three nations prepare to resume their meeting this year, after a four-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Jody Chen, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603062302/https://mailchi.mp/500fbe724d30/hrnk-news-items-open-letter-on-china-s-forcible-repatriation-on-north-korean-refugees-n-korea-holds-politburo-meeting-to-discuss-kim-putin-summit-12237>

Tuesday, September 26, 2023

Yoon says S. Korea-U.S. alliance will end N.K. regime in event of nuclear weapons use

In North Korea:

[Foreigners can enter North Korea after 2-day quarantine: Chinese state media](#) (NK News, 09/26/2023)

[N. Korea scheduled to hold key parliamentary meeting following Kim-Putin summit](#) (Yonhap, 09/26/2023)

In South Korea:

[Court finds ban on leafleting into NK unconstitutional, ban on praise for NK constitutional](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/26/2023)

[DP elects new floor leader as party chief appears in court](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/26/2023)

[S. Korea holds rare military parade, warns NK against nuclear attack](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/26/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea's criticism of Yoon reflects sense of isolation, crisis: unification ministry](#) (Yonhap, 09/26/2023)

International:

[Blinken says N. Korea-Russia military cooperation threatens global peace](#) (Yonhap, 09/26/2023)

[Korea wants trilateral summit with China, Japan by year's end](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 09/26/2023)

[US renews commitment to diplomacy with N. Korea after regime reopens borders for foreigners](#) (Yonhap, 09/26/2023)

[Yoon says S. Korea-U.S. alliance will end N.K. regime in event of nuclear weapons use](#) (Yonhap, 09/26/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea will allow foreigners to enter the country on the condition that they undergo a two-day quarantine, according to Chinese state broadcaster CCTV, though it remains unclear if this sets the stage for long-term residents and even tourists to return for the first time in over three and a half years. The Chinese state-run agency reported Monday evening that the new policy was in place as of the same day. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea is scheduled to convene a key parliamentary meeting Tuesday amid keen attention over whether its leader Kim Jong-un will attend it to deliver any message related to his latest summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- A South Korean court on Tuesday found a law banning private entities from sending leaflets or other items by balloon into North Korea unconstitutional. Meanwhile, the same court on Tuesday found a law to ban the act of praising or propagating the North Korean regime under the National Security Act constitutional. (Son Ji-hyoung, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Democratic Party (DP) leader Lee Jae-myung appeared at Seoul Central District Court on Tuesday morning to attend a hearing on an arrest warrant request filed by prosecutors accusing him of corruption charges. Lee, who subsequently served as Gyeonggi governor from 2018 to 2021, is also suspected of committing bribery through a third party and violating international sanctions by asking underwear manufacturer Ssangbangwool to illegally transfer \$8 million to North Korea from 2019 to 2020. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The South Korean military showcased an array of domestically produced advanced weaponry in a rare, large-scale military parade in downtown Seoul on Tuesday, with its commander-in-chief warning North Korea of the collapse of the Kim Jong-un regime in the case of a nuclear attack against the South. In commemoration of the 75th anniversary of Armed Forces Day, observed each year on Oct. 1, South Korea demonstrated its robust conventional military capabilities, serving as a resolute message to North Korea amid its increased nuclear threats. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea's latest rebukes against South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol showed how the secretive regime feels isolated and a sense of crisis amid the international community's united front against Pyongyang, the unification ministry said Tuesday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Monday military cooperation between North Korea and Russia undermines global peace, highlighting America's "ironclad" security commitment to South Korea. "Beyond the (missile) launches themselves, the DPRK threats to broader security were demonstrated clearly by Kim Jong-un's visit to Moscow this month," Blinken said during a forum on the South Korea-U.S. alliance co-hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Korea Foundation. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

- Korea wants to host a trilateral summit with China and Japan before the end of this year, a high-ranking Foreign Ministry official in Seoul said Tuesday. "As the chair country of the trilateral summit this time, Korea has been trying to host the summit within the year," the official told reporters. "This is something we will continue to discuss with our counterparts in Japan and China." (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The U.S. Department of State reiterated its commitment to diplomacy with North Korea on Monday, after the reclusive regime reportedly reopened its borders for foreigners' entry this week for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. "I would say that we have always made clear that we welcome diplomacy with North Korea that has been the policy of this administration since the beginning of this administration," Matthew Miller, the department's spokesperson, told a press briefing. "But North Korea has rejected it at every turn." (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol issued a stern warning against North Korea on Tuesday, saying the regime will be brought to an end by the South Korea-U.S. alliance if it uses nuclear weapons. "The North Korean regime must clearly realize that nuclear weapons will never be able to guarantee its security," he said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gabrielle Drinkwine, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603062411/https://mailchi.mp/1ca241b63b82/hrnk-news-items-open-letter-on-chinas-forcible-repatriation-on-north-korean-refugees-n-korea-holds-politburo-meeting-to-discuss-kim-putin-summit-12237>

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Kim Jong-un Putin meeting is a new threat... "Strengthening practical extended deterrence"

Top News:

["Kim Jong-un-Putin meeting is a new threat... "Strengthening practical extended deterrence"](#) (News Rebeat, 09/27/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korean envoy vows stronger 'self-defense' capabilities, mentions 'imminent danger' of nuclear war](#) (Yonhap, 09/27/2023)

[N. Korea's state media keeps mum on key parliamentary meeting](#) (Yonhap, 09/27/2023)

In South Korea:

[Defense minister nominee vows to end 2018 military agreement with North Korea](#) (NK News, 09/27/2023)

[Defense minister nominee vows to 'firmly punish' N. Korea in event of provocation](#) (The Korea Herald, 09/27/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[North Korean defector-activists welcome ruling to overturn leaflet launch ban](#) (NK News, 09/27/2023)

[Two Koreas trade barbs over nuclear war](#) (The Korea Times, 09/27/2023)

[Unification minister 'strongly' urges N. Korea to respond to dialogue offer over separated families](#) (Yonhap, 09/27/2023)

International:

[A look at other Americans who have entered North Korea over the years](#) (AP News, 09/27/2023)

[American Soldier Travis King in US Custody After Fleeing to North Korea](#) (VOA, 09/27/2023)

[N. Korea decides to expel U.S. soldier Travis King over border crossing](#) (Yonhap, 09/27/2023)

[North Korean envoy tells UN that Korean Peninsula on brink of nuclear war](#) (NK News, 09/27/2023)

[North Korea to deport US soldier Travis King for 'illegally entering' country](#) (NK News, 09/27/2023)

[Russian military plane lands in North Korea after unannounced flight](#) (NK News, 09/27/2023)

[S. Korean ambassador says stronger Russia-N. Korea cooperation 'most concerning'](#) (Yonhap, 09/27/2023)

[US soldier Travis King in US custody after expulsion from North Korea to China](#) (Reuters, 09/27/2023)

[US soldier who crossed into North Korea 2 months ago is in American custody, US officials say](#) (AP News, 09/27/2023)

Top News:

- Greg Scarlatoiu, Secretary-General of the Human Rights Committee in North Korea (HRNK), said, "The key to maintaining the North Korean regime is ideology, not nuclear weapons or missiles." "There was an ideology that made people slaves," he said. He then emphasized the need to bring in external information about the North Korean people, saying, "We must inform the outside world of the North Korean regime's corruption and human rights violations, and we must internally report developments in the outside world, including South Korea."(Mark, [News Rebeat](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea's ambassador to the United Nations said Tuesday his country is "urgently" required to bolster its self-defense capabilities, claiming the Korean Peninsula faces the "immediate danger of nuclear war breakout." (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's state media on Wednesday remained silent about whether it opened a key parliamentary meeting earlier this week amid the possibility that the rubber-stamp parliament's session could run for at least two days. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- The nominee to be South Korea's next defense minister vowed to suspend a military agreement with North Korea "as soon as possible" once appointed, speaking at his confirmation hearing on Wednesday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Defense Minister nominee Shin Won-sik vowed Wednesday to "firmly punish" North Korea in the event of military provocations and warned the regime will come to an end should it conduct a nuclear attack. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Prominent North Korean defector-activists welcomed a South Korean court's decision to strike down a law prohibiting the sending of leaflets and other items into the DPRK, celebrating the ruling for defending democratic principles. (Joon-ha Park, [NK News](#))
- South and North Korea have engaged in a heated exchange of words regarding a nuclear war, intensifying the military tension on the Korean Peninsula. (Kim Hyun-bin, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea's point man on North Korea "strongly" called on North Korea on Wednesday to respond to Seoul's offer for talks to discuss the issue of families separated by the 1950-53 Korean War. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korea says it plans to expel a U.S. soldier who crossed into the country in July. (Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))
- American soldier Travis King, who illegally crossed into North Korea in July is now in U.S. custody, U.S. officials said Wednesday. (Carla Babb, [VOA](#))
- North Korea has decided to expel Travis King, a U.S. soldier who has been detained after "illegally intruding" into the country by running across the inter-Korean border in July, state media said Wednesday. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's ambassador to the U.N. issued a stark warning that the Korean Peninsula has reached a "hair-trigger situation with imminent danger of nuclear war breakout," delivering a speech at the 78th U.N. General Assembly in New York on Tuesday. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- North Korea will expel U.S. soldier Travis King for "illegally entering" the country more than two months ago, state media announced Wednesday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- A Russian military plane flew directly from Moscow to Pyongyang on Tuesday, according to flight tracker data, in an unannounced trip that follows Kim Jong Un's recent visit to Russia. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- South Korea's ambassador to the United States on Tuesday called the apparent strengthening of cooperation between Russia and North Korea "most concerning," while stressing Seoul and Washington will "not sit idly by." (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Private Travis King, the U.S. soldier who ran into North Korea in July, is in U.S. custody after being expelled by North Korea into China, U.S. officials said on Wednesday. (Phil Stewart and Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- The U.S. soldier who sprinted into North Korea across the heavily fortified border between the Koreas two months ago was released into American custody Wednesday, according to two officials. (Kim Tong-hyung, Matthew Lee, and Lolita C. Baldor, [AP News](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603062531/https://mailchi.mp/aff858750ad5/hrnk-news-items-kim-jong-un-putin-meeting-is-a-new-threat-strengthening-practical-extended-deterrence>

Thursday, September 28, 2023

As North Korea Grows Closer to Russia, the Situation Worsens for North Korean Refugees

Top News:

[As North Korea Grows Closer to Russia, the Situation Worsens for North Korean Refugees](#) (VOA, 09/28/2023)

*This press briefing has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un stresses 'exponential' nuke production at parliamentary session](#) (NK News, 09/28/2023)

[N. Korea stipulates nuclear force-building policy in constitution](#) (Yonhap, 09/28/2023)

[North Korean leader urges greater nuclear weapons production in response to a 'new Cold War'](#) (AP News, 09/28/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Over 2,200 aging applicants for reunions of separated families died this year: gov't data](#) (Yonhap, 09/28/2023)

International:

[American soldier Travis King arrives back in US after being freed by North Korea](#) (CNN, 09/28/2023)

[American Soldier Travis King Back in US After Fleeing to NKorea](#) (VOA, 09/28/2023)

[American soldier who crossed into North Korea arrives back in the US, video appears to show](#) (AP News, 09/28/2023)

[Analysis: American soldier's release from detention was quick by North Korean standards](#) (AP News, 09/28/2023)

[1st gold in Hangzhou leaves N. Korean shooters in tears](#) (Yonhap, 09/28/2023)

[North Korea amends constitution to bolster nuclear power status, calls US and allies 'worst threat'](#) (CNN, 09/28/2023)

[North Korea changes constitution to boost nuclear arsenal growth](#) (UPI, 09/28/2023)

[North Korea May Have Seen Little Benefit in Keeping U.S. Soldier](#) (The New York Times, 09/28/2023)

[Nuclear envoys of S. Korea, U.S., Japan condemn N. Korea's stipulation of nuclear policy](#) (Yonhap, 09/28/2023)

[S. Korea elected as IAEA board member for 2023-25 period](#) (Yonhap, 09/28/2023)

[Travis King's release an opportunity for rapprochement in U.S.-N. Korea ties?](#) (Yonhap, 09/28/2023)

[Travis King heading home after release from North Korea via China: State Dept.](#) (NK News, 09/28/2023)

[Video shows moment Travis King steps foot back on US soil](#) (CNN, 09/28/2023)

Top News:

- The situation of North Korean escapees in Russia appears to be deteriorating as North Korea grows closer to Russia. Multiple sources have stated that the situation has changed drastically. There has been a substantial increase in the number of officially dispatched North Korean workers who have been arrested by local police after attempting to escape. The route for North Korean escapees to South Korea through Russia, which had enabled many individuals to escape, may no longer be a viable option. Reporter Kim Young-gwon has the story. (Kim Young-gwon, [VOA](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un emphasized his priority to “exponentially” grow nuclear weapons stockpiles in the face of “threats” from the U.S. in a speech at a Supreme People’s Assembly (SPA) session this week, according to state media on Thursday. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has stipulated the policy of strengthening its nuclear force in the constitution at a key parliamentary meeting, as leader Kim Jong-un said trilateral security cooperation between South Korea, the United States, and Japan poses “the worst actual threat.” (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un called for an exponential increase in production of nuclear weapons and for his country to play a larger role in a coalition of nations confronting the United States in a “new Cold War,” state media said Thursday. (Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- More than 2,200 South Koreans died in the first eight months of this year without having a chance to reunite with their family members in North Korea after being separated by the 1950-53 Korean War, government data showed Thursday. (Kim Soo-yoen, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- US Army Private Travis King arrived back on United States soil Thursday after being returned to American custody weeks after he crossed into North Korea, a Defense Department official said. (Natasha Bertrand, Megan Trimble and Jessie Yeung, [CNN](#))
- An American soldier who illegally crossed into North Korea in July arrived back in the United States early Thursday, according to a U.S. defense official. (Carla Babb, [VOA](#))
- The American soldier who sprinted into North Korea across the heavily fortified border between the Koreas more than two months ago arrived back in the U.S. early Thursday, video appeared to show. (Matthew Lee, Eric Gay and Lolita C. Baldor, [AP News](#))

- Just over two months after he sprinted into North Korea across the heavily fortified inter-Korean border, King was put on a plane back to America after the North released him into U.S. custody. (Kim Tong-hyung, [AP News](#))
- After winning their country's first gold medal of the 19th Asian Games in China on Thursday, North Korean shooters Ri Ji-ye, Paek Ok-sim and Pang Myong-hyang were overcome with emotion. (Yoo Jee-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has amended its constitution to bolster and expand its nuclear force, with leader Kim Jong Un pointing to the growing cooperation between the United States, South Korea and Japan as “the worst actual threat” facing the isolated nation. (Jessie Yeung, Gawon Bae and Larry Register, [CNN](#))
- North Korea adopted an amendment to its constitution that enshrined the growth of its nuclear arsenal as a “basic law of the state,” state-run media reported Thursday. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- When Pvt. Travis T. King fled to North Korea in July, he looked like a potential propaganda bonanza for Kim Jong-un’s government. (Choe Sang-hun, [The New York Times](#))
- The top nuclear envoys of South Korea, the United States and Japan on Thursday denounced North Korea's constitutional amendment to enshrine its policy on nuclear force, Seoul's foreign ministry said. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea has been elected to the board of governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to serve for the 2023-2025 period, Seoul's foreign ministry said Thursday. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's release of a U.S. soldier after months of detention for a border crossing is raising questions over whether it would lead to direct reengagement between Washington and Pyongyang or at least a warming of their strained ties. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- American soldier Travis King was in U.S. custody and on his way home Thursday, after North Korea expelled him from the country via China the previous day, according to the State Department. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- US Army Private Travis King arrived back in the United States after being freed from North Korea weeks after he had crossed into the country. While many questions remain, such as what prompted King to enter North Korea, his release marks a rare diplomatic success between Washington and Pyongyang. CNN's Marc Stewart reports. ([CNN](#))

As North Korea Grows Closer to Russia, the Situation Worsens for North Korean Refugees

September 6, 2023

By Kim Young-gwon

<https://www.voakorea.com/a/7255786.html>

The situation of North Korean escapees in Russia appears to be deteriorating as North Korea grows closer to Russia. Multiple sources have stated that the situation has changed drastically. There has

been a substantial increase in the number of officially dispatched North Korean workers who have been arrested by local police after attempting to escape. The route for North Korean escapees to South Korea through Russia, which had enabled many individuals to escape, may no longer be a viable option. Reporter Kim Young-gwon has the story.

“It feels like Russia has returned to the old communist era.”

This was the statement made yesterday by a source familiar with the situation in Russia, as they shared with VOA an official letter issued by local authorities regarding North Korean escapees.

This letter was sent from the Khabarovsk Police Department to a partner lawyer in the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in Russia. It contained a request for information about Kim Tae-seong, a North Korean student who has been wanted by the authorities after he went missing on the 8th of July.

According to this letter, obtained exclusively by VOA, the Russian police claimed that the 26-year-old student may have been the victim of a serious crime such as murder, which is specified in Article 105 of Russia’s Criminal Code. The letter asks for information on whether the individual has sought legal assistance or is otherwise receiving the help of any organizations.

“Why would a foreign student have anything to do with a murder case,” this source said, adding that it was most likely fabricated by the Russian and North Korean authorities as a pretext for his arrest.

According to some media reports, the Russian police are still searching for Kim, but have yet to find him.

An individual related to Memorial, the Russian human rights organization that was the co-winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2022, told VOA yesterday that this was “a matter of great concern.”

In addition, this individual stated that describing the student as a victim “appears to be a ruse, which is even more shameful.”

Multiple sources in Russia informed VOA that with the recent uptick in bilateral relations between Moscow and Pyongyang, the Russian police has considerably intensified its crackdown on North Korean workers or students in Russia who have escaped.

A source in the Russian far east, where many North Korean workers have been dispatched, said that “the situation (for North Korean escapees) has completely changed since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, and especially since the start of this year.”

The source explained that in the past, Russian police took pity on North Korean escapees and did not arrest them, even if they had the means to or received official instructions to do so. Now, however, such escapees are arrested and handed over to the North Korean authorities with no exceptions.

According to this source, “there are now explicit orders from above to arrest all escapees, without exception. All of them are arrested, and all of them are handed over.”

The source added that officially dispatched workers who were in Russia for an extended period of time due to the COVID-19 pandemic and have been contemplating whether to escape from have now “become very hesitant.”

Even though UN Security Council Resolutions prohibit North Korea from sending workers abroad to earn foreign currency, the U.S. government and the UN Panel of Experts on North Korea sanctions have stated that many North Korean laborers are still working illegally in Russia.

The [2023 Trafficking in Persons Report on Russia](#), released by the U.S. State Department in June, states that Russia has issued or reissued 4,723 visas to North Koreans in 2022 to evade the Security Council Resolutions. The report also points out that this represents an increase of 630 cases compared to 4,093 cases last year (2021).

Organizations that assist North Korean escapees in Russia and North Korean refugees in the United States have expressed great concern about these recent developments. Heo Gang-il of the Moogoonghwa Rescue Team, an NGO that has helped several North Koreans escape through Russia, commented that Russia was coming to resemble China.

[Heo Gang-il] “Russia is becoming more like China since a few months ago. It will probably be difficult to go (to South Korea) for the rest of the year. If North Koreans escape, they become wanted persons across the whole country, just like in the North Korean mother and son case.”

Russia’s federal Investigative Committee posted an order on its website calling for an open investigation into the case of a North Korean mother and her son who escaped from North Korea’s consulate in Vladivostok this June. After the order was issued, they are believed to have been arrested by Russian police and handed over to the North Korean authorities.

According to Heo, two North Korean escapees who had applied for asylum to the UNHCR and were awaiting their decision “were arrested by Russian police and handed over to North Korea in late July, shortly after the North Korean student’s disappearance.” Something like this would not have happened in the past, he said.

North Korean escapees who have come the United States as refugees also expressed concern, saying that the situation in Russia has changed.

Han Dong-ho (alias), who entered the U.S. in 2010, said that the practice of falsely implicating North Korean workers in serious crimes to arrest them had mostly taken place before the year 2000.

[Han Dong-ho] “When they arrested workers who escaped, they drew up documents accusing the escapees of being murderers. If it was someone they had to arrest and return, they would make up some bizarre charges and report it to the police. The police would then make the arrests without any exceptions. This seems to be happening again now.”

Kim Guk-cheol (alias), who also entered the U.S. as a refugee in 2016 and settled on the west coast, said that he did not feel much fear even while traveling long distances from his residence in Russia to Moscow three times. Things appear to be different now, he said.

[Kim Guk-cheol] “It was nothing like that when I was working in Russia. I lived in a city called [omitted], and I went from there to Moscow three times for interviews. Back then, I didn’t feel threatened or afraid. Things are much worse now.”

North Korean escapees who escaped through Russia also pointed out that the Russian police would release them for a small bribe. Recent developments are a departure from past practices, they noted.

How this trend will affect the North Korean escapees heading to South Korea from Russia is also a matter of concern.

Unlike in China, North Korean escapees in Russia often received help from local lawyers to travel to South Korea through UNHCR's Moscow office or the South Korean Embassy. This was the case until early this year.

A diplomatic source and a source related to the UNHCR told VOA that they were unable to confirm or publicly comment on this matter, as it is quietly handled through trilateral coordination between the Russian authorities, the UN, and South Korea.

However, VOA was able to confirm by various means that, on average, 20 to 30 North Korean escapees in Russia made it to South Korea every year since 2010 with the help of the UNHCR.

Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, when it became virtually impossible for North Korean escapees in China to come to South Korea, most of the escapees who arrived were North Korean workers who had been dispatched to Russia. Among the 40 male escapees who arrived in South Korea in 2021 and the 35 male escapees who arrived in 2022, most were in Russia when they escaped.

According to one source, five escapees arrived in South Korea from Russia during the first half of 2023, but it is unclear whether this can continue for the rest of the year.

As the possibility of going to South Korea becomes uncertain due to North Korea's closer ties with Russia, some are trying to flee to South Korea through a third country.

According to VOA's investigations, after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, there are at least two North Korean escapees who have resettled in the free world after fleeing through a third country from Russia.

Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, an NGO based in Washington D.C., noted that "the situation of North Korean escapees reflects the worsening geopolitical situation."

He also stated, "I'm very afraid that we'll face (in Russia) a situation similar to what has been happening in China for decades"—the forcible repatriation of North Korean refugees.

[Greg Scarlatoiu] "I'm very afraid that we'll face a situation similar to what has been happening in China for decades, that [is] the forcible repatriation of North Korean refugees. I would not be surprised if the transit of North Korean refugees from Russia or through Russia to South Korea were halted at some point. So this will have unavoidable consequences for North Korean escapee[s]."

This is Kim Young-gwon, reporting for VOA News.

Translated by Jiwoo (Katie) Choi, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603062647/https://mailchi.mp/215d716922c9/hrnk-news-items-as-north-korea-grows-closer-to-russia-the-situation-worsens-for-north-korean-refugees>

Friday, September 29, 2023

North Korean Escapee Leader Calls Upon South Korea and UN to Stop the Forcible Repatriation of North Korean Refugees from China

Top News:

[North Korean Escapee Leader Calls Upon South Korea and UN to Stop the Forcible Repatriation of North Korean Refugees from China](#) (Yonhap, 09/23/2023)

*This press briefing has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[North Korea still isolating imports after easing visitor restrictions: Imagery](#) (NK News, 09/29/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea cruises past N. Korea in women's basketball](#) (Yonhap, 09/29/2023)

International:

[Pentagon's CWMD strategy document calls N. Korea "persistent threat"](#) (Yonhap, 09/29/2023)

[Travis King in 'reintegration program' in US after North Korea release: Pentagon](#) (NK News, 09/29/2023)

[UN Security Council to meet on North Korea following Kim Jong Un's Russia visit](#) (NK News, 09/29/2023)

Top News:

- As North Korea reopens its borders following the COVID-19 pandemic, the leader of a North Korean escapee organization called upon the South Korean government and the international community, led by the United Nations, to take proactive measures to prevent the forced repatriation of North Korean refugees currently detained in China. (Cho Joon-hyung, [Yonhap](#))

In North Korea:

- The busiest North Korea-China overland trade route is still subject to bottlenecks at a large DPRK import disinfection and quarantine facility, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery, even though Pyongyang eased other pandemic restrictions this week. Planet Labs imagery shows goods continued to appear in the last week on the runway of the converted Uiju Airbase near Sinuiju, across from China's Dandong, in a sign that authorities still require imports to be isolated over fears of spreading COVID-19 to the population. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea defeated North Korea 81-62 in a highly-anticipated women's basketball preliminary game at the Asian Games in China on Friday, as the countries that formed a joint team five years ago returned as foes. (Yoo Jee-ho, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The U.S. Department of Defense labeled North Korea as a "persistent" threat in an updated key security document released Thursday, warning that its military capability advancements would give the recalcitrant regime options to use nuclear arms "at any stage of a conflict." (Kim Dong-hyeon, [Yonhap](#))

- U.S. soldier Travis King is undergoing a “reintegration program” at a medical facility in Texas after his release from a two-month detention in North Korea, the Pentagon announced Thursday, while declining to comment on what punishment he’ll face. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The U.N. Security Council (UNSC) is set to convene on Friday to review developments related to North Korea, in the wake of leader Kim Jong Un’s recent visit to Russia, informed U.N. sources told NK News. The closed-door meeting is scheduled to take place at 10 a.m. and is intended to update UNSC members on North Korea issues, one of the sources familiar with the plans said. (Chad O’Carroll, [NK News](#))

North Korean Escapee Leader Calls Upon South Korea and UN to Stop the Forcible Repatriation of North Korean Refugees from China

Cho Joon-hyung

Yonhap
09/23/2023

As North Korea reopens its borders following the COVID-19 pandemic, the leader of a North Korean escapee organization called upon the South Korean government and the international community, led by the United Nations, to take proactive measures to prevent the forced repatriation of North Korean refugees currently detained in China.

On September 22, Lee So-yeon, the president of the New Korea Women’s Union, an organization of North Korean escapee women, spoke at an event in Washington, D.C. hosted by the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea. Based on information collected by individuals involved in supporting North Korean refugees, Lee stated that approximately 2,600 North Korean refugees are currently detained in China.

She stressed that “the international community, including the United Nations, should consider them as refugees and should make this an international issue to prevent their forced repatriation.”

Due to North Korea’s complete border closure in 2020 in response to COVID-19, North Korean escapees who were previously detained in China managed to avoid forced repatriation for some time. However, with North Korea gradually opening its borders starting this summer, they now face the risk of repatriation.

Lee, who was repatriated to North Korea after attempting to escape, explained that “North Koreans who escape to live in China may spend several years in labor re-education camps (kyo-hwa-so) when they are repatriated. On the other hand, those who attempted to go to South Korea or came into

contact with churches are regarded as hostile elements and are sent to political prison camps (kwan-li-so) if they are repatriated.”

Lee added, “I hope that the South Korean government will urge the Chinese government to send North Korean refugees in China to South Korea. It is also important to raise public awareness about the harsh punishment that awaits escapees if they are repatriated to North Korea.”

She further mentioned, “On the 19th, we sent a letter to North Korea’s Mission to the UN, urging them not to forcibly repatriate North Korean escapees, and today, we held a rally near the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C. to oppose the repatriation of North Korean escapees.”

Lee called upon China to act out of humanitarian considerations, saying that “the whole world is watching.”

As part of “North Korea Freedom Week,” which began in April 2004 when North Korean human rights organizations gathered in front of the U.S. Capitol to call for the passage of the North Korean Human Rights Act, rallies were held today near Chinese embassies in over 60 countries against the forced repatriation of North Korean refugees, including in the United States.

Meanwhile, the U.S. government has recently expressed concern about the issue of North Korean escapees detained in China.

During a conference hosted by the National Endowment for Democracy and the Unification Media Group in Washington, D.C. on the 19th, Jung Pak, Deputy Assistant Secretary and Deputy Representative for North Korea at the U.S. Department of State, stated that “We are particularly concerned about the risk that North Koreans detained in China could face detention and torture after repatriation. We will continue to raise this issue with China and urge them to adhere to the principle of non-refoulement.”

Translation by Nathan (Ingyu) Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Gloria Guo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603062849/https://mailchi.mp/6072a22eca8a/hrnk-news-items-as-north-korea-grow-s-closer-to-russia-the-situation-worsens-for-north-korean-refugees-12237091>

Saturday, September 30, 2023

S. Korea, US, Japan Urge N. Korea's Denuclearization at IAEA Conference

In North Korea:

[N. Korean FM slams UNSC meeting over Pyongyang's force-building policy in constitution](#) (Yonhap, 09/30/2023)

In South Korea:

[79 pct of young S. Koreans agree on need to improve ties with Japan: poll](#) (Yonhap, 09/30/2023)
[Unification ministry uses metaverse to recreate hometowns of elderly S. Koreans hailing from North](#) (Yonhap, 09/30/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea lose to N. Korea in women's football quarterfinals](#) (Yonhap, 09/30/2023)

International:

[China's gateway to North Korea waits in vain for border opening](#) (France 24, 09/29/2023)
[Japan and North Korea met informally this year over abduction row](#) (The Japan Times, 09/30/2023)
[North Korea's Ri, Kang set weightlifting world records at Asian Games](#) (Reuters, 09/30/2023)
[ROK-US alliance is win-win partnership: KUSAF chief](#) (The Korea Times, 10/01/2023)
[S. Korea, U.S. hold joint anti-terrorism exercise](#) (Yonhap, 09/30/2023)
[S. Korea, US, Japan Urge N. Korea's Denuclearization at IAEA Conference](#) (KBS World, 09/30/2023)
[S. Korea to extend US \\$5mln worth of fertilizer aid to Ukraine via U.S. agency](#) (Yonhap, 09/30/2023)
[S. Korean industry minister visits Africa for World Expo bid, economic ties](#) (Yonhap, 09/30/2023)
[What to know and what's next for Travis King, the American soldier who ran into North Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 09/30/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea's top diplomat on Saturday criticized a United Nations Security Council meeting convened this week in response to Pyongyang's latest measure to bolster the policy of nuclear force in its constitution, according to the country's state media. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- Nearly 8 out of 10 South Koreans in their 20s and 30s agree on the need for Seoul to improve relations with Japan, a survey showed Saturday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Based on the memories of three members of separated families and available documents and photos, the National Institute for Unification Education created a metaverse world resembling the North Korean cities. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Shorthanded South Korea fell to North Korea 4-1 in the quarterfinals of the Asian Games women's football tournament Saturday. (Yoo Jee-ho, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Stranded North Korean workers and merchants who rely on cross-border trade see scant signs that the frontier with China will open soon, despite recent trips abroad by leader Kim Jong Un and the country's athletes. ([France 24](#))
- Japan engaged in several informal contacts with North Korea this spring, sources close to the matter have said, apparently to seek a breakthrough in a long-standing impasse surrounding the abduction of Japanese nationals in the past. ([The Japan Times](#))
- North Korean weightlifters Ri Song Gum and Kang Hyong Yong set women's world records at the Asian Games on Saturday as the reclusive nation dominated the opening day of the competition. (Ian Ransom, [Reuters](#))
- "Alliances can break apart if the interests of both countries are not aligned. An alliance where one party benefits while the other does not, cannot last long," Leem Ho-young president of the Korea-U.S. Alliance Foundation (KUSAF), said during a recent interview with The Korea Times. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korean and U.S. soldiers staged a combined anti-terrorism exercise near the inter-Korean border earlier this week, the Army said Saturday, amid joint efforts to strengthen operational capabilities. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea, the U.S., and Japan issued a joint statement calling for the suspension of North Korea's nuclear program during the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency held in Vienna on Friday. ([KBS World](#))
- South Korea will deliver \$5 million worth of fertilizer to support Ukrainian farmers in partnership with the United States' international development agency, officials said Saturday. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean Industry Minister Bang Moon-kyu has met with President of Cabo Verde Jose Maria Pereira Neves and asked for the African country's support for its bid to host the 2030 World Expo in the southern city of Busan, his office said Saturday. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))
- Pyongyang abruptly announced Wednesday that it would expel King, and he was flown to an Air Force base in Texas on Thursday. Here's what we know about King, his mysterious entry into North Korea and what's happened in similar cases. ([The Korea Times](#))

Prepared by Raymond Ha, HRNK Director of Operations & Research

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603063014/https://mailchi.mp/a595fa65563c/hrnk-news-items-09302023>

10. OCTOBER

Sunday, October 1, 2023

S. Korea says N. Korea will never be recognized as nuclear-weapon state

In North Korea:

[N. Korean FM slams UNSC meeting over Pyongyang's force-building policy in constitution](#) (Yonhap, 09/30/23)

[2.1 magnitude natural earthquake strikes near N. Korea's nuclear test site: weather agency](#) (Yonhap, 10/01/23)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea says N. Korea will never be recognized as nuclear-weapon state](#) (Yonhap, 10/01/23)

International:

[N.K. leader sends congratulatory message to Xi on Chinese founding anniversary](#) (Yonhap, 10/01/23)

[N. Korea says relations with Russia are 'powerful fortress' for preserving peace](#) (Yonhap, 10/01/23)

[North Korea blames US for 'grave terrorist' act against Cuban embassy](#) (Reuters, 10/01/23)

[North Korean soccer players clash with referee after losing to Japan](#) (Reuters, 10/01/23)

[South Korea snatches weightlifting bronze in men's 67 kilograms](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/01/23)

In North Korea:

- North Korea's top diplomat on Saturday criticized a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) meeting convened this week in response to Pyongyang's latest measure to bolster the policy of nuclear force in its constitution, according to the country's state media. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- A 2.1 magnitude natural earthquake struck near North Korea's nuclear test site Sunday, the latest in a series of natural earthquakes to hit the region in recent months, South Korea's state weather agency said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea will never be recognized as a nuclear-weapon state and its pursuit of nuclear weapons will only lead to more sanctions against the regime, South Korea's foreign ministry said Sunday. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un sent a congratulatory message to Chinese President Xi Jinping on Sunday to mark the 74th founding anniversary of the People's Republic of China, state media said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

- Relations between North Korea and Russia serve as a "powerful fortress" for preserving peace and deterring the military threats of "imperialists," a North Korean official said Sunday. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea accused the United States on Sunday of letting a "terrorist" act against Cuba take place on U.S. soil, saying a recent attack against the Cuban embassy in Washington was the result of "despicable anti-Cuban" U.S. intentions. (Jack Kim, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea soccer coach Sin Yong Nam defended his players after several clashed with match officials on the pitch after their 2-1 defeat to Japan in the Asian Games quarter-finals in Hangzhou on Sunday. (Ian Ramson, [Reuters](#))
- South Korean weightlifter Lee Sang-yeon took bronze in the men's 67 kilograms division on Sunday at the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, China. (Mary Yang, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Angela Yoon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603065811/https://mailchi.mp/e29a62bfb9ec/hrnk-news-items-s-korea-says-n-korea-will-never-be-recognized-as-nuclear-weapon-state>

Monday, October 2, 2023

N. Korea slams IAEA's adoption of resolution on Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program

In North Korea:

[North Korean soccer players physically confront referee after loss to Japan](#) (NK News, 10/02/2023)

[N. Korea spurs efforts to raise crop production during fall harvest season](#) (Yonhap, 10/02/2023)

In South Korea:

[Unification minister says N.K.'s vicious cycle of provocations, rewards 'no longer works' under Yoon administration](#) (Yonhap, 10/02/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Seoul shoots down North Korea's claim that it is a 'responsible nuclear state'](#) (NK News, 10/02/2023)

[South says North will never be accepted as nuclear state](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/02/2023)

International:

[North Korea accuses US of concealing role in bombing of Russia's Nord Stream](#) (NK News, 10/02/2023)

[North Korea claims US 'tacitly' approved 'terrorist attack' on Cuban Embassy](#) (NK News, 10/02/2023)

[N. Korea slams IAEA's adoption of resolution on Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program](#) (Yonhap, 10/02/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea's men's soccer team bowed out of the Asian Games in acrimonious fashion against Japan on Sunday, lashing out at its opponents' staff and physically confronting the referee following a loss to a rival that the DPRK demonizes as its former colonial ruler. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has been ramping up efforts to boost crop production during the fall harvest season amid expectations that the impoverished country's food shortages have improved, compared with the first half of the year. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho has warned that North Korea's vicious cycle of receiving assistance and breaking off agreements will "no longer work" under the current administration of President Yoon Suk Yeol. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea's foreign ministry stressed that the international community will "never" recognize North Korea as a nuclear power on Monday, after a top DPRK accused the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) of denying the country's "constitutional position" as a nuclear weapon state. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- South Korean Foreign Ministry said North Korea will never be recognized as a nuclear state, rejecting the country's recent attempts to legitimize its nuclear arsenal. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- North Korea slammed the U.S. for allegedly covering up its involvement in the bombing of Russia-owned Nord Stream gas pipelines a year ago, in what an expert called yet another attempt by Pyongyang to garner favor with Moscow. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has blamed the U.S. for a "grave terrorist attack" on the Cuban Embassy in Washington, accusing the U.S. of giving "tactic" approval through its policy toward Havana. (Alannah Hill, [NK News](#))
- North Korea on Monday denounced the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for criticizing Pyongyang's nuclear development, calling it a "conspiracy between the U.S. and its followers." (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603070001/https://mailchi.mp/0ae0eace71d4/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-slams-iaeas-adoption-of-resolution-on-pyongyangs-nuclear-weapons-program>

Tuesday, October 3, 2023

U.S.-ROK-Japan Coordination Should Extend to North Korean Human Rights Issues, says U.S. Expert

Top News:

[U.S.-ROK-Japan Coordination Should Extend to North Korean Human Rights Issues, Says U.S. Expert](#) (Yonhap, 09/20/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

[Discussing the Pro-North Korean Movement in the USA: Presentation by Eberstadt and Peck](#) (American Enterprise Institute, 09/29/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korean Hackers Pose as Meta to Attack Aerospace Firm with Coding Tests](#) (NK News, 10/03/2023)

[North Reaffirms Satellite Launch Plan](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/03/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[North Korea Hails Women's Soccer Victory over South Korean 'Puppets'](#) (NK News, 10/03/2023)

International:

[French Aircraft to Help Monitor Sanctions Violations by North Korean Ships](#) (NK News, 10/03/2023)

[S. Korea's Coast Guard Apprehends 22 Chinese After Illegal Entry Attempt](#) (Yonhap, 10/03/2023)

[U.S. Calls on China to Encourage N. Korea's Return to Diplomacy](#) (Yonhap, 10/02/2023)

Top News:

- A U.S.-based North Korea expert said that he hopes that the trilateral cooperation between South Korea, the United States, and Japan, which has been greatly strengthened in response to North Korea's nuclear and missile threats, will also address issues related to human rights in North Korea. (Cho Joon-hyung, [Yonhap](#))
- In this event recording from the *American Enterprise Institute*, Lawrence Peck and Nicholas Eberstadt discuss the pro-North Korea movement in the United States. (Eberstadt and Peck, [American Enterprise Institute](#))

In North Korea:

- A North Korean cybercrime group attacked a Spanish aerospace company by targeting employees through “trojanized coding challenges,” according to a Slovakia-based cybersecurity firm. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea reaffirmed that it will launch a military reconnaissance satellite this month, the state-run Korean Central News Agency said Tuesday. The third attempt to put the satellite into orbit after two previous failures, each in May and August, could take place as early as

next week when the regime marks the founding of the country's ruling Workers' Party. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korean media hailed the DPRK women's soccer team's victory over South Korean "puppets" at the ongoing Asian Games this week, as athletes from the two Koreas faced off in multiple sports for the first time in over four years. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

International:

- France has deployed a patrol aircraft to Japan to help with routine monitoring of illegal ship-to-ship transfers by North Korean vessels in October, Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has announced. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- The Coast Guard apprehended 22 Chinese nationals Tuesday suspected of attempting to illegally enter a western coastal city by boat, officials said. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States has called on China to use its influence to encourage North Korea to take steps for de-escalation and return to diplomacy, the State Department said Monday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

U.S.-ROK-Japan Coordination Should Extend to North Korean Human Rights Issues, Says U.S. Expert

Cho Joon-hyung
Yonhap News
September 20, 2023

A U.S.-based North Korea expert said that he hopes that the trilateral cooperation between South Korea, the United States, and Japan, which has been greatly strengthened in response to North Korea's nuclear and missile threats, will also address issues related to human rights in North Korea.

Lawrence Peck, an advisor to the North Korea Freedom Coalition, speaking at an event hosted by the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK) in Washington D.C. on the 19th (local time), said that "South Korea, the U.S., and Japan are paying a great deal of attention to military and political issues, but I hope that human rights in North Korea will gradually become part of the trilateral discussion."

Peck also noted that "There are South Korean citizens detained in North Korea, and Japan and the United States also have concerns related to human rights in North Korea." He added, "I hope that these issues will be brought to the table for trilateral consultation between South Korea, the United States, and Japan through the efforts of organizations such as HRNK."

Peck, who has been researching the pro-North Korea movement and pro-North organizations around the world for many years, also claimed that pro-North Korea groups and individuals in the United States have been lobbying Congress and the local offices of members of Congress on behalf of North Korea's interests.

Peck said that pro-North Korea organizations and individuals in the United States are opposed to strengthening sanctions against North Korea or enacting legislation to pressure North Korea with regards to human rights or religious freedom. He stated that these organizations and individuals advocate for measures that benefit North Korea. In addition to lobbying Congress and the executive branch, they also operate websites, publish reports, hold events and rallies, and conduct media outreach.

Peck also said that pro-North Korea groups are using moral relativism and whataboutism to argue that North Korean human rights issues can only be improved through dialogue.

According to Peck, among these pro-North Korea organizations and forces in the United States, there are those who are connected to personnel from North Korea's United Front Department (UFD) dispatched to North Korea's mission to the United Nations, and those who are linked to overseas organizations overseen by the UFD, such as the Chosen Soren in Japan.

He also claimed that pro-North Korea organizations and forces in the United States gather resources through individual donations, grants from foundations, and through mutual help from like-minded groups in South Korea, and that some of them even previously received support from the South Korean government.

Translated by Angela Yoon, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Ryan Beane, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603070257/https://mailchi.mp/9771a798a973/hrnk-news-items-us-rok-japan-coordination-should-extend-to-north-korean-human-rights-issues-says-us-expert>

Wednesday, October 4, 2023

North Korean Human Rights: StatusQuo vs. Revisionist Powers

Top News:

[North Korean Human Rights: StatusQuo vs. Revisionist Powers](#) (The Washington Brief, 10/03/2023)

In South Korea:

[Global Peace Foundation presents vision for unified Korea through campaign](#) (The Korea Times, 10/04/2023)

[South Korea to found cyberwarfare reserve forces in 2025](#) (The Korea Times, 10/04/2023)

[Thousands gather in Seoul to support Korean unification](#) (The Korea Times, 10/04/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Defense ministry warns N. Korea will face end of regime in event of nuclear use attempt](#) (Yonhap, 10/04/2023)

[N. Korea intensifying cyber attacks against S. Korean shipbuilders: spy agency](#) (Yonhap, 10/04/2023)

[Seoul issues warning as Pyongyang ramps up nuke rhetoric](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/04/2023)

[South Korean intelligence agency warns shipbuilders of North Korean hacking attempts](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/04/2023)

[Two Koreas to compete for bronze in women's basketball](#) (Yonhap, 10/04/2023)

[Yoon spars with predecessor, criticizing 'fake peace' with nuclear North Korea](#) (NK News, 10/04/2023)

[Yoon vows to defend nation from N. Korea's provocations](#) (Yonhap, 10/04/2023)

[Yoon warns against threat of 'fake peace' with North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/04/2023)

International:

[Bipartisan Senate delegation to visit S. Korea, China, Japan this month](#) (Yonhap, 10/04/2023)

[North Korea lays groundwork for US disarmament talks: experts](#) (The Korea Times, 10/04/2023)

[North Korea slams Pentagon for calling it 'persistent threat' in WMD strategy](#) (NK News, 10/04/2023)

[N. Korea slams U.S. over Pentagon document calling regime 'persistent' threat](#) (Yonhap, 10/04/2023)

[Potential punishment for Travis King unclear after return from North Korea](#) (CNN, 10/04/2023)

[Sanctions-busting North Korean factory operating in China, evidence suggests](#) (NK News, 10/04/2023)

Top News:

- Greg Scarlatiou, the Executive Director of HRNK, spoke about the measures needed to improve North Korean human rights on the Washington Brief livestreaming on October 3rd. ([The Washington Brief](#))

In South Korea:

- Established in 2009 and led by Chairman Hyun Jin Preston Moon, the Global Peace Foundation (GPF) is a nonprofit organization aimed at realizing world peace and seeking concrete action plans based on universal principles and values. (Sah Dong-seok, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea's military aims to establish reserve forces for cyberwarfare in 2025 amid North Korea's growing digital threats. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- On Tuesday afternoon, Yeouido Park in Seoul was filled with crowds rallying for the unification of the two Koreas, in a major event held to raise public awareness about the "Korean Dream 10 Million" initiative launched by eight civic organizations. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The defense ministry warned Wednesday that North Korea will face the "end of its regime" if it attempts to use nuclear weapons, after Pyongyang recently amended its constitution to enshrine its nuclear policy. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has carried out intensive cyber attacks against South Korean shipbuilders in an effort to bolster its military capabilities upon leader Kim Jong-un's instruction, Seoul's spy agency said Wednesday. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))
- The war of words continued between Seoul and Pyongyang on Wednesday over the North Korean regime's threats to use its nuclear weapons. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The South Korean intelligence agency, the National Intelligence Service (NIS), has issued a warning to shipbuilders regarding hacking attempts believed to be linked to North Korea's efforts to build military vessels. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea and North Korea will clash in women's basketball for a bronze medal Thursday at the 19th Hangzhou Asian Games for the first time in Asiad history, with the women's handball team competing for its third consecutive gold against Japan. (Kim Boram, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol criticized the promotion of "fake peace" by those who seek an end-of-war declaration with North Korea on Wednesday, years after his predecessor pursued such a deal. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol vowed Wednesday to defend the nation from North Korea's provocations by strengthening its ability to respond "immediately and overwhelmingly." (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol stressed Wednesday that notions of "fake peace" with North Korea pose a serious challenge to security and democracy. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- A bipartisan Senate delegation will travel to South Korea, China and Japan this month, in an East Asia swing aimed at advancing U.S. economic and national security interests, Senate Majority leader Chuck Schumer's office was quoted as saying Tuesday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's development and advancement of nuclear weapons are now enshrined in its constitution following an amendment last week to expand its nuclear force. The reclusive state is the only country to have done that. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea has criticized the U.S. for calling the Pyongyang regime a "persistent threat" in its new strategy for countering weapons of mass destruction. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korea on Wednesday rejected a Pentagon document labeling Pyongyang a "persistent" threat, saying the world's biggest threat of weapons of mass destruction comes from none other than the United States. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- With Army Pvt. Travis King back in the US after two months in North Korean custody, it's unclear if he will face disciplinary actions for running across the demarcation line into North Korea. (Haley Britzky, [CNN](#))
- North Korea likely began to jointly operate a medical mask factory in China during the pandemic, an NK Pro investigation has found, in what appears to be another case of DPRK-China sanctions violations approved by their respective governments. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603070345/https://mailchi.mp/54ffaf40dcae/hrnk-news-items-north-korean-human-rights-statusquo-vs-revisionist-powers>

Thursday, October 5, 2023

Rights Advocate: Few Signs of Progress Addressing North Korean Abuses

Top News:

[Rights advocate: Few signs of progress addressing North Korean abuses](#) (The Washington Times, 10/03/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korea shines light on teacher protests in Seoul in bid to smear South](#) (NK News, 10/05/2023)

In South Korea:

[Government to consider inter-Korean relations, freedom of expression in policy on leaflet distribution into N.K.](#) (Yonhap, 10/05/2023)

[S. Korea keeping close tabs on 'high-risk' N.K. defectors](#) (Yonhap, 10/05/2023)

[S. Korea stresses compliance with UNSC resolutions after report on suspicious N.K. tanker](#) (Yonhap, 10/05/2023)

[Yoon warns against threat of 'fake peace' with North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/04/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[North Korean hackers targeting ROK shipbuilders to bolster navy, Seoul says](#) (NK News, 10/05/2023)

[South beats North for basketball bronze in second Games showdown](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/05/2023)

International:

[North Korea provides Russia artillery for the Ukraine war as U.S. hands Kyiv ammunition seized from Iran](#) (CBS News, 10/05/2023)

[S. Korea, Japan agree to keep momentum going for warming ties in 'strategic dialogue'](#) (Yonhap, 10/05/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. closely monitoring N. Korea for signs of nuclear reactor halt](#) (Yonhap, 10/05/2023)

Top News:

- Greg Scarlatiou, the Executive Director of HRNK, commented on the lack of progress being made in the international community towards ending North Korean human rights abuses. (Guy Taylor, [The Washington Times](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean state media has slammed the South Korean government's handling of the suicide of an elementary school teacher in a series of articles in recent weeks, condemning the ROK for poor teacher rights and labeling the Yoon administration "corrupt" and "incompetent." (Lina Park, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- The unification ministry will formulate its policy on the issue of propaganda leaflet distribution into North Korea while comprehensively taking into account inter-Korean relations and the Constitutional Court's decision to strike down a ban on leaflet distribution, an official said Thursday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The unification ministry said Thursday it is closely monitoring some 6,000 vulnerable North Korean defectors considered at a high risk of suicide attempts and lonely deaths due to financial difficulties and other hardships. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- The foreign ministry stressed Thursday that all United Nations member states, including North Korea, have the obligation to comply with Security Council resolutions, after a news report that a North Korean oil tanker with a sanctions violation record was detected in Chinese waters. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol stressed Wednesday that notions of "fake peace" with North Korea pose a serious challenge to security and democracy. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Seoul's spy agency warned Wednesday that North Korean cybercriminals are carrying out cyberattacks against South Korean shipbuilders to boost recent efforts to enhance the country's naval capabilities. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The South Korean women's basketball team took bronze on Thursday, defeating North Korea 93-63 to win the national team's sole medal in the sport at the Hangzhou Asian Games. (Mary Yang, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- North Korea has begun transferring artillery to Russia, bolstering Vladimir Putin's forces as they continue their 20-month [invasion of Ukraine](#), a U.S. official tells CBS News. It was not immediately clear whether the transfer is part of a new, long-term supply chain or a more limited consignment, or what North Korea is getting in return for the weapons. (Ramy Inocencio, [CBS News](#))
- South Korea and Japan held vice-ministerial talks in Seoul on Thursday on bilateral relations and other common issues, including the recent development on North Korea's closer ties

with Russia, agreeing to keep the momentum going for thawing relations, Seoul's foreign ministry said. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

- The intelligence authorities of South Korea and the United States are closely monitoring North Korea for signs the reclusive regime appears to have halted operations of a nuclear reactor in its Yongbyon nuclear complex, Seoul's defense ministry said Thursday. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ryan Beane, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603070810/https://mailchi.mp/326dfc7dd26e/hrnk-news-items-rights-advocate-few-signs-of-progress-addressing-north-korean-abuses>

Friday, October 6, 2023

North Korea, amid reopening, receives humanitarian aid despite 'minimal' return of international organization employees

Top News:

[North Korea, amid reopening, receives humanitarian aid despite 'minimal' return of international organization employees](#) (RFA, 09/29/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[N. Korea denounces U.S. sanctions at international legal forum hosted by Russia](#) (Yonhap, 10/06/2023)

[N. Korea holds Cabinet plenary meeting over grain output, economic issues](#) (Yonhap, 10/06/2023)

[N. Korea slams France for its planned surveillance of illicit maritime activities](#) (Yonhap, 10/06/2023)

[N. Korea may launch military spy satellite between Oct. 10 and 26: S. Korean think tank](#) (Yonhap, 10/06/2023)

[North Korea's next spy satellite launch attempt may come in October, think tank says](#) (Reuters, 10/06/2023)

[North Korean women's basketball team loses out on bronze to ROK at Asian Games](#) (NK News, 10/06/2023)

In South Korea:

[First North Korean defector to become a full-time professor recalls starvation, hardship and danger](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/06/2023)

[S. Korea expects to expand exchanges with Japan amid thaw: FM official](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/06/2023)

[Will court ruling to lift anti-NK leaflet ban escalate inter-Korean tensions?](#) (The Korea Times, 10/06/2023)

International:

[Ukraine war drives drop in US support for defending Seoul from North Korea: Poll](#) (NK News, 10/06/2023)

Top News:

- North Korea recently reopened its borders after being closed for 3 years and 7 months since the onset of COVID-19. However, UNICEF, the international child fund, reported that they have not received any related information. (Park Jeong-woo, [RFA](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea denounced U.S. sanctions during an Asia-Pacific legal conference hosted by Russia, state media reported Friday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has held an enlarged plenary meeting of the Cabinet to assess economic performances in the third quarter, stressing the need to attain this year's goal of grain output without fail, state media reported Friday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- A North Korean official denounced France on Friday over its plan to monitor North Korea's possible illicit maritime activities, calling it an "extremely foolish act of plunging itself into a bottomless pit." (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea may launch its military spy satellite between Tuesday and Oct. 26 following its previous two failed launches, as it will likely take into account key political and diplomatic events, a South Korean state-run think tank said Friday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea will try this month to launch a spy satellite, a Seoul-based think tank said, the third attempt after two previous launches failed soon after liftoff. (Hyunsu Yim, [Reuters](#))
- The North Korean women's basketball team missed out on a chance to take home a bronze medal at the Asian Games on Thursday, losing by a whopping 30 points to its South Korean rivals in Hangzhou. (Yong-ja Hong, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- North Korean defector Kim Seong-ryeol, who came to the South after two attempts to flee the North, was named a professor of international studies at Busan University of Foreign Studies (BUFS). (Kim Min-ju, Cho Jung-woo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea is expecting fresh consultations with Japan "at many levels," a senior Foreign Ministry official in Seoul said Friday following their high-level talks the previous day that took place after a nine-year hiatus. First Vice Foreign Minister Chang Ho-jin and his Japanese counterpart, Vice Foreign Minister Masataka Okano, met in Seoul to reaffirm their commitment to curbing the growing threat from North Korea's nuclear weapons development. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The Constitutional Court's recent ruling that a ban on sending anti-Pyongyang propaganda leaflets to North Korea was unconstitutional has opened the door for activists to start, once

again, distributing the flyers without fear of legal consequences. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- U.S. public support for defending South Korea against North Korean attack has slipped for the second year in a row, a new poll showed, amid partisan disagreement over whether to continue to back Ukraine in its fight against Russian aggression. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

North Korea, amid reopening, receives humanitarian aid despite 'minimal' return of international organization employees.

Park Jeong-woo
Radio Free Asia
September 29, 2023

Anchor: North Korea recently reopened its borders after being closed for 3 years and 7 months since the onset of COVID-19. However, UNICEF, the international child fund, reported that they have not received any related information. Journalist Jimin Anderson reports.

While North Korea has announced the permission for foreigners to enter the country starting from the 25th of last month, the focus is not just on the resumption of tourism. The entry of foreign employees of international organizations and non-governmental organizations, such as the UN, who work within North Korea, is also being closely watched.

Due to the North Korean authorities' border closure, foreign employees have all left North Korea, causing disruptions in humanitarian aid activities for over three years. Organizations like UNICEF and the Food and Agriculture Organization have been maintaining continuous communication with their local North Korean staff through email and other means, but on-the-ground monitoring and supervision have been delayed, affecting their activities in North Korea.

The uncertainty lies in when these employees will be able to return to Pyongyang and resume their fieldwork.

UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) stated on Radio Free Asia (RFA) on the 29th, "We have not received any notification regarding the reopening of the North Korean border."

Despite formally reopening the borders after 3 years and 7 months on August 27th, North Korean authorities have not extended invitations to international organizations, unlike inviting politicians from China and Russia and sending athletes to the World Taekwondo Championships and Asian Games.

However, UNICEF has been consistently sending aid items to North Korea recently. Since July, UNICEF has sent essential medicines and supplies for maternal and child health, such as oxygen

concentrators, maternity beds, gynecological examination beds, test kits, and IV stands, which will be distributed to facilities in 50 counties nationwide. In August, they also delivered over 530,000 doses of polio vaccine, and in August and September, they sent water and hygiene items for use in community-based healthcare programs, as well as 2,000 emergency hygiene kits.

While North Korean authorities continue to ignore humanitarian support from the international community, the rights to health of North Korean citizens are being violated. According to a report released by the United Nations in July, North Korea was the only country in the world that did not carry out essential vaccination last year.

Regarding this issue, the UNICEF spokesperson for the East Asia and Pacific region told RFA, "Due to the closure of North Korea's borders in 2020, vaccine stocks were depleted, and some vaccine doses could not be administered last year. We have provided vaccines for children and women since supplies entered North Korea this year."

Greg Scarlatoiu, the Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, pointed out on RFA on the 29th that North Korea's priorities are not the health of its citizens, especially children, as the borders gradually reopen. He stated, "While the authorities are gradually opening the North Korean border, they will focus on areas that bring honor to the North Korean regime or generate revenue. In other words, they prioritize areas that are useful politically and financially. The current situation of North Korean children is dire. However, in Kim Jong-un's world, the health and rights of North Korean children are not highly regarded."

The question of when North Korean authorities will allow the entry of international organization employees who assist residents on-site is being closely watched.

Editor: Park Jeong-woo, Web Team: Lee Kyung-ha

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603070935/https://mailchi.mp/3e56a6787bfb/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-amid-reopening-receives-humanitarian-aid-despite-minimal-return-of-international-organization-employees>

Saturday, October 7, 2023

HRNK's 'The Impact of N. Korean Influence & Subversion Operations on Human Rights Defenders'; N. Korea's Military Spy Satellite

Top News:

[The Impact of N. Korean Influence & Subversion Operations on Human Rights Defenders](#) (HRNK, 09/19/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea may launch military spy satellite between Oct. 10 and 26: S. Korean think tank](#) (Yonhap, 10/06/2023)

[N. Korea sends arms to Russia following Kim-Putin summit: CBS](#) (Yonhap, 10/06/2023)

[N. Korea suspected in Sept. hack of decentralized finance project: report](#) (Yonhap, 10/07/2023)

[Satellite imagery highlights 'dramatic' increase in N. Korea-Russia border rail traffic: U.S. monitor](#) (Yonhap, 10/07/2023)

In South Korea:

[Between protection and prosecution: South Korea's self-defense paradox](#) (NK News, 10/06/2023)

[S. Korea to participate in new round of IPEF talks in Malaysia](#) (Yonhap, 10/06/2023)

International:

[Senior US official stresses 'strong' ties with S. Korea, Japan over N. Korean threats](#) (Yonhap, 10/06/2023)

[US citizens divided over troop mobilization to defend S. Korea in case of N. Korean invasion: poll](#) (Yonhap, 10/07/2023)

[U.S. expert redoubles calls for sturdier deterrence against N. Korean ICBM threats](#) (Yonhap, 10/08/2023)

Top News:

- On September 19, HRNK hosted Lawrence Peck at the DACOR Bacon House in Washington, D.C. The event also featured remarks by Nicholas Eberstadt and Greg Scarlatoiu. Please click on the link to view the recording. ([HRNK](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea may launch its military spy satellite between Tuesday and Oct. 26 following its previous two failed launches, as it will likely take into account key political and diplomatic events, a South Korean state-run think tank said Friday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea has started sending artillery to Russia as Moscow continues its war in Ukraine, a U.S. broadcaster reported Thursday, after last month's summit between the two countries reinforced concerns about a potential bilateral arms deal. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea is suspected in a massive breach of a decentralized finance project last month, which led to a loss of less than \$150 million, a senior White House official was quoted as saying Friday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- This week's satellite imagery showed a "dramatic" surge in rail traffic along the border between North Korea and Russia, a U.S. monitor said Friday, amid concerns about possible arms transfers following last month's summit between the two countries. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- In light of recent knife-related attacks, the concept and application of self-defense have gained significant attention in South Korea. One such incident in late May saw a man in his 70s attack a shop owner in Daejeon. The assailant allegedly used a knife to attack the victim, who proceeded to defend himself by kicking the attacker and wresting the knife away. (Lina Park, [NK News](#))
- South Korea will take part in a new round of negotiations on the United States-led Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) to be held in Malaysia later this month, officials said Friday. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- A senior US diplomat said Thursday South Korea, the United States and Japan already have "strong" security partnerships to address North Korean threats, following an academic proposal to consider a deterrence policy that signals the possibility of preemptive military action. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Half of U.S. citizens favor using American troops to defend South Korea in the event of a North Korean invasion, a recent U.S. poll showed Thursday, underscoring the public polarization over the security issue. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- A prominent U.S. security expert has renewed his calls for a risky yet calibrated and stronger deterrence policy signaling the possibility of preemptive military action to counter North Korea's growing intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) threats. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Tessa Aguilar, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available
here: <https://web.archive.org/web/20240603071215/https://mailchi.mp/7fef51172f7b/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-amid-reopening-receives-humanitarian-aid-despite-minimal-return-of-international-organization-employees-12237149>

Sunday, October 8, 2023

Unification ministry urges N. Korea to immediately send detained S. Koreans back home

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Unification ministry urges N. Korea to immediately send detained S. Koreans back home](#) (Yonhap, 10/08/2023)

International:

[US expert redoubles calls for sturdier deterrence against NK ICBM threats](#) (The Korea Times, 10/08/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The unification ministry on Sunday urged North Korea to immediately send a South Korean pastor and five other nationals back home, condemning their yearslong detention as "illegal and inhumane." (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- A prominent U.S. security expert has renewed his calls for a risky yet calibrated and stronger deterrence policy signaling the possibility of preemptive military action to counter North Korea's growing intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) threats. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603072316/https://mailchi.mp/5c835c59ad2e/hrnk-news-items-unification-ministry-urges-n-korea-to-immediately-send-detained-s-koreans-back-home>

Monday, October 9, 2023

HRNK Executive Director: 'It is time for the International community to adopt a 'human rights up front' approach'

Top News:

[It is time for the international community to adopt a 'human rights up front' approach](#) (CIVICUS, 10/06/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korea claims youth built 80-story Art Deco skyscraper in under 7 months](#) (NK News, 10/09/23)

[North Korea may be planning military parade or rally for Oct. 10 holiday](#) (NK News, 10/09/23)

In South Korea:

[Bitter clashes expected at final Assembly audit before election](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/09/23)

[Former S. Korean POW who escaped from N. Korea dies at 92](#)

(Yonhap, 10/09/2023)

[New defense chief calls for firm readiness posture against N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 10/09/2023)

[Seoul's new defense minister says best way to deter North Korea is punishment](#) (NK News, 10/09/23)

International:

[A surge in rail traffic on North Korea-Russia border suggests arms supply to Russia, think tank says](#) (AP News, 10/08/23)

[North Korea condemns deadliest attack on Syrian government forces in nine years](#) (NK News, 10/09/23)

[N. Korea denounces deadly drone attack in Syria](#) (Yonhap, 10/09/2023)

Top News:

- HRNK Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu was featured in CIVICUS's interview series on the state of civil society around the world. ([CIVICUS](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean teens and twenty-somethings with no prior construction experience have nearly completed a new 80-story skyscraper in Pyongyang in under seven months, according to state media on Monday, as part of a project to give youth “hardship” experiences. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- Satellite imagery shows possible soldier block formations at Pyongyang’s Kim Il Sung Square on Sunday. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- The National Assembly will begin the final audit before next year's legislative general election from Tuesday. At this year’s audit, defending elections from cyberattacks is anticipated to

emerge as a key wedge issue. According to a report submitted to the Assembly in May, out of the eight known hacking attacks alerted to the election service in the last two years, seven were believed to have been by North Korean hackers. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

- Han Byung-soo, a former South Korean prisoner of war who was held in North Korea for five decades before escaping to his home country, has died at the age of 92, the defense ministry said Monday. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- Defense Minister Shin Won-sik called Monday for a strong readiness posture against North Korea as he made his first visit to a front-line military unit in his new role. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's new defense minister visited the country's frontline army division facing North Korea on Monday, starting his tenure by emphasizing "punishing" the DPRK's military aggressions. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- Recent satellite photos show a sharp increase in rail traffic along the North Korea-Russia border, indicating the North is supplying munitions to Russia, according to a U.S. think tank. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- North Korea on Sunday condemned the deadliest attack on Syrian government forces in almost a decade as part of "hostile" forces' efforts to overthrow the Bashar Assad regime, highlighting longstanding solidarity between the two hereditary regimes. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea on Monday condemned a deadly drone attack on a Syrian military academy, saying it opposes all sorts of terrorism. Syria is one of the few countries that have friendly ties with North Korea. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Mohona Ganguly, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603072435/https://mailchi.mp/5fca79417e3b/hrnk-news-items-hrnk-executive-director-it-is-time-for-the-international-community-to-adopt-a-human-rights-up-front-approach>

Tuesday, October 10, 2023

The Crimes Behind the Seafood You Eat; Hamas' attack on Israel prompts South Korea to consider pausing military agreement with N.K.

Top News:

[The Crimes Behind the Seafood You Eat](#) (*The New Yorker*, 10/09/2023)

In North Korea:

[N.K. news agency says 'important report' is coming up](#) (Yonhap, 10/10/2023)

[N. Korea defends military spy satellite as 'indispensable strategic option'](#) (Yonhap, 10/10/2023)

[N. Korea touts Kim's leadership on 78th founding anniversary of ruling party](#) (Yonhap, 10/10/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Election watchdog's cybersecurity system vulnerable to hacking attacks](#) (Yonhap, 10/10/2023)

[Hamas' attack on Israel prompts South Korea to consider pausing military agreement with North Korea](#) (AP News, 10/10/2023)

[New defense chief vows to suspend 2018 inter-Korean military agreement](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/10/2023)

[NIS finds national election commission vulnerable to hacking](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/10/2023)

[South Korean elections vulnerable to North Korean hacking threats: NIS](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/10/2023)

International:

[Chinese boats spotted fishing in North Korean waters likely violating sanctions](#) (NK News, 10/10/2023)

[N. Korea blames Israel for conflict with Hamas](#) (Yonhap, 10/10/2023)

[North Korea blames Israel's 'ceaseless criminal acts' for Hamas conflict](#) (NK News, 10/10/2023)

[North Korean weapons not decisive but could sustain Russia in Ukraine](#) (NK News, 10/10/2023)

[ROK, Japan, US' advanced assets join naval exercise to intercept DPRK weapons](#) (NK News, 10/10/2023)

[South Korea, U.S., Japan conduct first trilateral maritime interdiction drill in 7 years](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/10/2023)

Top News:

- According to Chinese government estimates, last year as many as eighty thousand North Korean workers were living in one city in northeastern China alone. According to [a report by the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea](#), at least four hundred and fifty of them were working in seafood plants. (Ian Urbina, [The New Yorker](#))

In North Korea:

- The Korean Central News agency said Tuesday an "important report" is coming up. Tuesday is the 78th founding anniversary of the North's ruling Workers' Party. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- A North Korean official on Tuesday called the country's military spy satellite an "indispensable strategic option" to counter the United States, which is "getting hell-bent on space militarization." (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Tuesday lauded leader Kim Jong-un for "exceptionally" strengthening the country's combat power as Pyongyang marked the 78th founding anniversary of its ruling Workers' Party. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Announcing the outcome of a joint cybersecurity checkup on the National Election Commission (NEC), the National Intelligence Service (NIS) said North Korea could penetrate into the election watchdog's network "at any time" due to its weak security system, though no such infiltration has been identified. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean Defense Minister Shin Won-shik said Tuesday he would push to suspend a 2018 inter-Korean military agreement in order to resume frontline surveillance on rival North Korea, as the surprise attack on Israel by Hamas militants raised concerns in South Korea about similar assaults by the North. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- New Defense Minister Shin Won-sik said he will work to suspend the 2018 inter-Korean military agreement as soon as possible, saying it hinders South Korea's surveillance capabilities against the North. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- On Tuesday, the National Intelligence Service (NIS) said it had found the National Election Commission (NEC) network vulnerable to cyberattacks, especially from North Korea. (Lee Ho-Jeong [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's election systems may be vulnerable to foreign hacking threats and are in need of fortification ahead of next year's general election, the National Intelligence Service said Tuesday. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- At least a dozen Chinese-flagged vessels were fishing in North Korean waters adjacent to the contested Northern Limit Line (NLL) that separates the seas of the two Koreas on Monday, NK News observed during a visit to the remote island of Yeonpyeong-do. While the presence of Chinese vessels in either North or South Korean waters could be a breach of international law, the two nations' coast guards appeared to be doing little to stop them. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- North Korea on Tuesday denounced Israel over its escalating conflict with the Hamas militant group, saying it is the "consequence of Israel's ceaseless criminal actions" against the people of Palestine. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean state media has blamed Israel's "ceaseless criminal acts" for the recent escalation of violence with Hamas, omitting any mention of the Palestinian military group's deadly attacks on Israeli cities on Saturday. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korean weapons supplies to Russia will help sustain Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, but it probably won't be a deciding factor in the war, according to an unnamed U.S. official cited by CBS News last week. (James Fretwell, [NK News](#))
- South Korea, Japan and the U.S. conducted trilateral naval exercises off the southeast coast of Jeju on Monday and Tuesday to strengthen their ability to respond to North Korean threats, according to Seoul's defense ministry. (Ifang Bremer, Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan held a maritime interdiction drill in the high seas southeast of Jeju on Tuesday, marking the first trilateral drill of its kind in seven years. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603072619/https://mailchi.mp/5f46cd9f5964/hrnk-news-items-the-crimes-behind-the-seafood-you-eat-hamas-attack-on-israel-prompts-south-korea-to-consider-pausing-military-agreement-with-nk>

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Special Envoy for North Korea Human Rights Confirmed by the Senate, but Still Not in Office at the State Department

Top News:

[Special Envoy for North Korea Human Rights Confirmed by the Senate, but Still Not in Office at the State Department](#) (CSIS)

[Reflecting on the 70th anniversary of the U.S.-South Korea alliance](#) (The Washington Times, 10/10/2023)

In North Korea:

[Shady freighter with Sierra Leone flag spotted in key North Korean ports](#) (NK News, 10/11/2023)

In South Korea:

[S Korean voting system 'vulnerable' to N Korean hacking: spy agency](#) (RFA, 10/11/2023)

[Seoul officials suggest North Korea capable of ' Hamas tactics ' to attack South](#) (NK News, 10/11/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Pyongyang virtually nullified inter-Korean military pact: unification minister](#) (The Korea Times, 10/11/2023)

[Unification minister sees need to review military threats in deciding halt to 2018 accord with N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 10/11/2023)

[Unification ministry says to monitor conditions to resume humanitarian aid to N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 10/11/2023)

International:

[China forcibly repatriates some 600 N. Korean defectors this week: civic group](#) (Yonhap, 10/11/2023)

[Israel-Hamas conflict could nudge N. Korean issue onto back burner: experts](#) (Yonhap, 10/11/2023)

Top News:

- In January 2023, President Joe Biden nominated Julie Turner to be the U.S. Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights Issues. She is a career official at the Department of State and well-qualified for the position. (Robert R. King, [CSIS](#))

- This month marks the 70th anniversary of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the U.S. and South Korea, officially the Republic of Korea, signed Oct. 1, 1953. (Joseph DeTrani, [The Washington Times](#))

In North Korea:

- An obscure Sierra Leone-flagged freighter with a murky past appeared in key North Korean ports in what experts described as a possible attempt to smuggle energy resources or weaponry in violation of U.N. sanctions. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- The voting and ballot counting systems at the state-run election watchdog remain susceptible to potential cyberattacks by North Korea, South Korea's spy agency warned on Tuesday. (Taejun Kang, [RFA](#))
- North Korea can fire some 16,000 rounds an hour from its multiple rocket launchers at Seoul, South Korea's unification minister stated on Wednesday during the ministry's parliamentary audit session. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho said on Wednesday that the inter-Korean accord designed to reduce military tensions has been practically nullified by Pyongyang and stressed that it is "wrong" for Seoul to continue to adhere to it alone. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea needs to comprehensively take into account the security situation in deciding whether to suspend the 2018 military tension reduction accord with North Korea, Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho said Wednesday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- The unification ministry said Wednesday it will review whether to resume humanitarian assistance to North Korea, after closely monitoring the progress of international organizations' preparations for aid projects. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- China sent back around 600 North Korean defectors earlier this week right after the end of the Asian Games in Hangzhou, a local human rights group claimed Wednesday, despite Seoul's repeated calls against forced repatriation. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- The reigniting of the Israel-Hamas conflict, coupled with Russia's ongoing war in Ukraine, could shift the United States' attention further away from North Korea's nuclear quandary, analysts said Tuesday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603072921/https://mailchi.mp/f4cd42a2e1b9/hrnk-news-items-the-crimes-behind-the-seafood-you-eat-hamas-attack-on-israel-prompts-south-korea-to-consider-pausing-military-agreement-with-nk-122371>

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Hamas used North Korean rockets in Israel attacks, evidence suggests

In North Korea:

[North Korea says it's open to dope-testing after Asian Games success](#) (NK News, 10/12/2023)

In South Korea:

[Gov't working to verify speculation over China's forced repatriation of N. Korean defectors](#) (Yonhap, 10/12/2023)

[JCF chief says 2018 military accord restricts S. Korea's surveillance of N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 10/12/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N.K. propaganda outlets slam Seoul's unification minister as 'madman'](#) (Yonhap, 10/12/2023)

International:

[China may have repatriated hundreds to North Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/12/2023)

[Hamas used North Korean rockets in Israel attacks, evidence suggests](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/12/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim, Putin exchange congratulatory messages marking 75th anniversary of diplomatic ties](#) (Yonhap, 10/12/2023)

[Russia eyes North Korea's participation in Moscow-led organizations: Official](#) (NK News, 10/12/2023)

[Yoon, Estonian president voice joint concerns over North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/12/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea will allow anti-doping officials to enter the country after a nearly four-year hiatus in order to protect its future in weightlifting, its most successful Olympic sport. (Brian Oliver, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- The unification ministry said Thursday it is working to verify a news report that China sent back hundreds of North Korean defectors earlier this week, stressing that no North Korean refugees should be repatriated against their will. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- A 2018 military tension reduction agreement with North Korea restricts South Korea's surveillance of the North due to no-fly zones set along the heavily fortified border under the deal, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said Thursday. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea's propaganda outlets on Thursday issued a barrage of insults against South Korea's point man on inter-Korean affairs, calling him a "madman" and the worst-ever "traitor." (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Some 600 North Koreans may have been repatriated from China following the Asian Games, according to multiple rights groups. (Esther Chung, Chung Yeong-gyo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The Hamas militant group used North Korean rockets in its attack on Israel, according to evidence from battlegrounds in the country. The North Korean 85-millimeter F-7, a surface-to-surface fragmentation rocket, was spotted in a video that showed a Hamas militant appearing to carry the rocket during the group's attack last Saturday. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and Russian President Vladimir Putin have pledged to move relations between the two countries further forward as they exchanged messages marking the 75th anniversary of diplomatic ties after a summit last month, Pyongyang's state media reported Thursday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's potential participation in Russia-led international organizations is a way to "stabilize" the situation on the Korean Peninsula, which has been "complicated by military preparations by the U.S. and its allies," a high-level Moscow official said. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Meeting in Seoul on Thursday, President Yoon Suk Yeol and Estonian President Alar Karis voiced concerns about increasing reports that Russia and North Korea are trading arms. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603073232/https://mailchi.mp/c270b1c0ab34/hrnk-news-items-the-crimes-behind-the-seafood-you-eat-hamas-attack-on-israel-prompts-south-korea-to-consider-pausing-military-agreement-with-nk-122372>

Friday, October 13, 2023

N. Korea Threatens to Strike U.S. Aircraft Carrier, China Appears to Have Repatriated North Koreans Despite International Pressure

In North Korea:

[N. Korea, Russia hold celebrations marking 75th anniversary of diplomatic ties](#) (Yonhap, 10/13/2023)

[N. Korea threatens to strike U.S. aircraft carrier](#) (Yonhap, 10/13/2023)

[North Korea raises the specter of nuclear strike over US aircraft carrier's arrival in South Korea](#) (AP News, 10/13/2023)

[North Korea says US carrier's visit to South 'undisguised' provocation](#) (Reuters, 10/13/2023)
[North warns of 'rapid first strike' as U.S. carrier arrives in Busan](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/13/2023)

In South Korea:

[China deported 'large number' of N Korean defectors - Seoul](#) (BBC News, 10/13/2023)
[Election watchdog faces calls to apologize after failing security test](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/13/2023)
[JCS chief says threat by N. Korea different from Hamas](#) (Yonhap, 10/12/2023)
[Seoul confirms China's repatriation of North Koreans, raises issue with Beijing](#) (NK News, 10/13/2023)
[S. Korea hints at suspension of 2018 inter-Korean military accord even without N. Korea's provocations](#) (Yonhap, 10/13/2023)
[Unification ministry says many N. Koreans in China believed to have been repatriated](#) (Yonhap, 10/13/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Yoon vows to sternly respond to N. Korea's threats through S. Korea-U.S. alliance](#) (Yonhap, 10/12/2023)

International:

[Apparent North Korean weapons used by Hamas, but DPRK denies](#) (NK News, 10/13/2023)
[China Appears to Have Repatriated North Koreans Despite International Pressure](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 10/13/2023)
[Luxury goods imports from China to NK increased over past 3 years: data](#) (The Korea Times, 10/13/2023)
[No North Korean defectors in China, foreign ministry says](#) (Reuters, 10/12/2023)
[North Korea denies its weapons used by Hamas against Israel](#) (Reuters, 10/12/2023)
[North Korea on track to overpower US nuclear defences](#) (The Telegraph, 10/13/2023)
[North Korea's arms deals with Hamas, Hezbollah pose common threat to South Korea, Israel](#) (The Korea Times, 10/13/2023)
[N. Korea 'on pace' to field enough nuclear-tipped ICBMs to break U.S. missile defense: congressional report](#) (Yonhap, 10/13/2023)
[N. Korean hacking groups target defectors group's head: report](#) (Yonhap, 10/12/2023)
[North Korea's nuclear arsenal 'on pace' to challenge homeland missile defense, says U.S. congressional report](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/13/2023)
[Pyongyang dismisses speculation over Hamas' use of N. Korean weapons against Israel](#) (Yonhap, 10/13/2023)
[South Korea protests to China over suspected North Korea repatriations](#) (Reuters, 10/13/2023)
[US aircraft carrier arrives in South Korea as North's leader Kim exchanges messages with Putin](#) (AP News, 10/12/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea and Russia have pledged to further develop their relations, as they held celebrations in Pyongyang earlier this week to mark the 75th anniversary of diplomatic ties, the North's state media reported Friday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea threatened Friday to stage the "most powerful and rapid first strike" against U.S. strategic assets deployed to the Korean Peninsula, in the latest bellicose rhetoric that underscored Pyongyang's concerns about U.S. military capabilities in the region. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea lashed out Friday at the arrival of a U.S. aircraft carrier battle group in South Korea, calling it a provocation and again raising the specter of using nuclear weapons to defend itself. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- North Korea denounced on Friday a U.S. aircraft carrier's visit to South Korea, calling it a provocation that could bring "irrevocable, catastrophic circumstances". (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea threatened to stage the "most powerful and rapid first strike" against U.S. strategic assets Friday following the arrival of an American nuclear-powered aircraft carrier in the Korean Peninsula. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea says China has forcibly repatriated a "large number" of North Korean defectors. This follows recent reports from human rights groups claiming that as many as 600 North Koreans have been sent back. (Jean Mackenzie, Kelly Ng, [BBC News](#))
- Calls are mounting for the South Korean election watchdog to apologize after it failed to fend off mock cyberattacks, including several successful breaches by the North Korean foreign intelligence agency, in a security evaluation by the country's top spy agency. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea faces a different type of security threat from North Korea when compared with the Hamas militant group, and will beef up its warfare capability to deter any provocations, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said Thursday. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's unification ministry confirmed China has repatriated hundreds of North Koreans. The unification ministry says forced repatriations violates international norms, and can't confirm how many more in China. (Jeongmin Kim, Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))
- The unification ministry on Thursday hinted that the government may suspend the 2018 military tension reduction accord with North Korea, depending on the security situation, even if Pyongyang does not violate South Korean territory. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- Many North Koreans appear to have been repatriated from China, the unification ministry said Friday after a recent news report that about 600 North Koreans have forcibly been sent back home. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- President Yoon Suk Yeol vowed Thursday to sternly respond to North Korea's nuclear and missile threats through a firm South Korea-U.S. alliance, as he marked the anniversary of a key battle in the 1950-53 Korean War. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Weapons apparently produced by North Korea were likely used by Hamas in its offensive against Israel, expert analysis of photos published by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and independent media reveal. But North Korean state media on Friday refuted the suggestion. Analysts suggest both claims could be true, with rocket-propelled grenade launchers likely sourced indirectly. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- Hundreds are believed to have been forcibly sent back to the Kim Jong Un regime, where they likely face imprisonment and abuse, experts say. (Dasl Yoon, [The Wall Street Journal](#))
- North Korea's imports of luxury goods from China reached \$28.5 million last year, despite pandemic border control and international sanctions, data from China's customs office showed Friday. ([The Korea Times](#))
- There are no "so-called defectors" in China, a spokesperson for its foreign ministry said on Thursday, responding to a query about a report that the country had deported North Korean defectors. ([Reuters](#))
- North Korea denied on Friday its weapons were used by Hamas in the attack against Israel, saying the claim made in some media reports was a bid by Washington to divert the blame for the conflict from itself to a third country. (Jack Kim, Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- A US congressional report found that North Korea will soon be able to deploy enough nuclear missiles to overcome US defenses. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- South Korea should take heed of Israel's ongoing war against Hamas, an Islamic militant group controlling the Gaza Strip, as the recent incursion illustrates the potential risks posed by North Korea, experts said. (Kang Hyun-kyung, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea is "on pace" to deploy sufficient nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) to overcome the U.S. missile defense and may be preparing for a nuclear test to enable tactical nuclear operations, a congressional report showed Thursday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- A number of North Korean hacking groups were found to have made hacking attempts targeted at a head of a defectors' group in South Korea, according to a report by a U.S. cybersecurity company Thursday. (Kim Na-young, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea is "on pace" to deploy enough nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) to possibly penetrate the American missile defense system, according to a U.S. congressional report. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea on Friday dismissed speculation that the Hamas militant group used North Korean weapons for its surprise attack on Israel as "groundless," accusing the United States of cooking up a false accusation against the North. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea said on Friday it had protested to China over the suspected forced repatriation of a large number of North Koreans, who rights groups say face imprisonment and abuse at the hands of North Korean authorities. (Jack Kim, Ju-min Park, [Reuters](#))
- A U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier arrived in South Korea on Thursday in a demonstration of strength against North Korea, as the North's leader reaffirmed his push to bolster ties with Russia. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP News](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Katie Choi, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603073549/https://mailchi.mp/542ded806af8/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-threatens-to-strike-us-aircraft-carrier-china-appears-to-have-repatriated-north-koreans-despite-international-pressure>

Saturday, October 14, 2023

New U.S. special envoy for N. Korean human rights issues takes office, plans to visit Seoul next week

In South Korea:

[Rival parties clash over alleged hacking vulnerabilities in election watchdog](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/13/23)

International:

[Increased Activity on the Sino-North Korean “Bridge to Nowhere”](#) (38 North, 10/13/23)

[New U.S. special envoy for N. Korean human rights issues takes office, plans to visit Seoul next week](#) (Yonhap, 10/14/23)

[N. Korea-China border bridge shows increased activity: 38 North](#) (Yonhap, 10/14/23)

[North Korea provided Russia with weapons, White House says](#) (The Washington Post, 10/13/23)

[North Korea sent mass shipment of weapons, ammo to Russia: US](#) (NK News, 10/14/23)

[N. Korea sent more than 1,000 containers of military equipment, munitions to Russia: White House](#) (Yonhap, 10/14/2023)

[North Korea sending Russia military equipment, US claims](#) (BBC, 10/14/23)

[North Korea sends '1,000 containers' of weapons to Russia](#) (The Telegraph, 10/14/23)

[North Korea Shipped Arms to Russia for Use in Ukraine, U.S. Says](#) (The New York Times, 10/13/23)

[S. Korea to review additional measures against N. Korea's arms transfer to Russia](#) (Yonhap, 10/14/23)

[US says North Korea delivered 1,000 containers of equipment and munitions to Russia for Ukraine war](#) (AP News, 10/13/23)

[White House accuses North Korea of providing Russia with weapons](#) (Reuters, 10/13/23)

In South Korea:

- The rival parties locked horns over alleged cybersecurity vulnerabilities in the state-run election watchdog's voting and ballot counting systems during a parliamentary audit of the National Election Commission (NEC) Friday. The governing People Power Party expressed concern about the National Intelligence Service's recent finding that the NEC's network was vulnerable to cyberattacks, especially from North Korea. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- Recent commercial satellite imagery indicates an uptick in vehicular activity on the New Yalu River Bridge between China and North Korea this week. (Martyn Williams, [38 North](#))
- The new U.S. special envoy for North Korean human rights issues took office Friday, the State Department said, ending more than six years of vacancy at the post. Ambassador Julie Turner was officially sworn in and plans to travel to Seoul from Monday to Wednesday next week to meet government officials, civic organizations, North Korean escapees and journalists, according to the department. (Kim Seung-yeon, Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea recently sent over 1,000 containers of military equipment to Russia to aid Moscow's war efforts in Ukraine, the U.S. said Friday. The transfer to support the Ukraine war apparently occurred around the time Kim Jong Un visited the Far East last month. (Anton Solokin, [NK News](#))
- An unused border bridge between North Korea and China has shown increased activity this week in a potential sign of its opening since construction was completed nearly a decade ago, according to 38 North, a U.S. website dedicated to analyzing North Korea. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has delivered weapons to Russia for its fight in Ukraine, and Moscow may already have responded in kind, U.S. officials said Friday. National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said that as many as 1,000 containers with "equipment and munitions" had been provided "in recent weeks." (Karen DeYoung, [The Washington Post](#))
- North Korea has delivered more than 1,000 containers of military equipment and munitions to Russia in recent weeks for use in Ukraine, a White House official said Friday, lambasting burgeoning cooperation between Pyongyang and Moscow as a threat to regional stability. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- US officials have accused North Korea of supplying vast amounts of military hardware to Russia for use in Ukraine. Pyongyang has supplied up to 1,000 containers of "equipment and munitions" in "recent weeks", National Security Council Spokesperson John Kirby said. (Matt Murphy, [BBC](#))
- The United States has accused North Korea of sending more than 1,000 containers of military equipment and munitions to Russia to boost its protracted war against Ukraine. The White House has condemned the move as a threat to innocent Ukrainians as satellite images raise concerns of increased tensions in the region. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- North Korea shipped more than 1,000 containers of arms to Russia in recent weeks for use in the war in Ukraine, U.S. officials said on Friday, the latest example of Moscow scouring the world to replenish its depleted stores of weapons from some of the most isolated outlaw nations. (Peter Baker, [The New York Times](#))
- South Korea plans to review additional measures against growing military ties between North Korea and Russia, a senior government official said Saturday, following revelations that Pyongyang has delivered more than 1,000 containers of military equipment and munitions to Moscow for use in Ukraine. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said that the U.S. believes Kim Jong Un is seeking sophisticated Russian weapons technologies in return for the munitions to boost North Korea's military and nuclear program. (Aamer Madhani, [AP News](#))

- The White House showed a series of satellite images that it said indicate cargo from an ammunition depot in North Korea (DPRK) was loaded on to a Russian-flagged ship and then taken by rail to a depot near Russia's southwestern border. (Jeff Mason, [Reuters](#))

Prepared by Mohona Ganguly, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603073754/https://mailchi.mp/64825ee38392/hrnk-news-items-new-us-special-envoy-for-n-korean-human-rights-issues-takes-office-plans-to-visit-seoul-next-week>

Sunday, October 15, 2023

Israel-Hamas conflict amplifies ominous NK presence on peninsula

In South Korea:

[S. Korea joins ICRC's major donor group for 1st time](#) (Yonhap, 10/15/2023)

International:

[Israel-Hamas conflict amplifies ominous NK presence on peninsula](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/15/2023)

[Korean K9s integral to Estonian defense](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/15/2023)

[Russia does not violate UN sanctions against North Korea - Russian diplomat](#) (Reuters, 10/15/2023)

[UK: Rail Logistics Still Key to Russian Invasion](#) (VOA, 10/15/2023)

In South Korea:

- South Korea has joined a key donor group of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for the first time after making major contributions last year, the humanitarian organization said Sunday. As a member of the donor group, South Korea will be able to take part in high-level talks with the ICRC on its policies and projects, raising expectations for Seoul's possible involvement in the ICRC's projects in North Korea. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Adding to unease among South Koreans in a conflict-ridden world this year is the recent full-blown war that broke out between Hamas and Israel early this month. The situation resonates with South Korea, where tensions persist between the two Koreas, marked by intermittent skirmishes and military incidents over the past decades. (No Kyung-min, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Estonia would like a speedier procurement of K9 howitzers from Korea, President Alar Karis said in an exclusive interview in Seoul on Friday. More recently, Estonian company CoinsPaid was reportedly hacked by the North Korean Lazarus Group and lost nearly \$40 million. "The

political situation in Europe, the war in Ukraine, what's happened in Israel and the specifics in relation to North Korea" were all part of the discussions with President Yoon Suk Yeol in Seoul last Thursday, Karis said. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- Moscow does not violate United Nations sanctions against North Korea, but is categorically against new restrictive measures on Pyongyang, a high-ranking Russian diplomat told the RIA state news agency in remarks published on Sunday. (Lidia Kelly, [Reuters](#))
- Rail logistics remain "a vital component" in Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the British Defense Ministry said Sunday in its daily intelligence update. The White House has accused North Korea of shipping weapons to Russia, near the Ukraine border. North Korea has previously denied providing weaponry to Moscow. ([VOA](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603073916/https://mailchi.mp/33447113214c/hrnk-news-items-israel-hamas-conflict-amplifies-ominous-nk-presence-on-peninsula>

Monday, October 16, 2023

A Window of Opportunity: Addressing the Human Rights-Security Nexus in North Korea

Top News:

[A Window of Opportunity: Addressing the Human Rights-Security Nexus in North Korea](#) (HRNK Insider, 10/13/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Envoys on North Korea discuss aggression curbs](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/16/2023)

[Unification ministry slams N. Korea over suspected arms transfer to Russia](#) (Yonhap, 10/16/2023)

International:

[China Prepares for Summit Under Shadow of Israel-Gaza War](#) (VOA, 10/16/2023)

[Discussions on need for dialogue on N. Korea denuclearization diminish in U.S.: ambassador](#) (Yonhap, 10/16/2023)

[F-22, B-52 warm up for Seoul's largest-ever air show](#) (The Korea Times, 10/16/2023)

[New US envoy on North Korean human rights makes first visit to Seoul](#) (NK News, 10/16/2023)

[N. Korea slams Japan's plan to move up U.S. missile purchase as 'arrogant choice'](#) (Yonhap, 10/16/2023)

[North Korean passenger jet returns from Russia, third such flight since August](#) (NK News, 10/16/2023)

[Nuclear-capable US bomber to land at ROK base in show of force to North Korea](#) (NK News, 10/16/2023)

[Russian foreign minister to visit North Korea amid US accusations of arms trade](#) (NK News, 10/16/2023)

[Russia's foreign minister to visit N. Korea on Oct. 18-19: KCNA](#) (Yonhap, 10/16/2023)

[Russia's Foreign Minister Will Visit North Korea Amid Claims of Weapons Supplied to Moscow](#) (VOA, 10/16/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. to sign agreement on strengthening defense supply chains this month: DAPA](#) (Yonhap, 10/16/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. vow tighter coordination after suspected N.K. arms transfer to Russia](#) (Yonhap, 10/16/2023)[U.S. B-52 bomber to land in Korea for first time](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/16/2023)[U.S., South Korean envoys urge China to end repatriations of North Korean defectors](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/16/2023)

Top News:

- For more than 30 years, human rights has been sacrificed on the altar of political, military, and security issues...there is a clear security-human rights nexus when it comes to North Korea. Without addressing human rights, it is impossible to resolve the security issues. (Greg Scarlatou, [HRNK Insider](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The chief nuclear envoys of South Korea, the US and Japan met in Jakarta, Indonesia to discuss curbing North Korea's growing aggression, in regular two-day talks that started Monday. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The unification ministry lambasted North Korea on Monday for its suspected arms transfer to Russia, saying that it has exposed the true nature of the North deceiving the world. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- China began welcoming on Monday representatives of 130 countries for a conference that will be overshadowed by the Israel-Hamas war, as an increasingly assertive Beijing is asked to help de-escalate the violence. ([VOA](#))
- Discussions regarding the need for dialogue to address North Korea's nuclear quandary in the United States have dwindled, South Korea's top envoy in Washington said Sunday, indicating growing skepticism over the prospects of long-stalled nuclear diplomacy with the recalcitrant regime. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- An F-22 Raptor stealth fighter zoomed across the blue autumn sky over Seoul Air Base, Monday, in a rare public appearance by one of America's most advanced fighter jets. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))

- The new U.S. special envoy on North Korean human rights visited Seoul and met with top South Korean officials on Monday, days after being sworn in to fill the position vacant for more than six years. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korea on Monday condemned Japan's move to accelerate its planned acquisition of Tomahawk cruise missiles from the United States as an "arrogant choice," warning that it will heighten regional tensions. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- A North Korean passenger plane flew from the Russian Far Eastern city of Vladivostok to Pyongyang on Monday, over a month after the DPRK conducted its first flights to Russia since the beginning of the pandemic. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- A nuclear-capable U.S. bomber will land in South Korea this week, a move one expert viewed as an attempt to reassure South Koreans of the allies' joint deterrence capabilities in the event of a crisis involving North Korea. (Joon Ha Park, Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov will pay an official visit to North Korea this week, the Russian government announced on Monday, days after the U.S. presented new evidence that Pyongyang is supplying Moscow with military equipment for its war in Ukraine. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov will visit North Korea later this week, Pyongyang's state media said Monday, as the two countries move to strengthen military ties amid speculation over their suspected arms deal. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- Russia's foreign minister will visit North Korea this week, the Foreign Ministry said Monday, days after the United States claimed Pyongyang had delivered munitions and military equipment to Russia for use in the fighting in Ukraine. ([VOA](#))
- South Korea and the United States are expected to sign an arrangement aimed at bolstering bilateral security supply chains this month, Seoul's arms procurement agency said Monday, amid the allies' efforts to step up security cooperation. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the United States vowed Monday to work more closely in "sharing information on and joint responses to" any possible military cooperation between North Korea and Russia, after Washington accused Pyongyang of sending military equipment and munitions to Moscow. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.S. B-52 strategic bomber will land at Osan Air Base this week, marking the aircraft's first landing on the Korean Peninsula. (Cho Jung-woo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Julie Turner, the American special envoy on North Korean human rights, urged Beijing to stop repatriating North Korean defectors during her visit to Seoul on Monday. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603074159/https://mailchi.mp/5a9a17cb5a60/hrnk-news-items-a-window-of-opportunity-addressing-the-human-rights-security-nexus-in-north-korea>

Tuesday, October 17, 2023

Satellite Photos Show How Russia Could Be Shipping Arms From North Korea

In South Korea:

[S. Korea kicks off annual defense forum with space and cybersecurity talks](#) (Yonhap, 10/17/2023)

[South Korea unveils 'supersonic' answer to Pyongyang nuclear threat](#) (RFA, 10/16/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[K-pop star says North Koreans confessed they were her fans at Pyongyang concert](#) (NK News, 10/17/2023)

International:

[Ex-U.S. ambassador calls for strengthening nuke deterrence for S. Korea amid N. Korean threats](#) (Yonhap, 10/17/2023)

[Kremlin rejects allegations that N Korea is supplying arms to Russia](#) (Reuters, 10/17/2023)

[N. Korea appears to be linked to Hamas in arms trade, other military areas: JCS](#) (Yonhap, 10/17/2023)

[N. Korea sends delegation to Russia sports forum](#) (Yonhap, 10/17/2023)

[N. Korea vows 'overwhelming' response over U.S. deployment of strategic assets](#) (Yonhap, 10/17/2023)

[North Korea accuses US of stoking tension with 'nuclear supremacy'](#) (Reuters, 10/17/2023)

[Satellite Photos Show How Russia Could Be Shipping Arms From North Korea](#) (New York Times, 10/17/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S., Japan install trilateral communication hotline amid N. Korea, China challenges](#) (Yonhap, 10/17/2023)

[S. Korean diplomat discusses N.K. human rights with U.S. envoy](#) (Yonhap, 10/17/2023)

['Some of them will be sent to ... camps,' some 'may be executed'](#) (RFA, 10/17/2023)

[Top nuclear envoys of S. Korea, U.S., Japan to hold talks over suspected N.K.-Russia arms transfer](#) (Yonhap, 10/17/2023)

[US envoy calls alleged North Korea, Russia weapons delivery dangerous](#) (Reuters, 10/17/2023)

[U.S. envoy hopes to work with S. Korea on efforts to hold N.K. human rights abusers accountable](#) (Yonhap, 10/17/2023)

In South Korea:

- South Korea's defense ministry opened an annual international defense forum in Seoul on Tuesday for talks on promoting peace and cooperation against regional and global security challenges. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- With Kim Jong Un escalating nuclear threats from the North, South Korea has found a cost-effective solution: its homegrown fighter jets. The country unveiled its first domestically-produced supersonic fighter jet, the KF-21, also known as the Boramae, to the public at the Seoul Airbase on Tuesday. The KF-21 could boost the allies' deterrence capability against the likes of North Korea. (Lee Jeong-ho, [RFA](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Koreans secretly told K-pop star Ailee that they were fans of her music during a 2018 performance in Pyongyang, the singer has revealed, despite the DPRK's strict laws on the consumption of South Korean media. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))

International:

- A former U.S. ambassador to South Korea called Monday for the United States to keep strengthening its "extended deterrence" commitment to the Asian ally as he portrayed North Korea's evolving military threats as "far greater" than before. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- The Kremlin said on Tuesday that Western allegations that North Korea was supplying weapons to Russia were not based on evidence, the TASS news agency cited Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov as saying. ([Reuters](#))
- North Korea appears to be linked to the Hamas militant group in the arms trade and other military fields, and could use tactics similar to those used against Israel for a surprise attack on South Korea, a senior official at Seoul's military said Tuesday. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said Tuesday it has sent a delegation of sports officials to attend a forum in the Russian city of Perm in another exchange between the two countries seeking to strengthen military ties. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Tuesday lambasted the recent deployment of strategic assets by the United States to the Korean Peninsula and vowed to counter it with an "overwhelming and decisive response strategy." (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's nuclear programme is a self-defensive move to head off a nuclear war in the face of the U.S. pursuit of "nuclear supremacy," state media KCNA said on Tuesday. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- Satellite photos appear to provide new evidence of cargo ships shuttling between Russia and North Korea in support of an illicit arms trade bolstering Moscow's war in Ukraine, according to an analysis released on Monday. (Lara Jakes, [New York Times](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan established a trilateral communication hotline, a senior Seoul official said Monday, in another sign of progress in their three-way security cooperation amid North Korea's evolving military threats and China's increasing assertiveness. (Song Sang-ho, Kang Byeong-cheol, [Yonhap](#))
- A senior South Korean diplomat has held talks with the new U.S. special envoy for North Korean human rights and agreed to cooperate in launching a consultative body to better address the rights situation in the North, Seoul's foreign ministry said Tuesday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Koreans who have escaped to China need help to avoid being sent back against their will, and pressure on Beijing from South Korea alone is not enough, a former North Korean diplomat told Radio Free Asia. "It is important to send a strong message of international unity to prevent the Chinese authorities from forcibly repatriating [them]," said Thae Yong-ho, who is now a member of the South Korean National Assembly. "It is difficult to stop it with only the demands of the South Korean government." (Park Jaewoo, [RFA](#))

- The top nuclear envoys of South Korea, the United States and Japan were set to meet in Jakarta on Tuesday to discuss joint responses to North Korea's suspected arms delivery to Russia for use in Ukraine. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- Relations between North Korea and Russia were "very worrying," the U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Sung Kim said on Tuesday, after the White House said last week Pyongyang recently provided Russia a shipment of weapons. (Stanley Widiyanto, Hyunsu Yim, [Reuters](#))
- The new U.S. special envoy for North Korean human rights said Tuesday she would like to cooperate with South Korea's unification ministry on holding accountable those responsible for Pyongyang's "egregious" human rights record. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Jody Chen, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603074442/https://mailchi.mp/b94e09130200/hrnk-news-items-a-window-of-opportunity-addressing-the-human-rights-security-nexus-in-north-korea-12237257>

Wednesday, October 18, 2023

China must not forcibly repatriate North Korean escapees: UN experts

Top News:

[China must not forcibly repatriate North Korean escapees: UN experts](#) (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 10/17/2023)

In South Korea:

[A North Korean defector's long journey from prison to the halls of academia](#) (NK News, 10/18/2023)

[Access to N. Korean propaganda accounts on X blocked in S. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 10/18/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Unification minister urges N. Korea to make 'right' choice of returning to dialogue](#) (Yonhap, 10/18/2023)

International:

[Biden's envoy offers dual approach for N Korea human rights uplift](#) (Radio Free Asia, 10/18/2023)

[Experts say Putin likely to visit Pyongyang this year](#) (The Korea Times, 10/18/2023)

[Immediate global efforts needed to curb NK's nuclear ambition: Seoul official](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/18/2023)

[Lavrov visits North amid cooperation concerns](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/18/2023)

[North Korea accused of supplying weapons to Hamas terrorists](#) (The Telegraph, 10/18/2023)

[North Korea ramps up public executions](#) (The Korea Times, 10/18/2023)

[North Korea withdraws from Asia Para Games after flag ban](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/18/2023)

[PM says he raised S. Korea's concern over China's repatriation of N.K. defectors in meeting with Xi](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/18/2023)

[U.S. envoy calls for 'durable solutions' to improve N.K. human rights](#) (Yonhap, 10/18/2023)

Top News:

- China must consider alternative solutions to forcible repatriation of North Korean escapees, UN experts said today, calling on the country to respect the principle of non-refoulement guaranteed under international law. ([Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights](#))

In South Korea:

- Kim Seong-ryeol tells NK News how he escaped the DPRK twice and became the first defector to work as an ROK professor. (Lina Park, [NK News](#))
- Access to two X accounts, presumably run by North Korea for propaganda purposes, have been blocked in South Korea, the respective accounts showed Wednesday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho on Wednesday called on North Korea to make the "right" choice of returning to dialogue amid Pyongyang's provocations, as he reaffirmed Seoul's stance on seeking a principle-based relationship with the North. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- U.S. President Joe Biden's special envoy for North Korea human rights offered what appeared to be a two-prong approach aimed at improving the human rights situation in North Korea, underscoring Washington's firm commitment to use all means necessary in materializing practical change. (Lee Jeong-ho, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- Experts on Moscow-Pyongyang relations told The Korea Times on Tuesday that they believe the chief purpose of Lavrov's visit is to arrange a more significant diplomatic event — Russian President Vladimir Putin's first official visit to the North Korean capital in more than 20 years. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea's vice defense chief called for immediate international cooperation to curb North Korea's nuclear weapon development, emphasizing that insufficient efforts could lead to a catastrophic outcome. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov arrived in North Korea on Wednesday amid concerns about advanced nuclear weapons and satellite technology transfers between Moscow and Pyongyang after evidence emerged of large-scale cargo shipments from North Korea to Russia on a previously unknown shipping route. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea may have supplied artillery, rocket-propelled grenade launchers, and training to Hamas ahead of its attack on Israel, South Korea's military has said. Pyongyang may also deploy similar tactics for a surprise attack on the South, a senior official

from Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff warned in a local media briefing on Tuesday.

" Hamas is believed to be directly or indirectly linked to North Korea in various areas, such as the weapons trade, tactical guidance, and training," the official said on condition of anonymity. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))

- North Korea is witnessing an escalation in terror, as the totalitarian state has increasingly relied on public executions, a move by its dictator Kim Jong-un to strengthen his grip over national governance. (Kim Hyun-bin, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea has withdrawn from the 2023 Asian Para Games in Hangzhou, China after the Asian Paralympic Committee refused to permit the North Korean flag to be flown at the Games due to the country's non-compliance with global anti-doping regulations. (Jim Bulley, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Prime Minister Han Duck-soo said Wednesday that he conveyed Seoul's concerns regarding China's forced repatriation of North Korean defectors to their repressive home country during his meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping last month. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))
- The recent forced repatriation of North Koreans in China is one incident that calls on the need for like-minded countries to discuss "durable solutions" for those seeking to leave the reclusive country, the new U.S. envoy for North Korean human rights said Wednesday. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Alejandro Cassal, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603074703/https://mailchi.mp/4155b6a9e55e/hrnk-news-items-china-must-not-forcibly-repatriate-north-korean-escapees-un-experts>

Thursday, October 19, 2023

The Danger of N. Korean Proliferation to the Middle East; Report of the Special Rapporteur on N. Korean Human Rights

Top News:

[The Danger of North Korean Proliferation to the Middle East](#) (VOA, 10/18/2023)

[Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the DPRK to the General Assembly](#) (OHCHR, 10/12/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Don't forget the pain of the separated families](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/19/2023)

International:

[Evidence shows Hamas militants likely used some North Korean weapons in attack on Israel](#) (AP News, 10/19/2023)

['If we are needed, we will be here'](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 10/19/2023)

[Key N. Korea missile official heading missile bureau: Seoul](#) (*Yonhap*, 10/19/2023)

[Mass deportations of North Koreans cause tragic family separation](#) (*The Korea Times*, 10/19/2023)

[N. Korea's Kim family spends up to millions of dollars per year on luxury goods: Seoul](#)

(*Yonhap*, 10/19/2023)

[N. Korea tries to use artificial intelligence to write malicious software: U.S. official](#) (*Yonhap*, 10/19/2023)

[Russian FM meets N. Korea's Kim, reaffirms solidarity with Pyongyang](#) (*Yonhap*, 10/19/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. update guidance on preventing unwitting hiring of N. Korean IT workers](#) (*Yonhap*, 10/19/2023)

[Sohae Satellite Launching Station: Expansion Continues, No Visible Signs of Launch Preparations](#) (38 North, 10/19/2023)

Top News:

- Amb. Robert Joseph, HRNK Board Member and former Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, warns in an interview with VOA that as North Korea expands its nuclear capabilities, it may proliferate nuclear technology and nuclear weapons to the Middle East. (Eunjung Cho, [VOA](#))
- The present report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Elizabeth Salmón, is submitted pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 77/226. In her report to the General Assembly, she provides an update on the human rights situation and focuses on the impact of the prolonged state of conflict on human rights and the interlinkages between human rights, peace, and security as well as women, peace, and security. (Elizabeth Salmón, [OHCHR](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- It is regrettable that the displaced people cannot visit their hometowns in North Korea even while missing their families and friends. As of the end of August, 74 percent of the applicants for family reunion – or 93,058 out of over 130,000 – have passed away. Fast aging of the separated families is a serious issue because 85 percent of the survivors are in their 80s or older. (Lee Hoon, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- Hamas fighters likely fired North Korean weapons during their Oct. 7 assault on Israel, a militant video and weapons seized by Israel show, despite Pyongyang's denials that it arms the militant group. ([AP News](#))
- The United States Air Force's nuclear-capable B-52 strategic bomber on Tuesday made its first-ever landing at a South Korean air base. The touchdown of the long-range heavy bomber underscores the US' unwavering commitment to the defense of its treaty ally, amid escalating missile and nuclear threats posed by North Korea, according to the US Air Force. (Ji Da-gyum and Joint Press Corps, [The Korea Herald](#))

- A key North Korean official in charge of Pyongyang's missile development has been leading an agency considered to be handling the country's policy of strengthening its nuclear force, South Korea's unification ministry said Thursday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- After escaping North Korea at 14 in the midst of a catastrophic famine in 1998, Kim Cheol-ok settled down in a small town in the northeastern Chinese province of Jilin, where she married a Chinese man and gave birth to a daughter. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and his family are growing less hesitant to show off their luxury goods, often worth up to millions of dollars a year, to a population largely suffering from chronic food shortages, Seoul's unification ministry said Thursday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States has observed North Korea and other countries trying to use artificial intelligence (AI) technology to accelerate writing malicious software as part of their illicit cyber activities, a senior Washington official said Wednesday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has met with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, Moscow's foreign ministry said Thursday, as the top diplomat vowed "complete solidarity" with Pyongyang during his trip to the reclusive country, which came a month after a rare summit between their leaders. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the United States have issued an updated version of the joint guidance for the international community on preventing inadvertent recruitment and facilitation of North Korean information technology (IT) workers, the foreign ministry said Thursday. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- Recent commercial satellite imagery of North Korea's Sohae Satellite Launching Station shows continued construction and expansion activities continue around both the main complex and coastal areas, making progress against the plans directed by Kim Jong Un more than 18 months ago. Since May, North Korea has tried two times to launch a new military reconnaissance satellite into orbit. Although both attempts failed, the rapid succession of launches underscores the urgency Kim has placed on the satellite program and the heightened importance of the Sohae complex. (Martyn Williams, Jack Liu, and Peter Makowsky, [38 North](#))

Prepared by Alejandro Cassal and Annie Heitmeier, HRNK Research Interns

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603075051/https://mailchi.mp/975e3577e334/hrnk-news-items-the-danger-of-n-korean-proliferation-to-the-middle-east-report-of-the-special-rapporteur-on-n-korean-human-rights>

Friday, October 20, 2023

From Bait to Plate - How Forced Labor in China Taints America's Seafood Supply Chain

Top News:

[From Bait to Plate - How Forced Labor in China Taints America's Seafood Supply Chain](#) (CECC, 10/24/2023)

In North Korea:

[NK leader vows to build 'forward-looking' ties with Russia in talks with FM](#) (Yonhap, 10/20/2023)

[N. Korea warns U.S. strategic assets will be '1st targets of destruction'](#) (Yonhap, 10/20/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea, U.S. defense chiefs discuss deterrence against N. K. threats in phone talks](#) (Yonhap, 10/20/2023)

International:

[Defense chiefs of S. Korea, Mongolia hold talks in Seoul](#) (Yonhap, 10/20/2023)

[Imports of food and hair for wigs drive 4-year high in North Korea-China trade](#) (NK News, 10/20/2023)

[North Korean hackers exploit vulnerability in software development app: Report](#) (NK News, 10/20/2023)

[North's Kim reaffirms ties with Russia envoy](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/20/2023)

[U.N. General Assembly head hopes no tension-escalating measures follow N.K.-Russia talks](#) (Yonhap, 10/20/2023)

[US soldier who fled to North Korea charged with desertion, soliciting child porn](#) (NK News, 10/20/2023)

[U.S. to take 'whatever steps' it can to address the arms transfers between N. Korea, Russia: State Department](#) (Yonhap, 10/20/2023)

Top News:

- HRNK Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu has been invited to testify at this hearing, where he will address the role of North Korea's officially dispatched overseas workers in China's seafood processing industry. ([CECC](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has vowed to build a "forward-looking" relationship with Russia during his meeting with its foreign minister, state media said Friday, as the two countries move to strengthen military ties amid speculation over their suspected arms deal. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Friday condemned the arrival of a U.S. B-52 bomber in South Korea, threatening that U.S. strategic assets deployed on the Korean Peninsula will become the "first targets of destruction." (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea's new defense minister held phone talks with his U.S. counterpart for the first time Friday to discuss the allies' efforts to deter North Korea's nuclear and missile threats, Seoul's defense ministry said. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The defense ministers of South Korea and Mongolia held talks in Seoul on Friday on ways to step up security and arms industry cooperation, Seoul's defense ministry said. The talks between Defense Minister Shin Won-sik and his Mongolian counterpart, Saikhanbayar Gursed, took place amid Seoul's efforts to bolster regional cooperation against North Korea's nuclear and missile threats. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea imported more sanctioned goods, food and hair for wig production from China in September, NK Pro analysis of custom data shows, as bilateral trade jumped to a nearly four-year high last month. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korean cybercriminals have exploited a vulnerability in an application for managing software development, in a possible attempt to compromise software while it's still being developed and target new victims, according to security researchers. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un said North Korea and Russia should deliver on their summit agreement in September and usher in a new, future-looking era for the next 100 years, at a meeting with the Russian foreign minister in Pyongyang on Thursday. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The president of the U.N. General Assembly on Friday voiced hopes "no policy measures" threatening the security of the Korean Peninsula come out of Pyongyang's recent talks on military cooperation with Russia. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- U.S. soldier Travis King, who fled to North Korea in July and was released last month, has been charged with soliciting child pornography, desertion and six other violations of U.S. military law, according to charging documents seen by NK News. (Ifang Bremer, Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The United States will take "whatever steps" it can to hold to account those involved in arms transfers between North Korean and Russia, the State Department said Thursday, stressing it will "closely" monitor related developments. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Debby Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603075402/https://mailchi.mp/705e6b07a411/hrnk-news-items-from-bait-to-plate-how-forced-labor-in-china-taints-americas-seafood-supply-chain>

Saturday, October 21, 2023

North Korea is Pouring Money into Nuclear Weapons and Missiles amidst Food Shortages

Top News:

[North Korea is Pouring Money into Nuclear Weapons and Missiles amidst Food Shortages](#) (VOA, 10/04/2023)

In North Korea:

[New Satellite Could Provide Internet Access to North Korea...Someday](#) (38 North, 10/20/2023)

In South Korea:

[Top general inspects Hoguk military exercise at mechanized unit](#) (Yonhap, 10/20/2023)

International:

[Families of possible Japanese abductees by N.Korea call for early return](#) (NHK, 10/21/2023)

[North Korea condemns US for supplying long-range missiles to Ukraine](#) (Reuters, 10/20/2023)

[Retiring USFK officer cherishes memories from truce village separating two Koreas](#) (Yonhap, 10/21/2023)

[Russia Dismisses US Claims of North Korea Supplying Munitions to Moscow](#) (VOA, 10/20/2023)

[U.S. envoy renews grave concerns over China's repatriation of N. Korean escapees](#) (Yonhap, 10/21/2023)

[US Envoy Urges New Strategies to Get Information into N. Korea](#) (KBS World, 10/21/2023)

Top News:

- Greg Scarlatou, the Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, who participated in the dialogue, pointed out that the nuclear and missile programs are the most critical tools for the North Korean regime to maintain its power. He also highlighted that human rights is the regime's biggest vulnerability. Therefore, when conveying information to North Koreans, it will be effective to share stories about human rights, the corruption of the North Korean leadership, and information about the outside world—especially South Korea. (The story begins at 9:55 in the linked video.) ([VOA](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea's attempts to block foreign information from the country could soon face their most significant challenge to date. After years of combating the smuggling in of information via USBs, SD cards and other portable data delivery devices, as well as jamming of radio and satellite signals throughout the country, a new type of telecommunications satellite may offer a way to break through the information blockade. (Martyn Williams, [38 North](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's top general visited a mechanized unit Friday to check its readiness and participation in an ongoing military exercise, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- A group of relatives of missing Japanese people who may have been abducted by North Korea has renewed its appeal for the early return of their loved ones as well as public support. ([NHK](#))
- North Korea on Saturday condemned the United States for supplying Ukraine with long-range ballistic missiles known as ATACMS, saying any strike on Russia with them will only hamper peace efforts. (Cynthia Kim, [Reuters](#))
- The truce village of Panmunjom is the last remaining Cold War frontier inside the heavily-guarded demilitarized zone (DMZ) separating the two Koreas, but to Kim Young-gyu, the longest-serving public affairs officer at the United States Forces Korea (USFK), it is a place full of personal memories. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- Russia's top diplomat shrugged off U.S. claims that North Korea transferred munitions to Russia, saying Washington had failed to prove the allegation. ([VOA](#))
- The new U.S. envoy for North Korean human rights issues reiterated "grave" concerns Friday over China's reported repatriation of North Korean defectors last week, as she stressed the international principle of non-refoulement should be upheld. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- The new U.S. envoy for North Korean human rights has underscored the need to develop new strategies to facilitate information flow into North Korea. ([KBS World](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603075641/https://mailchi.mp/8859589d6695/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-is-pouring-money-into-nuclear-weapons-and-missiles-amidst-food-shortages>

Sunday, October 22, 2023

S. Korea, US, Japan stage first-ever aerial exercise in face of NK threats

In South Korea:

[Sense of crisis grips Yoon as approval rating falls to 6-month low](#) (The Korea Times, 10/22/2023)

International:

[S. Korea pledges support for Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, peace in Middle East](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/22/2023)

[S. Korea, US, Japan stage first-ever aerial exercise in face of NK threats](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/22/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. stage joint anti-submarine drills near Guam](#) (Yonhap, 10/22/2023)
[South Korea says holds first joint air drill with Japan and US](#) (Reuters, 10/22/2023)
[South Korea, US, Japan Hold 1st Trilateral Aerial Drill amid North Korea Threats](#) (VOA, 10/22/2023)
[Yoon aims to diversify bilateral cooperation with Saudi visit](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/22/2023)
[Yoon says S. Korea will help realize Saudi Vision 2030: interview](#) (The Korea Times, 10/22/2023)

In South Korea:

- President Yoon Suk Yeol's approval rating fell to a six-month low, raising alarms over his ability to handle state affairs. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))

International:

- Leaders of South Korea and Saudi Arabia discussed strengthening economic ties by expanding Seoul's involvement in Riyadh's "Vision 2030" plan and to contribute to peace in the region amid the Israel-Palestine conflict. (Shin Ji-hye, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan joined forces for an unprecedented aerial exercise south of the Korean Peninsula on Sunday, with the goal of bolstering their collective response capabilities against escalating missile and nuclear threats from North Korea. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The navies of South Korea and the United States have conducted a weekslong anti-submarine exercise in waters off the coast of Guam, the South's Navy said Sunday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea, together with Japan and the United States, held a joint aerial exercise near the Korean peninsula on Sunday, the South Korean military said, marking the first such collaboration between the three countries. ([Reuters](#))
- The South Korean, U.S. and Japanese militaries conducted their first-ever trilateral aerial exercise Sunday in response to evolving North Korean nuclear threats, South Korea's air force said. ([VOA](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol said his state visit to Saudi Arabia will expand cooperation between the two countries beyond construction and infrastructure to sectors such as energy, investment and culture. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol has said the country will help realize Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 for economic diversification by sharing its know-how and experience in economic development and using the capabilities and skills of its businesses, according to an interview published Sunday. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603080014/https://mailchi.mp/5b5023715800/hrnk-news-items-s-korea-us-japan-sta-ge-first-ever-aerial-exercise-in-face-of-nk-threats>

Monday, October 23, 2023

US, ROK, Japan hold first joint aerial drill despite North Korean warnings

In South Korea:

[Rights watchdog urges main opposition party to designate board members for launch of N. Korean Human Rights Foundation](#) (Yonhap, 10/23/2023)

[Rights groups warn of forced repatriation of N.K. defectors from China to N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 10/23/2023)

[S. Korea vows to bolster defense system against N. Korean missile threat](#) (Yonhap, 10/23/2023)

International:

[Family appeals to UN to stop repatriation of North Korean woman in China](#) (NK News, 10/23/2023)

[Major Russian container port tied to alleged North Korea weapons trade: Imagery](#) (NK News, 10/23/2023)

[N. Korea blames U.S. for instigating Israel-Hamas conflict](#) (Yonhap, 10/23/2023)

[N Korea calls for condemnation of US over Israel conflict](#) (RFA, 10/22/2023)

[Unification minister meets U.S. civic group head to discuss N.K. human rights](#) (Yonhap, 10/23/2023)

[US, ROK, Japan hold first joint aerial drill despite North Korean warnings](#) (NK News, 10/23/2023)

[US-Japan-South Korea Drill a 'New Era' for Defense Ties](#) (VOA, 10/23/2023)

In South Korea:

- South Korea's human rights watchdog called Monday for the speedy designation of board members from the main opposition Democratic Party (DP) to facilitate the launch of a foundation aimed at conducting research to enhance North Korean human rights. (Kim Hyun-soo, [Yonhap](#))
- Human rights advocacy groups in South Korea warned Monday against Beijing's possible repatriation of North Korean defectors against their will after hundreds of defectors were reportedly sent back to their repressive home country earlier this month. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean military will beef up its defense capabilities against North Korea's evolving nuclear and missile threat and asymmetric warfare tactics, the Army said Monday. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The aunt of a North Korean woman reportedly in a Chinese detention center has filed an urgent appeal to a U.N. working group to prevent her repatriation to the DPRK. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- A Russian cargo ship alleged to be part of a weapons trade scheme with North Korea appeared to pick up cargo at one of the largest container ports in the Russian Far East between trips to the DPRK this month, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery. (Anton Sokolin, Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

- North Korea on Monday accused the United States of being behind the ongoing war between Israel and the Palestinian militant group Hamas, saying Washington is "entirely" responsible for the tragedy. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho met with the leader of a U.S.-based civic group Monday to discuss ways of boosting cooperation on the improvement of human rights in North Korea, his office said. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea blamed the Israel-Palestine conflict on the United States, increasing its efforts to solidify an anti-American "united front." (Lee Jeong-Ho, [RFA](#))
- The U.S., South Korea and Japan conducted their first-ever joint aerial drill near the Korean Peninsula on Sunday, with an American nuclear bomber joining the exercise aimed at reinforcing their ability to counter North Korea. (Jeongmin Kim, Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))
- The United States, South Korea, and Japan held their first ever combined aerial exercise Sunday in an effort to send a tough message to North Korea. (William Gallo, [VOA](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603080609/https://mailchi.mp/aae2452a0823/hrnk-news-items-us-rok-japan-hold-first-joint-aerial-drill-despite-north-korean-warnings>

Tuesday, October 24, 2023

How the UN Could Help Address China's Forced Repatriation of North Koreans

Top News:

[How the UN could help address China's forced repatriation of North Koreans](#) (NK News, 10/23/2023)
[Why some North Korean defectors don't want exemption from ROK military service](#) (NK News, 10/23/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korean farmers pressured to repay debts early](#) (RFA, 10/23/2023)

In South Korea:

[Marine chief says suspended live-fire drills on border islands need to be resumed](#) (Yonhap, 10/24/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Inter-Korean military pact compromised border island defense, ROK minister says](#) (NK News, 10/24/2023)
[Several North Koreans in ROK custody after crossing sea border by boat: Seoul](#) (NK News, 10/24/2023)

[40 North Korean defectors reached South Korea in third quarter: Seoul](#) (NK News, 10/24/2023)

International:

[Defense chief, U.S. envoy discuss joint efforts to deter N. Korean threats](#) (Yonhap, 10/24/2023)

[EU preparing U.N. draft resolution on N.K. human rights](#) (Yonhap, 10/24/2023)

[North Korea's Covert Alliance With Iran Aligned Militias in the Middle East \(38 North, 10/23/2023\)](#)

[S. Korea, U.S. discuss trade issues including chip export controls](#) (Yonhap, 10/24/2023)

[Subconventional Stability on the Korean Peninsula: Lessons From South Asia](#) (38 North, 10/24/2023)

[Yoon, Saudi leader pledge cooperation in joint statement](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/24/2023)

Top News:

- Over the past two decades, China has forcibly repatriated tens of thousands of North Korean refugees, who then face brutal punishment at the hands of DPRK authorities. But while U.N. General Assembly resolutions have repeatedly expressed "very serious concern" about "the expulsion or return" of these "refugees and asylum seekers" to the DPRK, they make no reference to China by name. (Roberta Cohen, [NK News](#))
- Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, noted that a downside of excluding defectors from mandatory military service is that it can contribute to their "isolation, discrimination and ostracization...Over the long run, [enlisting defectors] will help former North Koreans better integrate into South Korean society, as difficult as military service may be." (Lina Park, [NK News](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean propaganda showing plentiful harvests this year is putting pressure on farmers to repay debts they incurred during the planting season, but residents told Radio Free Asia that most of the harvest hasn't been processed, meaning they are not yet able to pay. (Son Hyemin, [RFA](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's Marine chief said Tuesday live-fire drills on border islands in the Yellow Sea need to be resumed to enhance military vigilance against North Korean provocations, as they have been suspended following the 2018 inter-Korean military agreement. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The two Koreas' 2018 military agreement has limited live-fire training needed to defend border islands against North Korean armed aggression, South Korea's defense minister said during a visit to Yeonpyeong Island on Monday. (Jeongmin Kim and Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))
- Several presumed North Korean escapees are in South Korean custody after they entered waters off the east coast in a small wooden boat on Tuesday, according to Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The individuals are currently under investigation by relevant South Korean authorities, JCS said. (Jeongmin Kim and Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))

- Forty North Korean defectors arrived in South Korea between July and September this year, according to unification ministry data, bringing the total number of arrivals in the first three quarters of 2023 to 139. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

International:

- Defense Minister Shin Won-sik met with U.S. Ambassador to South Korea Philip Goldberg on Tuesday for talks on regional security and joint efforts to deter North Korea's military threats, Seoul's defense ministry said. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- The European Union is working on a draft resolution on North Korea's human rights to be submitted to a United Nations committee, its delegation to South Korea said Tuesday, amid growing concerns over China's forced repatriation of North Korean defectors. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Since Hamas carried out its deadly terrorist attacks against Israel on October 7, there has been intense scrutiny of the Palestinian militant group's use of North Korean military technology. North Korea's state Korea Central News Agency (KCNA) [called allegations](#) that it armed Hamas "a groundless and false rumor" and accused the US of fomenting this conspiracy to deflect from its own complicity in the Gaza War. (Samuel Ramani, [38 North](#))
- South Korea's industry ministry said Tuesday it has discussed pending bilateral trade issues with the United States, including Washington's latest export controls on chip equipment. (Kang Yoon-seung, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's advancing nuclear threats continue to command significant attention from South Korean and US policymakers and analysts. In its search for conventional and nuclear escalation options to reduce subconventional instability, Seoul can learn from how a similar quest has played out in the India-Pakistan rivalry. (Frank O'Donnell, [38 North](#))
- Korea and Saudi Arabia pledged to deepen their cooperation across energy, manufacturing, construction and defense sectors as President Yoon Suk Yeol's visit to Riyadh came to a close on Monday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Ryan Beane, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603080721/https://mailchi.mp/70d235b3ef68/hrnk-news-items-how-the-un-could-help-address-chinas-forced-repatriation-of-north-koreans>

Wednesday, October 25, 2023

Hamas is Using North Korean Weapons Against Israel

Top News:

[Hamas Is Using North Korean Weapons Against Israel](#) (19FortyFive, 10/24/23)

[U.S. NGO Raises Concerns about Possible Use of Political Prisoners for Forced Labor at North Korea's Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Site](#) (VOA Korea, 10/18/23)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[4 N. Koreans cross eastern sea border in apparent defection bid](#) (Yonhap, 10/24/23)

[Gov't urged to prepare for rise in N. Korean defections by sea](#) (The Korea Times, 10/25/23)

[Number of NK defectors entering S. Korea more than triples in Jan.-Sept. period](#) (The Korea Times, 10/24/23)

International:

[N. Korea to close its embassy in Uganda: report](#) (Yonhap, 10/25/23)

[North's artillery shells fueling Russia's war in Ukraine](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/25/23)

[S. Korea is done with 'strategic ambiguity,' ex-envoy says](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/25/23)

[US lawmaker urges action over import of seafood processed by North Koreans](#) (NK News, 10/25/23)

Top News:

- What capabilities has North Korea actually contributed to Hamas? According to a source within the South Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff, "some of the multiple rocket launchers found near the Israel border that Hamas militants reportedly used had 'Bang-122' written in Korean." (Bruce E. Bechtol Jr., [19FortyFive](#))
- A U.S. NGO revealed that North Korea may have mobilized a large number of political prisoners for the construction and maintenance of the Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Site. The ROK's Ambassador for International Cooperation on North Korean Human Rights stressed that security and human rights issues are directly connected. (Kim Young-gwon, [VOA Korea](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- A group of four unidentified individuals from North Korea crossed the eastern maritime inter-Korean border on a wooden boat early Tuesday, officials said, in an apparent attempt to defect to South Korea. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean government should brace for an increasing number of North Korean defectors in the coming months, as the latest East Sea border crossing, made by four North Koreans, indicates the deteriorating living conditions and chronic food shortages occurring in the reclusive regime, analysts said Wednesday. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))
- After escaping the North, 139 North Koreans reached the South in the January-September period, sharply up from 42 from the same period of last year, according to Seoul's unification ministry. In the third quarter, 40 defectors — three men and 37 women — came to the South. ([The Korea Times](#))

International:

- North Korea plans to close its embassy in Uganda as part of efforts to raise the operating efficiency of the country's organizations abroad, a Ugandan media report has said. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- Increased ammunition supplies from North Korea, coupled with Russia's domestic production of artillery shells, will "likely allow Russian forces to sustain sufficient rates of artillery fire in Ukraine" next year, according to an analysis by the Washington-based Institute of the Study of War (ISW). (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Heightening threats from North Korea to use its nuclear weapons against South Korea make a clear case for the South to stick closer to the US and its nuclear umbrella, according to South Korea's former ambassador to the US. "Given the current geopolitical landscape, we can no longer tolerate the kind of ambiguity seen in the previous government. No, that's not doable," said Ahn Ho-young. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- In a hearing conducted by the Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) on Tuesday, Republican Chris Smith strongly criticized China-based companies for exploiting "the forced labor of Uyghurs and North Koreans to process substantial quantities of seafood destined for the U.S. market." (Lina Park, [NK News](#))

U.S. NGO Raises Concerns about Possible Use of Political Prisoners for Forced Labor at North Korea's Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Site

Kim Young-gwon,

VOA Korea

October 18, 2023

A U.S. NGO revealed that North Korea may have mobilized a large number of political prisoners for the construction and maintenance of the Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Site. The ROK's Ambassador for International Cooperation on North Korean Human Rights stressed that security and human rights issues are directly connected.

Reporter Kim Young-gwon has the story.

In a new satellite imagery analysis released on October 17, HRNK, an NGO based in Washington D.C., raised the possibility that the Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Site and the notorious political prison camp Kwan-li-so no. 16 (Hwasong) may be closely related. Satellite images taken last year clearly show that the two facilities, which are both tightly controlled and located in mountainous terrain, are connected by a switchback road. The report states that an approximately 5.2km-long road connects Testing Tunnel no. 1 at Punggye-ri and the perimeter of Camp 16, and points out that this road has been observed consistently in satellite imagery since 2005. The report provides evidence to support the claim that prisoners at Camp 16 may have been mobilized for the construction and maintenance of the Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Site. On a virtual presentation held that day, Jacob Bogle, a co-author of the report and a satellite imagery analyst, stated: "The first explanation, of course, is that the road may be used to transport prisoners from Camp 16 to the nuclear test facility for forced labor purposes...The road was laid out and purposely cut into the mountainside and it's capable of carrying vehicle traffic like open back cargo trucks which are commonly seen in North Korea and are often used to transport people." He concluded that as North Korea lacks modern mining equipment and relies heavily on manual labor, it is likely the construction of the testing tunnels at Punggye-ri would have required enormous amounts of manual labor, in addition to heavy equipment. The report notes that the North Korean authorities could have plausibly mobilized political prisoners, whom

they have absolute control over, considering the number of prisoners at Camp 16 (previously estimated at more than 20,000) and the sensitivity of constructing a nuclear test site. In particular, the report states that “the regime would also not have had any qualms about exposing political prisoners to the serious health and safety risks associated with constructing or maintaining a nuclear testing facility, as it regards political prisoners as ‘poisonous grass’ that must be rooted out.” HRNK stated that caution must be taken, however, as there is no conclusive evidence—such as first-hand testimony—to prove the relationship between the two facilities. Nevertheless, it emphasized that the switchback road illustrates the nexus between human rights and security issues in North Korea. During her remarks, Amb. Lee Shin-wha, the ROK Ambassador for International Cooperation on North Korean Human Rights, pointed out that security and human rights issues are connected like two sides of a coin and that satellite imagery illustrates the importance of this connection. She said that “the utilization of such imagery reveals a spectrum of issues ranging from security threats like nuclear testing to severe human rights violations such as political prison camps.” Ambassador Lee also referred to reports from a South Korean NGO, which claimed that North Korea had closed Kwan-li-so no. 15 (Yodok), which is well known to the international community. This NGO added that North Korea had transferred tens of thousands of political prisoners to Camp 16, with some arguing that the camp has a total prisoner population of up to 100,000 as a result. According to the analysis of satellite imagery from sources such as HRNK and Amnesty International, Camp 16 encompasses an area of 560 square kilometers (216 square miles), which is similar to the size of Hamhung in North Korea. The facility is known to be the largest prison camp in North Korea. It is almost two times larger than the Gaza Strip, which has an area of 360 square kilometers and is the center of the ongoing conflict between Hamas and Israel. Ambassador Lee emphasized that prison camps like Camp 16 are still not well known to the international community and compared the situation to Nazi Germany’s massacre of Jews during World War II, calling it a “hidden Holocaust.” She said: “Remember the Holocaust where the Nazis killed so many people in gas chambers for a short period of time. So the international community recognized that as a crime against humanity of Holocaust. But this crime of slowly killing many people in North Korea, I think it is also a very serious crime against humanity.” She also stressed the importance of the international community strengthening its efforts to keep an eye on this issue by various means, including the collection of satellite imagery. North Korea has consistently denied the existence of political prison camps, however. In its report, HRNK called upon the international community to closely monitor and assess the purpose of the road linking Punggye-ri and Camp 16. HRNK also called upon North Korea to permit international inspection of both facilities and rejoin the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It also stated that the United States, along with like-minded countries, must now adopt a “human rights up front” approach in their policy toward North Korea. This is Kim Young-gwon, reporting for VOA News.

Translated by Jiwoo (Katie) Choi, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Gabrielle Drinkwine, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

Thursday, October 26, 2023

China's human rights: US must improve seafood supply chain monitoring to spot Chinese violations, panel told

Top News:

[China's human rights: US must improve seafood supply chain monitoring to spot Chinese violations, panel told](#) (South China Morning Post, 10/25/2023)

[Experts: Americans are eating fish processed by slaves](#) (RFA, 10/24/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea blames Israel over Gaza hospital blast](#) (Yonhap, 10/26/2023)

[N. Korea to close its embassy in Uganda: report](#) (Yonhap, 10/25/2023)

[N Korea claims Israel bombed Gaza hospital under US 'patronage'](#) (RFA, 10/26/2023)

[North Korea to raise tourism prices, move to dollar payments: Tour company](#) (NK News, 10/26/2023)

[North Korea says Israel bombed Gaza hospital, calls US 'accomplice'](#) (Reuters, 10/26/2023)

[North Korean hackers mimic e-commerce app to steal South Koreans' data: NIS](#) (NK News, 10/26/2023)

In South Korea:

[No imminent sign of N. Korea's spy satellite launch: unification ministry](#) (Yonhap, 10/26/2023)

International:

[Russia says it will build close ties with North Korea 'in all areas'](#) (Reuters, 10/26/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S., Japan issue joint statement condemning N. Korea's arms transfers to Russia](#) (Yonhap, 10/26/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S., Japan jointly condemn N. Korea's arms transfers to Russia](#) (Yonhap, 10/26/2023)

[S. Korea, US, Japan condemn N. Korea arms supplies to Russia](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/26/2023)

[South Korea, U.S., Japan condemn North for supplying arms to Russia](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/26/2023)

[South Korea, US and Japan condemn North Korea's alleged supply of munitions to Russia](#) (AP News, 10/26/2023)

[US, ROK and Japan condemn North Korean arms sales to Russia in joint statement](#) (NK News, 10/26/2023)

[US-ROK forces hold drill on 'neutralizing' North Korean attack on border islands](#) (NK News, 10/26/2023)

Top News:

- Greg Scarlatoiu, director of the Washington-based Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, described the conditions North Korean workers faced in Chinese seafood-processing plants as "inhumane". (Bochen Han, [South China Morning Post](#))
- The use of North Koreans to process seafood destined for the United States is a long-running issue, according to Greg Scarlatoiu, executive director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea. (Alex Willemyns, [RFA](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea on Thursday accused Israel of conducting a deadly explosion at a hospital in the Gaza Strip and lambasted the United States over its "undisguised patronage" of such an act. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea plans to close its embassy in Uganda as part of efforts to raise the operating efficiency of the country's organizations abroad, a Ugandan media report has said. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's foreign ministry accused Israel of bombing a hospital in the Gaza Strip, claiming it had openly committed a war crime "under the undisguised patronage of the United States." (Kang Taejun, [RFA](#))
- North Korea could soon increase the cost of visiting the country by changing the currency it uses for tourism payments to the U.S. dollar, according to a company specializing in tours to the DPRK. (Chad O'Carroll, Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's foreign ministry accused Israel of bombing a hospital in the Gaza Strip on Oct 17., saying it had openly committed a war crime "under the undisguised patronage of the United States". ([Reuters](#))
- North Korean cybercriminals are attempting to steal South Koreans' personal information by spoofing a widely used e-commerce app, Seoul's intelligence agency announced Thursday. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's unification ministry said Thursday there is no imminent sign of North Korea launching a military spy satellite, despite its earlier pledge to make a third attempt in October. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Russia said on Thursday that it planned to build close ties with North Korea in all areas, a day after South Korea, Japan and the United States condemned what they said were weapons supplies from Pyongyang to Moscow. ([Reuters](#))

- South Korea, the United States and Japan issued a joint statement condemning North Korea's provision of military equipment and munitions to Russia, saying they have confirmed some of such weapons deliveries. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan issued a joint statement Thursday condemning North Korea's provision of military equipment and munitions to Russia, saying they have confirmed some of such weapons deliveries. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- The top diplomats of South Korea, the US and Japan strongly condemned the supply of military equipment and munitions by North Korea to Russia, confirming some of the deliveries in a joint statement Thursday. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan condemned North Korea for providing arms to Russia to aid its invasion of Ukraine. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea, the U.S. and Japan strongly condemned what they call North Korea's supply of munitions and military equipment to Russia, saying Thursday that such weapons shipments sharply increase the human toll of Russia's war in Ukraine. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- The U.S., South Korea and Japan slammed North Korea on Thursday for transferring arms to Russia to aid its ongoing invasion of Ukraine, weeks after Washington released new evidence of alleged military transactions between Pyongyang and Moscow. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- The U.S. and South Korea are conducting joint military exercises on "neutralizing" North Korean operations against border islands in the Yellow Sea, the ROK navy announced on Thursday. (Jeongmin Kim, Lina Park, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603081106/https://mailchi.mp/4cebd2b475b5/hrnk-news-items-chinas-human-rights-us-must-improve-seafood-supply-chain-monitoring-to-spot-chinese-violations-panel-told>

Friday, October 27, 2023

The Outlaw Ocean Project Testimony at the Congressional-Executive Commission on China

Top News:

[The Outlaw Ocean Project Testimony at the Congressional-Executive Commission on China](#) (CECC, 10/25/2023)

In South Korea:

[Is there feasible way to tackle South Korea's shrinking military manpower?](#) (The Korea Times, 10/27/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Defense chief says N. Korea keeps violating 2018 military agreement near maritime buffer zone](#) (Yonhap, 10/27/2023)

[North Korean boat defection sparks debate about gaps in ROK maritime security](#) (NK News, 10/27/2023)

[North Korean hackers tricking users with 'copycat apps' disguised as South Korean: NIS](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/27/2023)

[Unification minister says N.K. leader's daughter could be successor](#) (Yonhap, 10/27/2023)

International:

[Arrival of N. Korean arms in Russia 'almost certain': British defense ministry](#) (Yonhap, 10/27/2023)

[Increasing NK-Russia arms shipments spark international condemnation](#) (The Korea Times, 10/27/2023)

[Number of North Koreans entering Russia surges in first half of 2023: Data](#) (NK News, 10/27/2023)

[S. Korea warned Russia it will not sit idly by if Moscow hands over missile technology to N. Korea: FM](#) (Yonhap, 10/27/2023)

[US, ROK hold drills on combating North Korea's ' Hamas-like ' artillery threats](#) (NK News, 10/27/2023)

Top News:

- On October 24, HRNK Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu testified to the Congressional-Executive Commission on China on the subject of North Korean forced labor in the U.S. seafood supply chain. His testimony begins at 35:45. ([CECC](#))

In South Korea:

- Concerns about South Korea's shrinking pool of military conscripts are not new. The demographic cliff caused by the country's plunging birthrate – the lowest among OECD member nations – has long been cited as the main cause of a foreseeable plunge in new recruits by the nation's armed forces. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Defense Minister Shin Won-sik said Friday that North Korea has violated the 2018 inter-Korean military agreement near the western maritime buffer zone on a few thousand occasions, reiterating his call to suspend the accord in order to bolster military readiness. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- The defection of several North Koreans in a wooden boat earlier this week has sparked a controversy over the South Korean military's response, with ROK authorities denying claims that the incident in the East Sea exposed a security gap along the maritime border. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- North Korean hackers are hiding malware in "copycat applications" that look like they are South Korean to steal personal information of users and other sensitive data, the national spy agency said Friday. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))

- South Korea's unification minister said Friday he leaves open the possibility that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's daughter, Ju-ae, could be the country's heir apparent given her public appearances. (Kang Yoon-seung, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Britain's defense ministry has said it is "almost certain" that North Korean munitions have arrived in western Russia for the country's use in its war against Ukraine amid persistent speculation over their arms transfers. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The suspected arms shipments from North Korea to Russia are showing signs of growing, despite the international community's increasing condemnation. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- Hundreds of North Korean nationals entered Russia in the first half of 2023, official statistics show, surging from last year in a development that one expert tied to increasing economic and military cooperation between Moscow and Pyongyang. (Anton Sokolin, Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- South Korea's top diplomat warned Friday that Seoul will retaliate against Russia if Moscow transfers its missile technology to North Korea amid growing concerns over suspected expanding military cooperation between Pyongyang and Moscow. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean army held large-scale military drills with the U.S. this week to enhance readiness against "North Korean ' Hamas-like ' artillery threats," the ROK military announced. (Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603081211/https://mailchi.mp/832e64279a69/hrnk-news-items-the-outlaw-ocean-project-testimony-at-the-congressional-executive-commission-on-china>

Saturday, October 28, 2023

N. Korean FM slams trilateral statement on arms transfer to Russia

In North Korea:

[N. Korea's cybertheft last year estimated at \\$1.7 billion: U.N. panel report](#) (Yonhap, 10/28/2023)

International:

[N. Korean FM slams trilateral statement on arms transfer to Russia](#) (Yonhap, 10/28/2023)

[North Korean foreign minister defends Russia arms sales against 'groundless criticism'](#) (Fox News, 10/28/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea's state-sponsored hackers were responsible for cryptocurrency theft worth nearly \$1.7 billion last year, the U.N. Panel of Experts on U.N. Security Council (UNSC) sanctions against Pyongyang said Friday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korea's top diplomat on Saturday criticized a trilateral statement released by Seoul, Washington and Tokyo earlier this week condemning the reclusive regime's arms transfer to Russia, calling it a "groundless criticism and defamation." (Kang Yoon-seung, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's top diplomatic official defended the hermit nation from international criticism for covertly selling weapons to Russia following weeks of bilateral meetings. (Timothy H.J. Nerozzi, [Fox News](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603081319/https://mailchi.mp/d5983bd6bd2c/hrnk-news-items-n-korean-fm-slams-trilateral-statement-on-arms-transfer-to-russia>

Sunday, October 29, 2023

S. Korean patrol ship spots N.K. vessel stranded near eastern maritime border: JCS

In South Korea:

[Vice Adm. Kim Myung-soo named chair of Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff](#) (*The Korea Herald*, 10/29/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korean patrol ship spots N.K. vessel stranded near eastern maritime border: JCS](#) (*Yonhap*, 10/29/2023)

[S. Korea play N. Korea to draw in women's Olympic football qualifying match](#) (*Yonhap*, 10/29/2023)

International:

[Former aid worker reflects on operating in authoritarian countries](#) (*The Korea Times*, 10/29/2023)

In South Korea:

- In a surprising move that underscores the growing importance of naval defense, Naval Operations Commander Vice Adm. Kim Myung-soo has been named the new chairperson of Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Ministry of National Defense announced Sunday. (Lee Jaeun, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- A South Korean patrol ship on Sunday spotted a North Korean vessel stranded near the de-facto inter-Korean sea border in the East Sea and provided humanitarian assistance, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea played North Korea to a goalless draw in their women's Olympic football qualifying match Sunday, staying alive in their bid to qualify for the 2024 Summer Games in Paris. (Yoo Jee-ho, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Christy Gavitt shot about 2,700 photos on 75 rolls of film during her six-month stay in North Korea in 1998 and 1999. She was there with the Private Voluntary Organization Consortium (PVOC), an NGO supervising food-for-work programs all across the isolated nation. (Bereket Alemayehu, [The Korea Times](#))

Prepared by Nathan Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603081600/https://mailchi.mp/08a8e269c51a/hrnk-news-items-s-korean-patrol-ship-spots-nk-vessel-stranded-near-eastern-maritime-border-jcs>

Monday, October 30, 2023

North Korea's link to Hamas attack; U.N. voices opposition against forced repatriation of N. Korean defectors in China

In North Korea:

[Closure of diplomatic buildings highlights North Korea's dire financial troubles](#) (*The Korea Times*, 10/30/2023)

[N. Korean vessel stranded near eastern maritime border rescued by N.K. authorities: JCS](#) (*Yonhap*, 10/30/2023)

[North Korea's link to Hamas attack](#) (CNN, 10/30/2023)

[North Korea's next satellite launch unlikely to make deadline](#) (*The Korea Times*, 10/30/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea reiterates stance against forced repatriation of N. Korean defectors in China](#) (Yonhap, 10/30/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Seoul slams N. Korea's money laundering, vows efforts to ban inflow of 'black money'](#) (Yonhap, 10/30/2023)

International:

[Declining Chinese border town eyes North Korean workers for economic revival](#) (NK News, 10/30/2023)

[N. Korea closes its embassy in Angola after its diplomatic mission shutdown in Uganda](#) (Yonhap, 10/30/2023)

[100 U.S. nuclear weapons should be committed to supporting S. Korea's security against N.K. threats: report](#) (Yonhap, 10/30/2023)

[U.N. voices opposition against forced repatriation of N. Korean defectors in China](#) (Yonhap, 10/30/2023)

[US needs 'strategic clarity' on North Korea deterrence: report](#) (The Korea Herald, 10/30/2023)

[US, ROK hold 'defensive' air drills with Australia featuring over 130 aircraft](#) (NK News, 10/30/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea appears to be paring back its operations regarding diplomatic missions. Only several days after announcing that it will shut its embassy in Uganda, Pyongyang is now moving to close its consulate in Hong Kong, according to the Yomiuri Shimbun, a Japanese daily. Given the significant roles the diplomatic offices served for decades, such as obtaining foreign currency and gathering intelligence, the decision to close them suggests a deep financial crisis for the regime, experts told The Korea Times on Sunday. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- A North Korean vessel stranded near the de facto inter-Korean maritime border in the East Sea was towed away by North Korean authorities several hours after it was spotted by the South Korean military, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said Monday. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- Pyongyang is known for being transactional and has long been willing to sell weapons to anyone who would pay. Its arms proliferation in the Middle East is well documented. A senior official with the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Seoul says they have evidence of North Korea exporting RPGs and potentially other weapons either directly or indirectly to Hamas; but the cooperation also likely extends to tactical doctrine and training. CNN's Paula Hancocks has the details. ([CNN](#))
- After failing to put a reconnaissance satellite into space two months ago for the second time this year, North Korea immediately vowed to give it a third try by the end of October. But analysts and government officials said on Monday that North Korea will likely miss its own deadline, amid speculation that its collaboration with the Kremlin may be the reason for the delay after Russian President Vladimir Putin declared his open support for the effort last month. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's vice defense minister has renewed Seoul's opposition against forced repatriation of North Korean defectors in China, the latest in a series of diplomatic pressure being put on Beijing to address the issue. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea's unification ministry handling inter-Korean affairs said Monday that it will cooperate with the international community to put a brake on Pyongyang's evolving money laundering schemes. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- A small Chinese town in economic decline is looking to laborers from across the border in North Korea to work at a new industrial park and boost the local economy, according to NK Pro analysis, setting the stage for potential large-scale U.N. sanctions violations. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's ambassador to Angola has paid a "farewell" courtesy call to the leader of the African country, Pyongyang's state media reported Monday, in the latest in the North's move to close a number of its diplomatic missions in Africa. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the United States should modernize around 100 U.S. tactical nuclear weapons to support the security of the South against North Korea's growing threats, a research report said Monday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.N. deputy high commissioner for human rights called on countries Monday to uphold the principle of non-refoulement in thinly veiled diplomatic pressure on China not to repatriate North Korean defectors to their communist homeland. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States should reconsider its policy of strategic ambiguity and shift toward one of strategic clarity in response to North Korea's escalating nuclear threats, one South Korean think tank said in a joint report with a US think tank in a press briefing Monday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The U.S. and South Korea will hold joint air force drills with Australia this week in what one expert described as regular training to defend against North Korean threats. The air forces of the U.S., ROK and Australia kicked off the "combined flying training event" called Vigilant Defense 24 on Monday, according to the U.S. military and the joint exercises are scheduled to run through Nov. 3. (Alannah Hill, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603081705/https://mailchi.mp/51bd9650b3ce/hrnk-news-items-north-koreas-link-to-amas-attack-un-voices-opposition-against-forced-repatriation-of-n-korean-defectors-in-china>

Tuesday, October 31, 2023

The Yoon Administration Must Stand Up for the Freedom of Hong Kong; Japan court rules North Korea responsible for luring people

Top News:

[The Yoon Administration Must Stand Up for the Freedom of Hong Kong](#) (Hankook Ilbo, 10/11/2023)

*This op-ed has been translated from Korean. Please see the full text of the translation at the bottom of this email.

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un orders military food reserves restored 'at all costs'](#) (Radio Free Asia, 10/30/2023)

[N. Korea calls for attaining annual fisheries output goal](#) (Yonhap, 10/31/2023)

In South Korea:

[Pyongyang's shutdown of overseas embassies sign of sluggish economy: unification ministry](#) (Yonhap, 10/31/2023)

[S. Korean military says hard to prejudge timing of N. Korea's spy satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 10/31/2023)

[S. Korea's top nuclear envoy discusses N. Korea with U.S. think tank officials](#) (Yonhap, 10/31/2023)

International:

[Hard-up North closes embassies in Africa as sanctions sting](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/30/2023)

['I can't lose her too': Family fears for loved one forcibly sent to North Korea](#) (NK News, 10/31/2023)

[Japan court rules North Korea responsible for luring people with false promises](#) (NK News, 10/31/2023)

[Satellite photos suggest shipments increasing between North, Russia](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 10/31/2023)

[U.S., Chinese diplomats hold video talks on N. Korea-Russia military cooperation, defector repatriation](#) (Yonhap, 10/30/2023)

[U.S. stresses opposition to any arms provision to Hamas amid claimed use of N. Korean weapons](#) (Yonhap, 10/31/2023)

[US Raises North Korea's 'Destabilizing' Acts in Talks With China](#) (Bloomberg, 10/30/2023)

[Victims lured to North Korea by lies welcome Japan court's ruling against regime](#) (The Korea Times, 10/31/2023)

Top News:

- In an op-ed in the Hankook Ilbo, Amb. Lee Jung-Hoon, HRNK Board member and Dean of Yonsei University's Graduate School of Int'l Studies, calls upon the Yoon Suk-yeol administration to support the cause of freedom and human rights for the people of Hong Kong. ([Hankook Ilbo](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has ordered the country's Civil Defense Department and the military to prioritize the replenishment of military food reserves "at all costs by the end of November," several local sources told Radio Free Asia. North Korea released much of its rice reserves to keep people from starving during the pandemic. (Moon Sung Hui, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- North Korea has called for efforts to meet its annual fisheries output goal, state media said Tuesday, as Pyongyang seeks to increase its grain and seafood production amid chronic food shortages. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- North Korea's recent move to close its diplomatic missions in Angola and Uganda is an apparent sign of its faltering economy worsened by global sanctions, the unification ministry said Tuesday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's military said Tuesday it is difficult to prejudge the timing of North Korea's next launch of a military spy satellite as Pyongyang's proclaimed launch period is nearing its end. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's top nuclear envoy met with a delegation from a U.S. foreign policy think tank Tuesday to discuss North Korea's military cooperation with Russia and other North Korean issues, the foreign ministry said. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korea's ambassador to Angola delivered his farewell greetings to the country's leader, Pyongyang's state media reported Monday, formally drawing the curtain on the North's diplomatic presence in a second African country. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Kim Cheol-ok was repatriated after 25 years in China. Now her family is looking for answers about her fate. (Ifang Bremer, Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))
- The Tokyo High Court ruled on Monday that the North Korean government is accountable for the human rights abuses suffered by ethnic Koreans lured from Japan to the DPRK under the "Paradise on Earth" campaign, according to a lawyer for the plaintiffs. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- Frequent ship movements captured by satellite photos of a port in North Korea this past month suggest an increase in shipments from the North to Russia that the U.S. government says contain weapons deliveries. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The U.S. special representative for North Korea held video talks with his Chinese counterpart Monday to discuss military cooperation between the North and Russia, China's reported repatriation of North Korean escapees and other issues, the State Department said. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States opposes any country supplying Hamas with anything that the militant group can use for "terrorist activities," the State Department said Monday, amid a report that

Hamas has been using North Korean weapons in its war against Israel. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

- The US special representative for North Korea and his Chinese counterpart held talks over Washington's concerns that Pyongyang is supplying arms to Russia and Beijing may be forcibly returning North Koreans in its territory. (Jon Herskovitz, [Bloomberg](#))
- Victims, who were lured into North Korea by its false promises of a "paradise on Earth," have welcomed the Japanese high court's ruling against the regime and a pro-North Korean group. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

The Yoon Administration Must Stand Up for the Freedom of Hong Kong

Lee Jung-Hoon, Dean of Yonsei University's Graduate School of International Studies
October 11, 2023

It has been over 1,000 days since Jimmy Lai, a Hong Kong media giant and a prominent pro-democracy figure, was detained on charges of violating the National Security Law (Hong Kong National Security Law). The core provisions of this law allow for the maximum penalty of life imprisonment for four offenses: secession, subversion, terrorism, and collusion with foreign forces. There is growing international concern that Lai, who is 75 years old, may end up spending the rest of his life behind bars.

Jimmy Lai, who built his career in the clothing industry by founding Giordano, created the widely-read newspaper *Apple Daily* in 1995, emerging as a meteoric figure in Hong Kong's media industry. Lai, who had been highly critical of the Tiananmen Square massacre, consistently voiced opposition in *Apple Daily* to China's tightening grip on Hong Kong. He also participated in the protests against the National Security Law in July 2020. In [an interview with the BBC](#) shortly after the law was enacted, he did not hide his concerns, saying that the law "spells the death knell for Hong Kong."

Lai also warned that "without the rule of law, people who do business here will have no protection," and that Hong Kong "will be plagued by corruption." His warning proved prescient. *Apple Daily*, which had become a target because of its pro-democracy stance, could not withstand the pressure of search and seizure warrants, arrests, asset freezes, and other forms of coercion. It ultimately shut down its operations in 2021, ending its 26-year history, just one year after the implementation of the National Security Law.

When it was handed back to China in 1997, there were concerns about how well Hong Kong, as a symbol of capitalism, would adapt to the rule of the Chinese Communist Party. However, few expected the situation to deteriorate to this extent. At the time, the Chinese government had promised residents of Hong Kong that it would respect their civil liberties for at least 50 years under the arrangement of "One Country, Two Systems."

However, in August 2017, on the 20th anniversary of the handover, a spokesperson for China's Foreign Ministry declared that "The Hong Kong handover agreement is now history," indicating that

the promise of “One Country, Two Systems” had become virtually meaningless. Subsequently, with the introduction of the National Security Law, the crackdown on pro-democracy groups intensified, leading to the dissolution of numerous media outlets and civic organizations, including *Apple Daily*.

Once known as the “Pearl of the Orient,” Hong Kong was a beacon of vibrant capitalism, symbolized by its towering skyscrapers, shopping malls, and culinary delights. Moreover, having developed a strong sense of civic consciousness during 156 years of British rule, it had the distinction of being the most visited city in the world. The fact that Hong Kong is being dismantled by China’s heavy-handed rule is a cause of great concern and sorrow for many.

We cannot remain bystanders. Firstly, it is critical to raise and maintain international awareness of the gravity of the situation in Hong Kong, so that pro-democracy figures like Jimmy Lai and Martin Lee—also known as the “father of Hong Kong’s democracy”—are not forgotten. It is also necessary to seize the opportunity of Hong Kong’s application for membership in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). Hong Kong has already submitted its application and is currently in close consultation with existing member states to expedite its membership. During this process, RCEP member countries, including South Korea, could consider making strict compliance with the Hong Kong handover agreement a prerequisite for entry. This could be effective because China views Hong Kong’s RCEP membership as a means to circumvent U.S.-led export restrictions on advanced semiconductor equipment.

We hope that the Yoon Seok-yeol administration, which has stressed values-based diplomacy, can play a role befitting a “global pivotal state” in support of the Hong Kong citizens who are fighting to rekindle the fading flames of freedom and human rights.

Translation by Nathan (Ingyu) Choe, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Jiwoo Katie Choi, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240603081910/https://mailchi.mp/95d9b78e7e18/hrnk-news-items-the-yoon-administrati-on-must-stand-up-for-the-freedom-of-hong-kong-japan-court-rules-north-korea-responsible-for-luring-people>

11. NOVEMBER

Wednesday, November 1, 2023

N. Korean Embassy Closures Continue; Blinken to Visit S. Korea

In North Korea:

[Rubella eradicated in N. Korea with mass vaccinations: WHO](#) (Yonhap, 11/01/2023)

In South Korea:

[Military failed to detect defectors' boat, but will hand out awards anyway](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/01/2023)

[Military to award units, soldiers over N.K. boat detection despite lingering criticism](#) (Yonhap, 11/01/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[JCS chairman nominee says 2018 inter-Korean military agreement poses limitations](#) (Yonhap, 11/01/2023)

International:

[Blinken to visit South Korea; North Korea, Russia on agenda](#) (Reuters, 11/01/2023)

[FM Park, Blinken to meet in Seoul next week](#) (The Korea Herald, 11/01/2023)

[Impact of N. Korea-Russia cooperation likely to be limited but should not be overlooked: experts](#) (Yonhap, 11/01/2023)

[Kim Jong-un orders support for Palestine in wake of Israel-Hamas war: NIS](#) (The Korea Herald, 11/01/2023)

[Kremlin fears excessive support for Pyongyang may backfire](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/01/2023)

[N. Korea closes embassy in Spain following shutdown of missions in Africa](#) (Yonhap, 11/01/2023)

[N Korea has shipped 1 million shells to Russia: S Korea intel](#) (Radio Free Asia, 11/01/2023)

[North Korean embassy closures continue, this time in Spain](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/01/2023)

[North preparing to support Hamas and launch satellite, spy agency says](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/01/2023)

In North Korea:

- The World Health Organization (WHO) has said the rubella virus has been wiped out in North Korea on the back of large-scale vaccinations for children and young women. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- Despite military authorities' initial failure to detect a North Korean wooden boat as it crossed the Northern Limit Line (NLL) in the East Sea last week, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS)

decided to award units and soldiers who later identified and tracked the vessel. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- The South Korean military said Wednesday it will grant awards to units and soldiers behind an operation to detect and track a North Korean boat near the eastern maritime border last week, despite lingering criticism over the military's security lapses. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The nominee to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said Wednesday the 2018 inter-Korean military tension reduction agreement poses limitations to the South Korean military, vowing to bolster the combined posture to fend off growing North Korean threats. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken will visit South Korea on Nov. 8 and 9 to discuss North Korea and alliance issues with Foreign Minister Park Jin, South Korea's foreign ministry said on Wednesday. (Jack Kim, [Reuters](#))
- Foreign Minister Park Jin will discuss North Korea's nuclear threats and other key issues with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken during the US diplomat's two-day trip to South Korea, which starts Nov. 8, according to the Foreign Ministry in Seoul on Wednesday. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korea and Russia's move to strengthen their military ties following the rare summit between their leaders may benefit the two isolated countries in the short term but is unlikely to have a lasting or fundamental impact on the economic and political front, experts said Wednesday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's Kim Jong-un is mobilizing support for Palestine in the wake of Israel's war with Palestinian-Islamist militant group Hamas, according to South Korea's spy agency. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Pyongyang's partnership with the Kremlin is painted as having no limits these days. North Korea's media constantly talks about their relations expanding in almost all areas from diplomacy to sports, sending worrying signals that the regime may gain access to advanced Russian weapons. (Jung Min-ho, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea has permanently closed its embassy in Madrid, a document showed Wednesday, the latest in a series of the reclusive regime's moves to shut down several diplomatic missions due apparently to economic difficulties worsened by global sanctions. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has sent more than one million artillery shells to Russia since early August, and is also likely helping Pyongyang with technology for its next attempted satellite launch, South Korea's spy agency said Wednesday. (Lee Jeong-Ho, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- North Korea is set to close its embassy in Spain due to difficulties arising from international sanctions, marking the third closure made public since last week. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has ordered “comprehensive support for Palestine,” South Korea’s spy agency told lawmakers at a closed-door audit on Wednesday. (Lee Ho-jeong and Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240625133206/https://mailchi.mp/3843664efc09/hrnk-news-items-1101-2023>

Thursday, November 2, 2023

Talking North Korean Human Rights in Washington, D.C.

Top News:

[Talking North Korean Human Rights in Washington, D.C.](#) (UniKorea blog, 10/18/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean and edited for clarity. Please see the full text at the bottom of this email.

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un ordered officials to help Palestine. South Korean spy agency says](#) (NK News, 11/02/2023)

[N. Korea appears to have resumed regular flights to Beijing](#) (Yonhap, 11/02/2023)

[North imports record amount of wine and whiskey, despite sanctions](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/02/2023)

In South Korea:

[Family members of S. Korean detainees in N. Korea recognized as victims of abduction](#) (Yonhap, 11/02/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea could stage provocations to divert domestic attention: defense chief](#) (Yonhap, 11/02/2023)

[Pregnant woman among 4 N. Koreans who crossed maritime border](#) (Yonhap, 11/02/2023)

[Seoul calls for restart of inter-Korean hotlines after North Korean boat rescue](#) (NK News, 11/02/2023)

[S. Korea urges Pyongyang to resume regular contact via inter-Korean liaison line](#) (Yonhap, 11/02/2023)

International:

[Chinese company sold purported North Korean seafood at popular market: UN report](#) (NK News, 11/02/2023)

[North Korea has likely sent missiles as well as ammunition and shells to Russia, Seoul says](#) (AP News, 11/02/2023)

[North Korean buyer purchased helicopter from Russia in 2019: US court documents](#) (NK News, 11/02/2023)

[North Korean ex-diplomat: embassy closures show closer ties with Russia, China](#) (UPI, 11/02/2023)

[S. Korean military says N. Korea might have provided Russia with short-range ballistic missiles](#) (Yonhap, 11/02/2023)

[Xi says 'willing to make bigger contributions' in letter to N.K. leader](#) (Yonhap, 11/02/2023)

Top News:

- In this interview with a student reporter for the Ministry of Unification, HRNK Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu discusses North Korean human rights, the role of the international community, and unification on the Korean Peninsula. (Park Yeon-kyeong, [UniKorea blog](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has instructed officials to “comprehensively aid Palestine” amid the war between Hamas and Israel, South Korea’s intelligence agency told lawmakers on Wednesday. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's national carrier appears to have resumed regular flights connecting Pyongyang and Beijing, a website showed Thursday, as the reclusive regime reopened its border following more than three years of border lockdown. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has imported record quantities of wine and whiskey since loosening restrictions on cross-border rail freight in the past year, according to Chinese customs records. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- The unification ministry said Thursday it has decided to recognize family members of long-term South Korean detainees in North Korea as victims of abductions by the isolated country. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea's defense minister called Thursday for heightened military readiness to brace for any possible North Korean provocation meant to divert domestic attention from the nation's food crisis. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- A pregnant woman in her 20s was among the four North Koreans who crossed the eastern maritime inter-Korean border on a wooden boat last month in an attempt to defect to the South, a government source said Thursday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- Seoul's unification ministry emphasized the need to restart inter-Korean hotlines on Thursday, following South Korea's recent rescue of a DPRK boat on the northern side of the maritime border. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

- South Korea's unification ministry on Thursday called on Pyongyang to respond to daily routine calls through an inter-Korean liaison communication channel. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- A Chinese company has sold seafood labeled as from North Korea at a popular market near the two countries' border, according to information in a new U.N. report, though Beijing denied that the vendor violated sanctions banning the import of such products. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has likely supplied several types of missiles to Russia to support its war in Ukraine, along with its widely reported shipments of ammunition and shells, South Korea's military said Thursday. (Hyung-Jin Kim, Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))
- A North Korean buyer purchased a helicopter from a Russian vendor in March 2019, according to U.S. court documents cited in a new U.N. report, cargo that would have likely breached multiple international sanctions if delivered. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korea is increasingly tying its economic and political future to Moscow and Beijing, a high-profile defector said Thursday, amid a spate of embassy closures that may have been sparked by tightened international sanctions against Pyongyang. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- North Korea might have provided Russia with short-range ballistic missiles and portable anti-aircraft missiles in addition to artillery rounds for its war in Ukraine, a senior South Korean military official said Thursday. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- Chinese President Xi Jinping told North Korean leader Kim Jong-un that he is "willing to make bigger contributions" to "defend the region's peace, stability, development and prosperity," Pyongyang's state media said Thursday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

Talking North Korean Human Rights in Washington, D.C.

Park Yeon-kyeong

*This article was written by a student reporter for the Ministry of Unification. The content of this article does not necessarily reflect the views of the Ministry of Unification.

Promoting human rights in North Korea has been a persistent challenge for the international community and one of the Yoon Suk-yeol administration's priorities. I recently interviewed Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, in Washington, D.C. He has been actively engaged in addressing the human rights situation in North Korea through activities in the United States and South Korea.

Why North Korean Human Rights?

When I tell my friends or mentors that I work on North Korean human rights issues, they often ask me this question.

Indeed, there are many human rights issues around the world that need to be addressed. Children in some countries cannot go to school, and countless people are suffering from war. But why are we so vocal about North Korean human rights, and why is the government focusing on this question? Why should we focus on human rights, and human rights in North Korea in particular?

Scarlatoiu: “Many countries across the world suffer from human rights violations. There are human rights issues in liberal democracies, despite their emphasis on individual freedoms and rights. The difference between liberal democracies, like the United States and South Korea, and authoritarian countries is their willingness and ability to address their imperfections. The only nations that claim to be perfect are dictatorships such as North Korea, Venezuela, China, and Russia.”

“Why is North Korea different? For those of us who work on Korean Peninsula issues, this is a problem that we must address. According to the February 2014 report of the UN Commission of Inquiry, most of the severe human rights violations in North Korea constitute crimes against humanity. Crimes against humanity are an extremely serious problem, which is why North Korean human rights is receiving more attention in the international community. These crimes are committed pursuant to policies established at the highest levels of the North Korean regime.”

What Should Be Done?

There are several ways to address human rights issues in North Korea. One is to send outside information into North Korea. The regime has forbidden the North Korean people from exchanging information with the outside world, so they do not know what is happening in the rest of the world, including in neighboring South Korea. Because of this, some people send in USBs with South Korean dramas and movies, and others fly leaflet balloons across the border. A high proportion of North Korean escapees who have resettled here say that they were exposed to South Korean media in this way. Is it enough to inform the North Korean people and hope for improvement in human rights in North Korea?

Mr. Scarlatoiu, who has given serious thought to these issues, said that we need to tell three stories to the North Korean people.

Scarlatoiu: “We have to tell North Korea three stories. The first is the corruption of the Kim family, their leader, and the core of the North Korean regime. The second is the story of their human rights. As UN member state, North Korea must abide by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. North Korea’s constitution stipulates wonderful freedoms, such as the freedom of expression and freedom of religion, but each and every human right is violated. The North Korean people need to know

about their human rights. Third, North Korea must be exposed to what is happening in the outside world. The North Korean people need to learn about liberal democracies like the Republic of Korea, which has the 11th largest economy in the world.”

“Are we doing enough? Not at all. The information delivery mechanisms we have are outdated and incomplete, as they are based on Cold War era-models. We need to improve. Balloons and micro-SD cards are essential. The means [to send information to North Korea] are very limited. Are the balloons effective? Absolutely, because it is one of the few means we have at our disposal. In addition, 80% of North Korean soldiers are stationed south of the Pyongyang-Wonsan line, where the balloons land. This is why the North Korean regime reacts strongly to the balloons.”

The Need for International Cooperation

Human rights in North Korea is a Korean issue that must be addressed by Koreans, but we also need to work with the international community. On August 17, the UN Security Council held a meeting on North Korean human rights. Also, the United States and Japan have enacted their own North Korean Human Rights Act. However, despite years of continued efforts, there has been no noticeable progress in improving North Korean human rights. And many other issues that need to be addressed across the world. There are concerns that the international community may be growing weary of addressing North Korean human rights. In response, Mr. Scarlatoiu shared his perspective on how human rights is addressed by the international community.

Scarlatoiu: “It is crucial to address North Korean human rights at the UN Security Council. This meeting was the first one in six years since December 2017. Human rights in North Korea have been sacrificed for more than 30 years since the Cold War for negotiations on North Korea's nuclear weapons and missiles. This is a mistake. We didn't achieve anything. It is meaningless to keep doing this, and we will find ourselves having the same discussion in 30 years. It is crucial that human rights are given the utmost importance. This must be placed at the top of the agenda. Human rights violations are why we fear a North Korea that is armed with nuclear weapons.”

“According to one organization, North Korea will possess approximately 200 nuclear weapons by 2027. In just four years, North Korea will have as many nuclear weapons as Britain and France. Now combine this with crimes against humanity. This is a deadly combination. Human rights is not a nuisance. It is central to the North Korean regime's policy. It is a means for them to stay in power and finance the development of nuclear weapons and missiles by exploiting their own people at home and abroad.”

“What do we need? We need a strategy. Having a Security Council meeting or a UN Human Rights Council resolution are good tactical steps, but it is not a strategy. What is our fundamental strategic objective when it comes to North Korea? This is a question that must be answered by like-minded UN member states, particularly the United States, South Korea, Japan, and the European Union. We need a strategy, and we need to apply it.”

In addition to the role of the international community, the South Korean government's efforts to improve the human rights issue in North Korea are also essential. The Yoon administration is speaking out about the human rights situation in North Korea, calling upon North Korea to change. In addition, it is crucial to have the South Korean public on board. Then, what are some effective ways to increase awareness of the human rights situation in North Korea?

Scarlatoiu: “South Koreans are very skilled at campaigning. I think South Korea has very high social conductivity...All of this is accomplished using different forms of media. We need a media campaign about North Korean human rights aimed at the South Korean public. Also, textbooks in South Korea rarely teach about North Korean human rights. It is necessary to teach South Korea's youth about North Korean human rights, starting in elementary school.”

How Can We Achieve a Breakthrough?

Two of the biggest issues related to North Korea are the nuclear issue and the human rights issue. The Republic of Korea and the international community are working hard to address these two issues. There is an ongoing debate about whether we should address the two problems simultaneously or focusing on one at a time. The North Korean human rights issue must be addressed to improve the lives of North Koreans and to uphold important values. At the same time, the nuclear issue directly threatens our security. How can the South Korean government effectively address the two issues? Is possible to find a compromise?

Scarlatoiu: “There is no need to compromise. Both issues are very important. When it comes to North Korea's nuclear weapons or missiles, millions of lives are at risk. This is a very important issue. Human rights is also a critical issue. Human rights violations are key to maintaining the North Korean regime. The regime obtains the funds to develop nuclear weapons and missiles by oppressing and exploiting North Koreans at home and abroad.”

“A paradigm shift requires a fundamental change in the way we look at North Korea. The human rights situation in North Korea is unacceptable. The South Korean government, under President

Yoon Seok-yeol, has a clear stance on human rights in North Korea. I think Unification Minister Kim Young-ho also has a great vision. He is quite outspoken on these issues, and some people may disagree with [his views], but we need a paradigm shift. We cannot continue to provide humanitarian assistance unless there is proper monitoring. There needs to be reciprocity. It is important to be open to dialogue, and there needs to be a responsible and principled approach to inter-Korean relations.”

Unification and North Korean Human Rights

Among the numerous issues related to North Korea, we need to think about the relationship between North Korean human rights and unification. Even if we know that the two are related, it is not always possible to explain exactly why. How can improving the human rights situation in North Korea contribute to unification?

Scarlatoiu: “There is a significant disparity between North and South Korea. There are economic, ideological, and even physical differences due to malnutrition in North Korea. Koreans have a shared history, culture, and customs. They have lived under the same system for over 1,000 years before the division. The economic gap can be overcome, but the difference in human rights is a completely different story. If we want a unified Korean Peninsula, if we want a unified Korea, we need unification under a united Republic of Korea. A united Korea would be a strong and prosperous democracy.”

“I was born and raised in communist Romania. People did not understand that they had rights. They had no understanding of civic rights. To build a shared understanding as one people among all citizens, it is essential to improve the human rights situation in North Korea. There is absolutely no doubt about this. Improvement of human rights starts with education. Since the two Koreas are still divided, the immediate priority should be information campaigns. We need to find creative ways to reach the North Korean people. ‘Do you have a constitution? Is there freedom of assembly? Can you express your dissatisfaction? Do you have the right to form a union?’ We need to inform the North Korean people that they are entitled to these rights, which are in North Korea’s constitution and the international treaties that it has ratified. There will be a lot of work to do in the future.”

The problem of North Korean human rights has persisted for decades. There are people in North Korea who don’t know what their rights are. They don’t know that these rights are being violated.

Helping the North Korean people is also the right thing to do for our future. We need to do the best that we can, taking things one step at a time. If previous methods do not seem sufficient, we should not hesitate to make significant changes. This is the way to breathe new life into the North Korean human rights movement.

We must seek to understand North Korea, what is happening there, and the people who live there. This is the first step toward the future. Having a clear understanding and engaging in deliberate efforts can foster a breakthrough in addressing human rights in North Korea. I hope that there will be renewed momentum to promote human rights in North Korea.

Translated by Yubin Jun (HRNK Research Intern); edited by Mohona Ganguly (HRNK Research Intern)

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607065921/https://mailchi.mp/93fb5be1fd23/hrnk-news-items-1101-12237378>

Friday, November 3, 2023

Chinese Embassy Admits Efforts to Block Shen Yun Shows in SK; Japan returns favor again by flying 15 Korean nationals out of Israel

Top News:

[Chinese Embassy Admits Efforts to Block Shen Yun Shows in South Korea](#) (NTD News, 11/01/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea says embassy closures aimed at boosting diplomatic efficiency](#) (Yonhap, 11/03/2023)

[N. Korea slams U.S. support of Israel in conflict against Hamas](#) (Yonhap, 11/03/2023)

[N. Korea slams U.S. test launch of Minuteman III ICBM](#) (Yonhap, 11/03/2023)

[N. Korea vows military action after US missile test](#) (The Korea Herald, 11/03/2023)

[North Korean cyber campaign targets blockchain engineers with new macOS malware](#) (NK News, 11/03/2023)

[Pyeongyang airport expands plane parking amid claims Air Koryo seeks new aircraft](#) (NK News, 11/03/2023)

[Up to 10,000 North Korean IT workers fundraising for regime abroad: Report](#) (NK News, 11/03/2023)

In South Korea:

[South Korea to compensate families of six detainees still held in North Korea](#) (NK News, 11/03/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Defense chief says N. Korea could launch spy satellite in late Nov. with Russian aid](#) (Yonhap, 11/03/2023)

[Gov't at odds over suspending inter-Korean military agreement](#) (The Korea Times, 11/03/2023)

[N. Korea tries to profit from Israel-Hamas war; S. Korea looks for intel blind spots](#) (The Korea Times, 11/03/2023)

International:

[China supported sanctions on North Korea's nuclear program. It's also behind their failure](#) (AP News, 11/03/2023)

[Japan returns favor again by flying 15 Korean nationals out of Israel](#) (The Korea Herald, 11/03/2023)

Top News:

- In an interview with NTD News, HRNK Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu noted that this case "demonstrates Beijing's ability to capitalize on investment ties to exert influence in South Korea." The video of the interview can be viewed [at this link](#), at timestamp 10:17. ([NTD News](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea said Friday its recent move to shut down several diplomatic missions is meant to efficiently rearrange its diplomatic capacity. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Friday accused the United States of engaging in "hideous war crimes that cause the massacre of innocent Arabians" by providing military support to Israel in its ongoing war against the militant group Hamas. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea lambasted the United States on Friday for its recent test of a Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) as it vowed to respond to "reckless" provocations with "prompt, overwhelming and decisive counteraction." (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said Friday that it will carry out efforts to step up its military deterrence and take military action, following a US intercontinental missile test late last month, in a commentary released by the official Korean Central News Agency. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- North Korean cybercriminals targeted blockchain engineers working for a cryptocurrency exchange platform with new macOS malware, posing as fellow engineers on an instant messaging platform, according to a U.S. cybersecurity firm, Elastic Security Labs in a report published Wednesday. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- Work is underway to expand the aircraft parking area at the Pyongyang International Airport passenger terminal, in a possible sign of North Korea's intention to acquire new commercial planes. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

- As many as 10,000 North Korean information technology workers are operating in other countries, earning thousands of dollars a month on average for the DPRK's weapons programs, according to estimates in a new U.N. report. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- The South Korean government will compensate the family members of those abducted by North Korea, the unification ministry announced Thursday, as six ROK citizens remain detained in the DPRK. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Defense Minister Shin Won-sik said Friday that North Korea may have delayed its plan to make a third attempt to launch a spy satellite to fix technological glitches in the third-stage system with Russian assistance. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- Two government ministries are split over the idea of suspending a 2018 inter-Korean military agreement banning hostile activities against each other. The defense ministry has been urging its suspension despite lacking the authority to do so unilaterally, but the unification ministry, which is responsible for this matter, is taking a more cautious approach. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- The Israel-Hamas War has become the subject of analysis, as countries, particularly those facing security threats from their neighbors, study the conflict to bolster asymmetric warfare capabilities to defeat their enemies. South Korea is striving to learn lessons from Israel's intelligence failure and fix blind spots in its defenses in order to detect and foil a possible Hamas-like attack by North Korea. (Kang Hyun-kyung, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- There is a growing mountain of evidence that shows Beijing is helping cash-strapped North Korea evade a broad range of international sanctions designed to hamper Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program, according to an Associated Press review of United Nations reports, court records and interviews with experts. (Alan Suderman, [AP News](#))
- Japan has brought back 15 South Korean nationals and one foreign national family member from Israel to Tokyo on a Japanese military plane, reciprocating for the second time Korea's rescue flight last month that included Japanese nationals. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607083300/https://mailchi.mp/f42ec40e82f1/hrnk-news-items-chinese-embassy-admits-efforts-to-block-shen-yun-shows-in-sk-japan-returns-favor-again-by-flying-15-korean-nationals-out-of-israel>

Saturday, November 4, 2023

N. Korea 'poised to unleash nuke' after Kim Jong-un's secret lair exposed in snaps

Top News:

[North Korea 'poised to unleash nuke' after Kim Jong-Un's secret lair exposed in snaps](#) (Daily Express, 11/03/2023)

In North Korea:

[Is 4G on the Horizon for North Korea?](#) (North Korea Tech, 11/04/2023)

[N. Korea diversifying cybercrimes amid drop in value of cryptocurrency: report](#) (Yonhap, 11/04/2023)

[Road rage: North Koreans forced to pitch in and patch potholes](#) (Radio Free Asia, 11/03/2023)

International:

[North Korea Is Closing Some Diplomatic Missions Abroad](#) (The Diplomat, 11/04/2023)

[North Korean art sells in China despite UN sanctions over nuclear program](#) (AP, 11/03/2023)

[North Korean media urges stronger nuclear force after U.S. missile test](#) (Reuters, 11/03/2023)

[South Korea's Quest to Become a Global Pivotal State](#) (The Diplomat, 11/04/2023)

Top News:

- It's long been rumoured that Hwasong provides slave labour to the test site, but in the mountainous terrain of North Korea, travel between the two required a 100-mile round trip. Now a hidden trail across the mountains has been discovered in satellite imagery, bringing the two locations within walking distance. (Matthew Dooley, [Daily Express](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea could finally be getting a long-overdue upgrade to its 3G cellular network. A report says that the country has begun importing used 4G networking equipment from Huawei and will launch the new network in major cities. (Martyn Williams, [North Korea Tech](#))
- North Korea appears to be diversifying its cybercrimes to offset the declining value of cryptocurrencies it steals to fund its nuclear and missile programs, a report said Saturday. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean authorities are forcing citizens to donate materials and labor to fix potholes and cracks in paved roads, but the people complain that it is unfair to make them sacrifice for maintenance on roads that they will never use. (Ahn Chang Gyu, [Radio Free Asia](#))

International:

- North Korea confirmed Friday that it's closing some of its diplomatic missions abroad, a move that rival South Korea suspects is likely the latest sign of the North's economic troubles amid persistent international sanctions. (Hyung-jin Kim, [The Diplomat](#))

- For sale at a recent Beijing art exposition was a painting with an asking price of \$2,460 that depicted the snow-capped Mount Paektu, the mythical birthplace of the Korean people. (Dake Kang, [AP](#))
- North Korea will increase its military deterrent to ensure its security against a U.S. nuclear arsenal aimed at it, its state media reported on Friday, as it criticised the United States for a recent intercontinental ballistic missile test. (Hyunsu Yim, [Reuters](#))
- Restoring relationships, especially with countries in the Indo-Pacific region, is a crucial element in achieving Yoon's vision of a global pivotal state. (Kuyoun Chung, [The Diplomat](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607093532/https://mailchi.mp/97e07ee42e95/hrnk-news-items-chinese-embassy-admits-efforts-to-block-shen-yun-shows-in-sk-japan-returns-favor-again-by-flying-15-korean-nationals-out-of-israel-122>

Sunday, November 5, 2023

N. Korea warns of nuclear capabilities as S. Korea, US, Japan up military cooperation

In North Korea:

[N. Korea designates 'missile industry day' for test-launch of ICBM](#) (Yonhap, 11/05/2023)

[N. Korea diversifying cybercrimes amid drop in value of cryptocurrency: report](#) (Yonhap, 11/04/2023)

[N. Korea steps up criticism against military cooperation among S. Korea, U.S., Japan](#) (Yonhap, 11/05/2023)

[N. Korea warns of nuclear capabilities as S. Korea, US, Japan up military cooperation](#) (The Korea Times, 11/05/23)

[North designates Nov. 18 as 'Missile Industry Day'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/05/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Two Koreas race to launch first homegrown military spy satellites](#) (The Korea Herald, 11/05/23)

[Unification ministry plans to hold talks with U.N. Command to resume Panmunjom tour](#) (Yonhap, 11/05/23)

[Unification Ministry to propose resumption of civilian tours to JSA](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/05/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has designated a "missile industry day" to mark a test-firing of its Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in 2022, the North's state media reported Sunday. ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korea appears to be diversifying its cybercrimes to offset the declining value of cryptocurrencies it steals to fund its nuclear and missile programs, a report said Saturday. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Sunday said military cooperation between South Korea, the United States and Japan has entered a "very dangerous stage" that could drive the Korean Peninsula into the brink of a nuclear war. (Woo Jae-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea criticized the ongoing military cooperation among South Korea, the United States and Japan on Sunday, issuing a warning that the situation could potentially lead to a nuclear war on the Korean Peninsula. (Kim Hyun-bin, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea has designated Nov. 18 as "Missile Industry Day" to commemorate the successful test launch of the regime's Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in 2022, Pyongyang's state media said Sunday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- In a high-stakes race, South and North Korea are vying for success in launching their first homegrown military spy satellites, backed respectively by the United States and Russia, as a pivotal initiative aimed at enhancing their military capabilities. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea's unification ministry plans to hold talks with the U.N. Command to resume a tour program for the inter-Korean truce village of Panmunjom, according to a ministry official on Sunday. ([Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's Unification Ministry plans to propose resuming civilian tours of the Joint Security Area (JSA) to the United Nations Command (UNC), according to a ministry official Sunday. Civilian tours to the area, which is jointly patrolled by guards from the UNC and the North Korean military, have been suspended since U.S. Pvt. 2nd Class Travis King ran across the border at the JSA on July 18 while on a group tour. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Mohona Ganguly, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607094421/https://mailchi.mp/440a891879b4/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-warns-of-nuclear-capabilities-as-s-korea-us-japan-up-military-cooperation>

Monday, November 6, 2023

N. Korea claims it achieved world's strongest nuclear force

In North Korea:

[N. Korea claims it achieved world's strongest nuclear force](#) (Yonhap, 11/06/2023)

[NK's new holiday meant to enhance image of Kim's daughter: expert](#) (The Korea Times, 11/06/2023)

['Son of the army': North Korea holds up infant as future soldier for Kim Jong Un](#) (NK News, 11/07/2023)

In South Korea:

[South Korea plans to launch first military reconnaissance satellite this month](#) (UPI, 11/06/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[JCS keeps close tabs on N. Korea's possible provocations around ICBM launch anniv.](#) (Yonhap, 11/06/2023)

[S. Korea deplores N. Korea's designation of 'missile industry day'](#) (Yonhap, 11/06/2023)

[S. Korea sees signs of N. Korea receiving technical support from Russia over spy satellite](#) (Yonhap, 11/06/2023)

International:

[Expert says North likely to ramp up production of munitions after Russia shipments](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/06/2023)

[How North Korea recruited overseas Koreans to kidnap Japanese citizens](#) (NK News, 11/06/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has successfully built the world's strongest nuclear force under the guidance of its leader Kim Jong-un, state media reported Monday, as the secretive regime has been bolstering the development of its nuclear and missile programs. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- Nov. 18 has been designated as a new holiday in North Korea to celebrate the anniversary of the successful test launch of its Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in 2022. But the regime may have an ulterior motive for making the move, according to an analyst on Monday. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- TV program profiles boy delivered by army medics during pandemic, in propaganda campaign to shore up support for regime. (Lina Park & Seung-Yeung Chung, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea will send its first military reconnaissance satellite into orbit on Nov. 30, defense officials confirmed on Monday, amid reports that North Korea is moving ahead with plans for a third attempt at launching its own spy satellite. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said Monday it has been closely monitoring the possibility of North Korea making a third attempt to launch a spy satellite later this month in light of Pyongyang's designating an anniversary marking a test-firing of a Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

- The unification ministry on Monday deplored North Korea's designation of a "missile industry day" to mark its successful launch of a Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in November last year. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea appears to have been receiving technical assistance from Russia over the launch of a military spy satellite, and there is a "very high" chance for the North to press ahead with it once the country completes fixing technical glitches, South Korea's unification minister said Monday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korea is likely to ramp up production of munitions after shipping thousands of containers full of suspected artillery ammunition and weapons to Russia, according to an expert interviewed by the JoongAng Ilbo. (Chung Yeong-Gyo & Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The families of Japanese citizens abducted by North Korea during the 1970s and 1980s lost an opportunity to see a suspect in a kidnapping brought to justice last week, as news broke of the death of a former DPRK agent wanted for his involvement in an abduction 43 years ago. (James Fretwell, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Alejandro Cassal, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607094951/https://mailchi.mp/11314cd0bd52/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-claims-it-achieved-worlds-strongest-nuclear-force>

Tuesday, November 7, 2023

U.S. envoy vows to make clear 'inextricable' link between N. Korea's human rights abuses, threats

In North Korea:

[North Korea promotes Pyongyang arts festival with foreign performers next spring](#) (NK News, 11/07/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea in talks with U.N. Command over resumption of Panmunjom tour](#) (Yonhap, 11/07/2023)

[S. Korea to continue to support suspended inter-Korean dictionary project: minister](#) (Yonhap, 11/07/2023)

International:

[China denies North Korean banker laundered cryptocurrency within its borders](#) (NK News, 11/07/2023)

[South Korea to open 10 new embassies across the globe](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/07/2023)

[Unification minister calls on China to enable N. Korean defectors to decide country of choice](#) (Yonhap, 11/07/2023)

[U.S. envoy vows to make clear 'inextricable' link between N. Korea's human rights abuses, threats](#) (Yonhap, 11/07/2023)

[U.S. expert voices concern over N.K.'s cooperation with Russia, abandonment of decades long effort to normalize ties with U.S.](#) (Yonhap, 11/07/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has started to promote an arts festival featuring international participants for next spring in Pyongyang, a move that one expert said raises the possibility of a wider reopening to tourism around the event. The 33rd biennial April Spring Friendship Art Festival will be held from April 11-25 and will include “famous artists of authoritative art, acrobatic and dance troupes... promoting friendship, unity exchanges and cooperation among men of culture and artistes from different countries of the world,” according to the DPRK Ministry of Culture’s website. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea's unification ministry said Tuesday it is in talks with the United Nations Command (UNC) over the resumption of a tour program for the truce village of Panmunjom on the inter-Korean border. The tour program for ordinary people has been suspended since mid-July after U.S. Army private Travis King crossed the border into North Korea during a tour to the Joint Security Area in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating the two Koreas. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's point man on North Korea said Tuesday that Seoul will continue to support a long-suspended project to compile a unified Korean-language dictionary with Pyongyang despite frosty inter-Korean ties. The two Koreas have held 25 rounds of meetings with scholars since 2005, when they launched the project to publish a common Korean-language dictionary. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- China has denied allegations that a sanctioned North Korean bank representative received and laundered millions of dollars in virtual currency within its borders, according to a new U.N. report. The U.N. Panel of Experts said in its latest report that Sim Hyon Sop, a China-based representative of the sanctioned Korea Kwangson Banking Corporation (KKBC), allegedly received over \$24 million worth of laundered digital assets, citing a member state. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The South Korean Foreign Ministry plans to open embassies in 10 countries in Europe, Africa, South America and the Pacific by the second half of next year, the ministry

announced Tuesday. The latest announcement from the South Korean government is in stark contrast to North Korea, which has been closing down several of its embassies, including ones in Uganda, Angola and Spain. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- South Korea's Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho renewed calls Monday for China to help North Korean defectors move to a country of their choice and ensure their human rights are protected based on the "international norm." (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- The new U.S. envoy for North Korean human rights issues pledged efforts Monday to shine a light on the "inextricable" connection between Pyongyang's rights abuses and its security threats. Ambassador Julie Turner made the remarks at a forum, underscoring that the "repressive political climate" in the North allows the recalcitrant regime to divert a large share of public resources to its weapons development programs. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has made concerning "strategic" changes in the regime's decadeslong effort of seeking normalization with the United States, turning to Russia and China for cooperation instead, an American expert said Tuesday. Siegfried Hecker, an emeritus professor at Stanford University known for his direct experience with Pyongyang's nuclear program, made the remarks during a press conference prior to his lecture at Ewha Womans University in Seoul, stressing that the recent link-up of Russia and North Korea is "really serious and significant." (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gabrielle Drinkwine, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607095108/https://mailchi.mp/7f5258b4c485/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-claims-it-achieved-worlds-strongest-nuclear-force-12237471>

Sunday, November 8, 2023

North Korea Threatens to Respond to Opponents' Propaganda Leaflets With 'Shower of Shells'

In North Korea:

['In North Korea, nobody knows Harvard, but almost everyone knows Oxford'](#) (*The Korea Times*, 11/08/2023)

[N. Korea poised to have 'eye in the sky' to observe S. Korea](#) (*The Korea Times*, 11/08/2023)

[N. Korea to field multiple candidates to pick deputies for local assemblies](#) (*Yonhap*, 11/08/2023)

In South Korea:

[32 pct of S. Koreans say unification with N. Korea unnecessary: poll](#) (*Yonhap*, 11/08/2023)

[S. Korea to continue to support suspended inter-Korean dictionary project: minister](#) (Yonhap, 11/07/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[How the Koreans' Race to Launch a Spy Satellite Has Ramifications Beyond the Peninsula](#) (Time, 11/08/2023)

[North Korea Threatens to Respond to Opponents' Propaganda Leaflets With 'Shower of Shells'](#) (Time, 11/08/2023)

International:

[Blinken Arrives in S. Korea for Talks on N. Korea, Alliance](#) (Yonhap, 11/08/2023)

[Is the US-ROK Alliance Prepared for a Multipolar World?](#) (38 North, 11/06/2023)

[Unification minister calls on China to enable NK defectors to decide country of choice](#) (The Korea Times, 11/07/2023)

[US expert voices concern over NK's cooperation with Russia](#) (The Korea Times, 11/07/2023)

In North Korea:

- Almost everything about America is vilified by the regime in North Korea, where people are taught from an early age to use phrases like "American bastards." (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- The North is cashing in on the wars by supplying artillery and munitions to Russia for the war in Ukraine and exporting weapons to Hamas and providing them with training and tactics to help the terrorist group improve its capabilities against Israel (Kang Hyun-kyung, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea has revised an election law to recommend multiple candidates to pick new deputies for local assemblies in a move seen as aimed at diverting criticism that elections in the North are a formality. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- A record 32 percent of South Koreans said unification with North Korea is unnecessary, a survey showed Wednesday, as inter-Korean relations remain frosty amid the North's persistent military threats. The figure from a poll of 1,000 adults conducted by the Peaceful

Unification Advisory Council (PUAC) from Sept. 15-17 marked the highest level since the organization began compiling the data in the first quarter of 2015. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

- South Korea's point man on North Korea said Tuesday that Seoul will continue to support a long-suspended project to compile a unified Korean-language dictionary with Pyongyang despite frosty inter-Korean ties. "The government will continue to support the project for its stable operation," Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho said in a virtual message for an academic forum in Seoul. He did not elaborate. ([Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Both North and South Korea have had an action-packed year in space development, from unveiling new rocket designs to testing hypersonic missiles. Now, the rivaling countries are racing to launch their first homegrown military reconnaissance satellites. (Chad De Guzman, [Time](#))
- North Korea criticized rival South Korea on Wednesday for removing a law that banned private activists from sending anti-Pyongyang propaganda leaflets to the North, insisting that such activities amount to psychological warfare and threatening to respond with a "shower of shells." (Kim Tong-hyung, [Time](#))

International:

- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken arrived in South Korea on Wednesday for talks on North Korea, alliance and regional issues amid growing concerns over the North's closer military ties with Russia. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- In the context of Northeast Asia, the newly emerging and increasingly nuclear China-Russia-North Korea bloc imperils South Korea, which has depended on its alliance with the US to ensure its security. The US-ROK alliance will be put to a new test in an increasingly multipolar order, but can effectively handle this new challenge by adhering to the principles and structure upon which it was built. (George Hutchinson, [38 North](#))
- South Korea's Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho renewed calls Monday for China to help North Korean defectors move to a country of their choice and ensure their human rights are protected based on the "international norm." ([Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has made concerning "strategic" changes in the regime's decadeslong effort of seeking normalization with the United States, turning to Russia and China for cooperation instead, an American expert said Tuesday. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Annie Heitmeier, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607095218/https://mailchi.mp/fb1f2dbe3078/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-threatens-to-respond-to-opponents-propaganda-leaflets-with-shower-of-shells>

Monday, November 9, 2023

Seoul warns N. Korea over anti-Pyongyang leaflet campaign criticism

In North Korea:

[For the first time since 1948, North Koreans given a choice in an election](#) (RFA, 11/08/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea's revision of election law does not mean guarantee of suffrage: Seoul](#) (Yonhap, 11/09/2023)

[Seoul warns N. Korea over anti-Pyongyang leaflet campaign criticism](#) (Yonhap, 11/09/2023)

International:

[Blinken says Russia providing technology, support for N.K. military programs](#) (Yonhap, 11/09/2023)

[Blinken slams North-Russia arms deals during visit to Seoul](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/09/2023)

[Kim Jong Un's comeback](#) (Financial Times, 11/09/2023)

[North Korea to shutter embassy in Nepal, at least fifth closure in recent weeks](#) (NK News, 11/09/2023)

[North Korean hackers target Apple computers with new malware variant](#) (NK News, 11/09/2023)

[North Koreans still running restaurant in Laos to earn cash for regime: Report](#) (NK News, 11/09/2023)

[S. Korea in talks with U.N. Command over staff participation](#) (Yonhap, 11/09/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. defense chiefs to hold annual security talks in Seoul next week](#) (Yonhap, 11/09/2023)

[U.N. committee unveils draft resolution on N. Korea's human rights violations](#) (Yonhap, 11/09/2023)

[U.S. envoy calls for human rights dialogue with N. Korea after regime's criticism of her activities](#) (Yonhap, 11/09/2023)

In North Korea:

- For the first time since the country's founding in 1948, North Koreans were given a choice between two candidates in an election, residents told Radio Free Asia, puzzling people accustomed to simply voting for the single, party-approved candidate. (Kim Jieun, [RFA](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea's recent revision of an election law does not appear to genuinely guarantee people's suffrage, South Korea's unification ministry said Thursday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's unification ministry on Thursday warned Pyongyang to refrain from "acting rashly" after the recalcitrant regime threatened to "pour a shower of shells" into the South over propaganda leaflets criticizing it. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Russia is providing "technology and support" for North Korea's military programs, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Thursday, as Pyongyang is believed to be trying to make yet another attempt to launch a military satellite. (Kim Seong-yeon, Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken condemned "two-way street" arms deals between Russia and North Korea during his visit to Seoul on Thursday. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- At a recent banquet to celebrate the achievements of his country's navy, a relaxed Kim Jong Un sat with his wife and young daughter as they were serenaded by a choir of North Korean sailors. Steering North Korea through a period of extreme isolation to counter Covid-19 while defying tough international sanctions, he has emerged into the warm embrace of Moscow and Beijing amid intensifying geopolitical tensions in the region. (Christian Davies, [Financial Times](#))
- North Korea has decided to shut down its embassy in Nepal, the Nepalese foreign ministry has confirmed to NK News, at least the fifth in a series of DPRK mission closures in recent weeks. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- A North Korean cybercrime group is targeting Apple computers with a new malware variant, according to security researchers, in the latest campaign to venture beyond the DPRK's traditional focus on Microsoft Windows. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korean nationals continue to run a restaurant in Laos to earn income for the Pyongyang regime, a new U.N. report shows, despite international sanctions that ban such activity. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- South Korea is in talks with the U.S.-led U.N. Command (UNC) on ways for its military to take on roles on the unit's staff, the defense ministry said Thursday, amid yearslong efforts by the multinational command to bolster its presence. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- Defense chiefs of South Korea and the United States will hold their annual bilateral security talks next week to discuss ways to strengthen Washington's extended deterrence against North Korea's missile and nuclear threats, and shore up the alliance, Seoul's defense ministry said Thursday. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.N. General Assembly committee has unveiled a draft resolution denouncing North Korea's human rights violations and voicing concerns over the regime's punishment of those repatriated from abroad. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- The new U.S. special envoy for North Korean human rights made an overture for dialogue with the recalcitrant regime Wednesday, after Pyongyang accused her of "distorting and slandering" its rights records. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Jody Chen, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607095453/https://mailchi.mp/80b0100572dc/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-threaten-s-to-respond-to-opponents-propaganda-leaflets-with-shower-of-shells-12237478>

Tuesday, November 10, 2023

The Covid-19 Pandemic and Digital Human Rights in North Korea

Top News:

[The Covid-19 Pandemic and Digital Human Rights in North Korea](#) (GWIKS, 11/10/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea pulls out of Nepal in series of diplomatic mission closures](#) (Yonhap, 11/10/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[ROK spy agency defends detention of North Korean defectors against UN criticism](#) (NK News, 11/10/2023)

International:

[Blinken concerned by growing Russia-North Korea military ties](#) (Reuters, 11/09/2023)

[N. Korea calls U.S. 'war merchant' over support for Israel in war with Hamas](#) (Yonhap, 11/10/2023)

[North Korea-Iran Relations Post-JCPOA](#) (38 North, 11/09/2023)

[Russia has provided technical help to North Korea in exchange for arms: Blinken](#) (NK News, 11/09/2023)

[US and South Korea close ranks on common global issues during Blinken visit](#) (AP News, 11/09/2023)

Top News:

- In his panel presentation at the George Washington University's Institute for Korean Studies on October 20, HRNK Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu discusses information control, surveillance, and the effects of COVID-19 in North Korea. His remarks begin at 23:55. ([GWIKS](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea has decided to shut down its embassy in Nepal, a news report said Friday, the latest in a series of the reclusive regime's moves to shut down diplomatic missions due apparently to economic difficulties worsened by global sanctions. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea's spy agency defended its detention and investigation of newly arrived North Korean defectors on Friday, after a U.N. committee raised concerns about a lack of safeguards to protect them during the process. (Ifang Bremer, Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))

International:

- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Thursday he shared South Korean concerns about growing military cooperation between North Korea and Russia, which he called a "two-way street" involving arms flows and technical support. (Son-Hyang Choi, Ju-Min Park, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea on Friday denounced Washington's military support for Israel in its ongoing war with the Hamas militant group, calling the United States a "war merchant" that is aggravating the Middle East situation with weapons supply. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- In recent months, Iran and North Korea have become the two principal military backers of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. While Iran's drone exports and North Korea's artillery shell shipments to the Russian military have been widely discussed, cooperation between Iran and North Korea has continued under the radar. (Samuel Ramani, [38 North](#))
- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken accused Russia of providing technical assistance to North Korea in return for munitions on Thursday, expressing "profound concern" over their alleged arms trade while visiting Seoul for high-level talks. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- The United States and South Korea closed ranks behind common approaches to North Korea, Russia and China on Thursday, vowing to continue to support Ukraine against Russia's invasion and boosting humanitarian aid to Palestinian civilians in Gaza caught in Israel's war against Hamas. (Matthew Lee, Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP News](#))

Prepared by Angela Yoon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

Wednesday, November 11, 2023

Biden, Xi to hold summit next week on bilateral ties, N. Korea, Taiwan, Middle East: officials

International:

[Biden, Xi to hold summit next week on bilateral ties, N. Korea, Taiwan, Middle East: officials](#) (Yonhap, 11/10/2023)

[FM Park discusses N.K threats, Ukraine with France's top diplomat](#) (Yonhap, 11/11/2023)

[Pyongyang reconfirms stronger ties with Russia despite warning](#) (Yonhap, 11/11/2023)

[Rally held for Japanese woman abducted by North Korea 46 years ago](#) (NHK World, 11/11/2023)

International:

- U.S. President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping will hold a much-anticipated summit in the San Francisco Bay Area next week, senior U.S. administration officials have said. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Foreign Minister Park Jin has discussed bilateral relations as well as regional and international issues, ranging from North Korean threats to the war in Ukraine, during his meeting with France's top diplomat in Paris, his office said Saturday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said Saturday that its relations with Russia will remain strong despite the United States' warning against their arms transfers. (Park Sang-soo, [Yonhap](#))
- Family members of a Japanese woman abducted by North Korea 46 years ago have called on the Japanese government to resolve the issue as soon as possible. ([NHK World](#))

Prepared by Debby Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607100130/https://mailchi.mp/26b3020bd5cc/hrnk-news-items-biden-xi-to-hold-summit-next-week-on-bilateral-ties-n-korea-taiwan-middle-east-officials>

Thursday, November 12, 2023

UN urges member states to end forced repatriation in North

International:

[N. Korea chides US over relations with Russia](#) (The Korea Herald, 11/12/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S., Japan to launch N.K. missile data sharing system next month](#) (Yonhap, 11/12/2023)

[Top generals of S. Korea, U.S. agree to bolster combined defense posture](#) (Yonhap, 11/12/2023)

[UN urges member states to end forced repatriation in North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/12/2023)

[Why the Seoul-Beijing divide over North Korean defectors could scupper attempts to repair ties](#) (SCMP, 11/12/2023)

[Yoon calls for combined U.S.-S. Korea defense posture against any N. Korean provocations](#) (Yonhap, 11/12/2023)

[Yoon urged to raise N. Korea rights issues in talks with UK, Dutch leaders](#) (The Korea Times, 11/12/2023)

International:

- North Korea criticized US Secretary of State Antony Blinken for “irresponsible and provocative” remarks last week about deepening military ties between the North and Russia, saying destabilizing actions by the US and its partners on the Korean Peninsula would be met with strong countermeasure. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan agreed Sunday to launch a real-time missile warning data sharing system next month to better detect and assess North Korea's ballistic missile launches, Seoul's defense ministry said. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- JCS Chairman Gen. Kim Seung-kyum and his U.S. counterpart, Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr., held the annual Military Committee Meeting at the South Korean JCS headquarters in central Seoul, as the allies seek to deepen security cooperation against evolving military threats from North Korea. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- A United Nations (UN) General Assembly committee voiced deep concerns regarding the “grave human rights situation” in North Korea and the punishment of those repatriated from abroad in its recently unveiled draft resolution. (Cho Jung-woo, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- A public row between Beijing and Seoul over the decades-old issue of China's reported repatriation of North Korean defectors could create hurdles for Beijing's ties with Seoul and could further deepen uncertainties in restoring high-level talks between the two countries, analysts have said. (Seong Hyeon Choi, [SCMP](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol has called on the U.S defense chief to maintain the allies' combined defense posture against any North Korean provocations, the presidential office said Sunday. (Choi Kyong-ae, [Yonhap](#))
- The families of the victims of North Korea's brutal human rights abuses have joined activists to call on President Yoon Suk Yeol to raise rights issues in upcoming summits with his British and Dutch counterparts, saying consistent messaging is important in bringing about actual change. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

Prepared by Debby Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607100548/https://mailchi.mp/af2618c56423/hrnk-news-items-un-urges-member-states-to-end-forced-repatriation-in-north>

Friday, November 13, 2023

**N.Korea slams Japanese official's remarks on Kanto massacre of Koreans;
S.Korea,U.S. revise 'tailored deterrence strategy' on N.Korea**

In North Korea:

[N. Korea slams Japanese official's remarks on Kanto massacre of Koreans](#) (*Yonhap*, 11/13/2023)

[N. Korea slams S. Korea-UNC defense chief meeting as attempt for 'new war of aggression'](#) (Yonhap, 11/13/2023)

[North Korea calls for 'dissolving' UN Command ahead of major meeting with ROK](#) (NK News, 11/13/2023)

[North Korea calls UN command a 'war tool' of U.S., repeats demand for its dissolution](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/13/2023)

In South Korea:

[Yoon calls for combined defense posture should North conduct a Hamas-style attack](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/13/2023)

International:

[Russia could provide farmland to North Koreans in Far East, governor says](#) (NK News, 11/13/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. revise 'tailored deterrence strategy' on N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 11/13/2023)

[South Korean, U.S. defense chiefs sign new 'tailored deterrence' strategy](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/13/2023)

[Unification minister discusses N.K. issues with Canadian envoy](#) (Yonhap, 11/13/2023)

[US, ROK, Japan to kick off info sharing on North Korean missiles next month](#) (NK News, 11/13/2023)

[US, S Korea elevate ties to global alliance amid security challenges](#) (RFA, 11/13/2023)

[US, South Korea revise deterrence strategy, boost drills over North Korea threat](#) (Reuters, 11/13/2023)

[U.S., South Korea update deterrence strategy against North Korean threats](#) (UPI, 11/13/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea on Monday denounced Tokyo's claim that it is difficult to verify the massacre of Koreans in the wake of the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake as "desperate efforts to erase its blood-stained past history." (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Monday renewed its calls for dissolving the U.S.-led United Nations Command (UNC), claiming that a plan by South Korea and UNC member states to hold the inaugural defense ministerial meeting this week is a "dangerous" scheme to spark a "new war of aggression" against the North. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's foreign ministry demanded that the U.N. Command (UNC) be "dissolved" on Monday, a day before the first-ever meeting between the defense ministers of South Korea and the multilateral coalition that upholds the Korean War armistice. (Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))
- North Korea on Monday called for the dissolution of the United Nations Command (UNC) as it claimed an upcoming meeting of defense ministers from South Korea and UNC member states entailed a "dangerous scheme" to plan a "new war of aggression" against the North. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- President Yoon Suk Yeol on Sunday called on South Korea and the United States to maintain a combined defense posture to immediately punish North Korea in the case of any miscalculation and provocations, including a Hamas-style surprise attack. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- Russia could provide North Korean farmers with agricultural land in the Far East, a local governor told reporters this week, a scheme that one expert said could be a DPRK attempt to improve its food situation and earn cash for the regime. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- The defense chiefs of South Korea and the United States updated their joint deterrence strategies on North Korea during their annual security talks Monday as part of efforts to better counter Pyongyang's growing missile and nuclear threats. (Kim Eun-jung, Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean and U.S. defense chiefs updated their tailored deterrence strategy aimed at countering North Korea's nuclear and missile threats for the first time in a decade during annual security talks in Seoul on Monday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's point man on North Korea met with the Canadian ambassador to South Korea on Monday and called for the country's support in helping resolve dire human rights conditions in the North, the unification ministry said. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S., South Korea and Japan will launch real-time information sharing about North Korean missile launches and more "systematic" trilateral military drills in the coming months, Seoul's defense ministry announced Sunday. (Jeongmin Kim, Lina Park, [NK News](#))
- The United States and South Korea have agreed to further progress their military alliance into a global partnership – an expansion aimed to address not only threats from North Korea but also broader challenges that impact regional and global peace. (Lee Jeong-Ho, [RFA](#))
- South Korea and the United States on Monday revised a bilateral security agreement aimed at deterring North Korea's advancing nuclear and missile threats, and vowed to maintain pressure on Pyongyang despite global distractions. (Phil Stewart, Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))
- The United States and South Korea updated their joint deterrence strategy against North Korea for the first time in a decade Monday, revising the plan to better respond to the North's mounting missile and nuclear threats and its growing military ties with Russia. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607100720/https://mailchi.mp/f8e840f243d4/hrnk-news-items-nkorea-slams-japanese-officials-remarks-on-kanto-massacre-of-koreans-skorea-us-revise-tailored-deterrence-strategy-on-nkorea>

Saturday, November 14, 2023

North Korea criticizes G7 as 'remnant of the Cold War'; S. Korea hosts inaugural defense ministerial meeting of UNC member states

In North Korea:

[North Korea boasts of successful kids camp project despite 14-year delay](#) (NK News, 11/14/2023)

[North Korea criticises G7 as 'remnant of the Cold War'](#) (Reuters, 11/13/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea hosts inaugural defense ministerial meeting of UNC member states](#) (Yonhap, 11/14/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea considering partial suspension of inter-Korean military agreement upon N. Korean satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 11/14/2023)

[S. Korea resumes task force after 11-yr hiatus on its citizens held in N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 11/14/2023)

[South Korea fears Hamas-style attack from the North](#) (BBC News, 11/14/2023)

International:

[Austin expresses concerns over growing military ties between N. Korea, Russia](#) (Yonhap, 11/14/2023)

[U.N. Command member states vow united response if S. Korea attacked](#) (Yonhap, 11/14/2023)

[UN members concerned China, Russia helping North Korea -US' Austin](#) (Reuters, 11/14/2023)

[US, ROK hold joint naval drill on defending against North Korean submarines](#) (NK News, 11/14/2023)

[Yoon vows to raise alarm about North Korea-Russia military ties at APEC summit](#) (NK News, 11/14/2023)

In North Korea:

- A small “new” political camp for children recently promoted in North Korean state media actually took over 14 years to build, according to NK News analysis, in the latest sign that chronic material shortages and top-down management problems are contributing to long construction delays. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea criticised the Group of Seven countries as a "remnant of the Cold War" that causes conflicts for their own interests and violates other countries' sovereignty, its state media KCNA said on Tuesday. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea and the United Nations Command (UNC) member states were set to hold their first meeting of defense chiefs and representatives Tuesday to evaluate the multinational command's contributions and explore their future roles, the defense ministry said. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea is considering partially suspending a 2018 inter-Korean military agreement as a precautionary measure against North Korean provocations in case it makes a third attempt to launch a spy satellite, sources said Tuesday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea held a meeting of its task force on the issue of South Korean abductees in North Korea for the first time in 11 years, the unification ministry in charge of relations with Pyongyang said Tuesday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- On Sunday, when South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol hosted US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin at his home for dinner, he urged Mr Austin to be vigilant against any type of North Korean attack, including surprise assaults "resembling Hamas-style tactics". (Jean Mackenzie, [BBC News](#))

International:

- U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin on Tuesday expressed concerns over North Korea's growing nuclear and cyber threats, and its expanding military cooperation with Russia for its war in Ukraine. (Kim Eun-jung & Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the United Nations Command (UNC) member states adopted a joint statement Tuesday condemning North Korea's "unlawful" nuclear and missile program and vowed a united response in the case of Pyongyang's aggression. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said on Tuesday U.N. member states enforcing the Korean War armistice were concerned that China and Russia were helping North Korea expand its military capabilities by enabling Pyongyang to evade U.N. sanctions. (Jack Kim & Ju-min Park, [Reuters](#))
- The U.S. and South Korea kicked off three-day joint naval exercises in the East Sea on Monday, seeking to improve military readiness to defend against North Korean submarines and enemy provocations at sea. (Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol has said he will emphasize threats posed by North Korea's "illegal" cooperation with Russia at an upcoming meeting with world leaders in San Francisco, while raising concern that the DPRK's space program supports its ballistic missile development. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Ryan Beane, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607100944/https://mailchi.mp/b21b3c445337/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-criticizes-g7-as-remnant-of-the-cold-war-s-korea-hosts-inaugural-defense-ministerial-meeting-of-unc-member-states>

Sunday, November 15, 2023

N. Korea tests newly developed solid-fuel engines for new type IRBM; High level Russian delegation in North Korea for economic talks

In North Korea:

[N. Korea tests newly developed solid-fuel engines for new-type IRBM: KCNA](#) (Yonhap, 11/15/2023)

[North Korean cybercriminals target job seekers with fake skills assessments](#) (NK News, 11/15/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea seeks support for World Expo bid in APEC ministerial meeting](#) (Yonhap, 11/15/2023)

[Yoon departs for San Francisco to attend APEC summit](#) (Yonhap, 11/15/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[JCS chairman nominee says 2018 military agreement limits surveillance on N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 11/15/2023)

International:

[High-level Russian delegation in North Korea for economic talks: State media](#) (NK News, 11/15/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. stage joint air drills with B-52H bombers over Yellow Sea](#) (Yonhap, 11/15/2023)

[Top diplomats of South Korea, U.S. and Japan blast North-Russia arms deals, Hamas's attack on Israel](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/15/2023)

[U.S. approves possible sale of SM-6 missile interceptors to S. Korea amid N. Korea threats](#) (Yonhap, 11/15/2023)

[US court awards Otto Warmbier's parents \\$2.2M in frozen North Korean funds](#) (NK News, 11/15/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has successfully conducted ground tests of newly developed solid-fuel engines for a new type of intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM), Pyongyang's state media said Wednesday. The first- and second-stage engines were tested Saturday and Tuesday to evaluate the technical specifications of the newly developed high-thrust solid-fuel IRBM engines, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean cybercriminals lured IT job seekers to take fake skills assessment tests on malicious websites in a new social engineering campaign, according to Microsoft researchers, in what one expert called a likely attempt to extort victims. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's foreign minister has sought support for the country's bid to host the 2030 World Expo in the latest diplomatic push, just two weeks ahead of the announcement of a winner. Park Jin stressed that the expo in the southeastern port city of Busan will serve as the ideal venue for discussions on climate change, the digital divide, inequality and other global challenges. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol departed for San Francisco on Wednesday to attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, where he is expected to call for stronger solidarity,

promote trade liberalization, and discuss a response to military cooperation between North Korea and Russia. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The nominee for the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said Wednesday the 2018 inter-Korean military agreement poses limits to the South Korean military's surveillance on North Korea and live-fire drills near the maritime border. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- A high-level Russian delegation is visiting Pyongyang for talks on expanding cooperation with North Korea in a wide range of sectors, DPRK state media reported on Wednesday. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- South Korea and the United States staged joint air drills Wednesday, involving two U.S. B-52H strategic bombers, over the Yellow Sea, Seoul's defense ministry said, in the latest show of force against North Korea. South Korean F-35A, F-15K, and U.S. F-35B and F-16 fighter jets escorted the nuclear-capable bombers during the drills, the ministry said, as the allies seek to bolster security cooperation against growing North Korean military threats. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- The top diplomats of South Korea, the United States and Japan condemned alleged arms deals between Russia and North Korea and the Hamas militant group's attack on Israel during their meeting in San Francisco on Tuesday. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The U.S. Department of State has approved a possible sale to South Korea of Standard Missile-6 (SM-6) shipborne missile interceptors and related equipment to help improve the Asian ally's security capabilities, a government agency said Tuesday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.S. court has ruled that some \$2.2 million of North Korean funds seized from a Russian bank must be paid to the parents of Otto Warmbier, the American student who died shortly after his release from a lengthy detention in the DPRK. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Ryan Beane, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607101032/https://mailchi.mp/e94c95c98940/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-tests-newly-developed-solid-fuel-engines-for-new-type-irbm-high-level-russian-delegation-in-north-korea-for-economic-talks>

Monday, November 16, 2023

North Korea vows more offensive response to US threats; Biden stresses North's denuclearization in summit with Xi

In North Korea:

[North Korea vows more offensive response to US 'threats' -KCNA](#) (Reuters, 11/15/2023)

In South Korea:

[Defense chief vows to ramp up cyberwarfare capability](#) (Yonhap, 11/16/2023)

[JCS says N. Korea could test-fire solid-fuel intermediate-range ballistic missile](#) (Yonhap, 11/16/2023)

[S. Korea's military holds amphibious landing drills](#) (Yonhap, 11/16/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Nominee to lead ROK military comes out against military pact with North Korea](#) (NK News, 11/16/2023)

International:

[Biden stresses North's denuclearization in summit with Xi](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/16/2023)

[Nuclear arms of N. Korea, China, Russia pose 'existential' dangers to U.S., its allies: report](#) (Yonhap, 11/16/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. revive consultative meeting on N.K. human rights after 6 years](#) (Yonhap, 11/16/2023)

[U.N. committee adopts resolution on N. Korean human rights for 19th straight year](#) (Yonhap, 11/16/2023)

[U.S. authorizes potential sale of AIM-9X air-to-air missiles to S. Korea amid N. Korean threats](#) (Yonhap, 11/15/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea on Thursday criticised a recent visit to South Korea by top U.S. defence officials and vowed more "offensive" responses to what it called military threats from the United States and its allies, state media reported. In a statement carried by the KCNA news agency, a spokesperson for the North's defence ministry blamed the United States for raising tensions in the region, referring to U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin's Seoul visit this week. (Soo-Hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))

In South Korea:

- Defense Minister Shin Won-sik said Thursday that South Korea will draw up a "proactive and offensive" cybersecurity strategy to counter escalating cyberthreats to the military and the defense industry. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean military said Thursday that North Korea could test-fire a new type of intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) following its recent tests of its solid-fuel engine to advance its weapons program. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's Navy and Marine Corps began weeklong amphibious landing training near the eastern coast Thursday, the Navy said. The joint drills were taking place in and around Pohang, 272 kilometers southeast of Seoul, as part of the annual Hoguk exercise that has been under way since last month, it said. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol's nominee for the country's highest-ranking military position voiced skepticism about the value of a 2018 military deal with North Korea this week, while facing a barrage of questions about his personal conduct at a confirmation hearing. (Jeongmin Kim & Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))

International:

- U.S. President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping emphasized the importance of preventing tensions from escalating and pursuing bilateral cooperation during their summit in California on Wednesday, where the White House said Biden underlined Washington's commitment to North Korea's denuclearization. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The nuclear weapons of North Korea, China and Russia continue to present "existential" dangers to the United States and its allies, according to a report by a U.S. government advisory board released Wednesday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the United States resumed a long-suspended bilateral forum on North Korea's human rights and held a meeting in Brussels this week for the first time in six years, the foreign ministry said Thursday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.N. General Assembly committee has passed a resolution on North Korean human rights for the 19th consecutive year amid growing concerns for the safety of North Korean escapees who were repatriated from China. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. Department of State has approved a potential sale to South Korea of AIM-9X air-to-air missiles and related equipment to help improve the East Asian ally's defense capabilities, a government agency said Wednesday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ryan Beane, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607101114/https://mailchi.mp/e9cec954ba5d/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-vows-more-offensive-response-to-us-threats-biden-stresses-norths-denuclearization-in-summit-with-xi>

Tuesday, November 17, 2023

N Korea, Russia strengthen key sector ties, risk UN sanctions breach

In North Korea:

[North Korean soccer star reappears after vanishing from competition 3 years ago](#) (NK News, 11/17/2023)

In South Korea:

[Seoul, Washington agree to deepen cooperation in disaster response](#) (Yonhap, 11/17/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korean investors renew calls for compensation over stalled tour program in N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 11/17/2023)

International:

[Biden voiced concerns about 'illicit' N. Korean nuclear, missile programs in talks with Xi: official](#) (Yonhap, 11/17/2023)

[N Korea, Russia strengthen key sector ties, risk UN sanctions breach](#) (Radio Free Asia, 11/15/2023)

[Russia, North Korea discuss exploration of gold and rare earth metals: Moscow](#) (NK News, 11/17/2023)

[U.N. committee adopts resolution on N. Korean human rights for 19th straight year](#) (Yonhap, 11/16/2023)

In North Korea:

- A North Korean soccer star not seen since sanctions interrupted his international career over three years ago made his return to competitive soccer on Thursday, taking the field in North Korea's 0-1 loss to Syria in a World Cup qualifier. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea and the United States have agreed to strengthen cooperation in the fields of disaster and climate change response during their safety-related ministerial talks in Washington, D.C., the interior ministry here said Friday. The agreement was reached between Interior and Safety Minister Lee Sang-min and U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas on Thursday, the ministry said. This is the first time that South Korea's interior minister has met with the U.S. homeland security secretary since the ministry was launched in 2017. (Yoo Cheong-mo, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- More than a dozen South Korean investors pressed the government again Friday to provide compensation for their losses stemming from a long-stalled tour program in North Korea. The latest call came a day before the 25th anniversary of the launch of the tour program at Mount Kumgang, a scenic mountain resort on North Korea's east coast. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- U.S. President Joe Biden expressed worries about North Korea's "illicit" nuclear and missile programs during his summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping in California this week, a senior U.S. official said Thursday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea and Russia agreed to further boost their cooperation in various sectors, including the economy, science, and technology – a development that could create potential loopholes in the United Nations sanctions aimed at curbing Pyongyang's nuclear program. (Lee Jeong-ho, [Radio Free Asia](#))

- Russian and North Korean officials discussed joint exploration of precious and rare earth metals and boosting food trade during meetings in Pyongyang this week, Russia's natural resources and ecology minister said Friday, a day after his delegation left the country. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- A U.N. General Assembly committee has passed a resolution on North Korean human rights for the 19th consecutive year amid growing concerns for the safety of North Korean escapees who were repatriated from China. On Wednesday, the Third Committee handling human rights and social affairs adopted by consensus the resolution, which calls on countries to honor the international principle of non-refoulement. The resolution will be sent to a full General Assembly session for approval in December. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gloria Guo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607101231/https://mailchi.mp/5237943b006f/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-vows-more-offensive-response-to-us-threats-biden-stresses-norths-denuclearization-in-summit-with-xi-12237561>

Wednesday, November 18, 2023

UNC Members Reaffirm Defense of South Korea, China Remains Opposed

International:

[Asia's space race: Korean rivalry, US alliance go into orbit with militarisation of new frontier](#) (SCMP, 11/18/2023)

[At APEC summit, Yoon offers to lead action on climate change, supply chain risks](#) (Yonhap, 11/18/2023)

[Japan's Kishida, S. Korea's Yoon talk tech, cooperation in Silicon Valley](#) (Reuters, 11/18/2023)

[Paper Suggests North Korea is Reorganizing Legations to Leverage New Cold War](#) (KBS, 11/18/2023)

[Russian soldier in Ukraine discusses North Korean weapons in video](#) (Reuters, 11/18/2023)

[S. Korea's top diplomat holds talks with Malaysian, Indonesian counterparts at APEC](#) (Yonhap, 11/18/2023)

[UNC Members Reaffirm Defense of South Korea, China Remains Opposed](#) (VOA, 11/18/2023)

International:

- Asia's space race is intensifying with South Korea set to launch its first home-grown military satellite mounted on a SpaceX rocket, while the North claims it has carried out successful tests of solid-fuel engines for a new intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM). (Park Chan-kyong, [SCMP](#))
- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol wrapped up a visit to San Francisco on Friday after attending an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit that demonstrated South

Korea's growing solidarity with the United States and Japan and its commitment to leading global action on climate change and supply chain risks. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida pledged cooperation on clean-energy supply chains, quantum computing and other innovative technology during a Silicon Valley roundtable on Friday. (Ann Saphir, [Reuters](#))
- A recently published analysis paper suggests North Korea may be reorganizing its overseas legations to leverage the emerging new Cold War structure to improve its nuclear arsenal. ([KBS](#))
- supplied by North Korea surfaced on social media this week, apparently debunking denials by Pyongyang and Moscow that the isolated East Asian country is supplying weapons for the war there. (Cho Jinwoo, [Reuters](#))
- South Korea's foreign minister held a series of talks with his Malaysian and Indonesian counterparts in San Francisco this week and requested for their countries' support in South Korea's bid to host the 2030 World Expo, his office said Saturday. ([Yonhap](#))
- Video of a Russian soldier in Ukraine talking about ammunition
- Seventeen nations have reiterated their commitment to help defend South Korea against any attack from its northern neighbor, eliciting an angry response from China. (Christy Lee, [VOA](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607101335/https://mailchi.mp/51c24085dd9b/hrnk-news-items-unc-members-reaffirm-defense-of-south-korea-china-remains-opposed>

Thursday, November 19, 2023

N. Korea may launch spy satellite 'within a week or so'

In North Korea:

[N.K. authorities warn would-be defectors that they will be caught by facial recognition systems in China](#) (Rimjin-gang, 11/16/2023)

[New in North Korea: Hair loss products](#) (Radio Free Asia, 11/18/2023)

[North Korea marks missile holiday with silence as Kim absent 29 days](#) (The Japan Times, 11/19/2023)

In South Korea:

[Encountering my activist great-grandfather -- and his bones](#) (The Washington Post, 11/17/2023)

[North Korean Escapee Who Begged on the Streets Chases K-Pop Stardom](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 11/15/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea may launch spy satellite 'within a week or so': defense minister](#) (Yonhap, 11/19/2023)

International:

[Korea secures US investment worth \\$1.2 billion during Yoon's APEC trip](#) (The Korea Times, 11/19/2023)

[FM Park holds talks with Canadian, Mexican counterparts on margins of APEC summit](#) (Yonhap, 11/19/2023)

[Russia and North Korea: A Growing Strategic Partnership](#) (38 North, 11/17/2023)

[World is facing 'polycrisis' warns South Korean president ahead of UK state visit](#) (The Telegraph, 11/19/2023)

[Yoon returns home from APEC summit in San Francisco](#) (Yonhap, 11/18/2023)

[Yoon's state visit a 'crowning moment' in thriving Korea-U.K. ties](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/19/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea's law enforcement authorities are warning people that "if you flee to China, you'll be caught immediately." (Kang Ji-won, [Rimjin-gang](#))
- Hair loss products are now for sale in North Korea amid an apparent uptick in the number of people struggling with thinning hair or going bald, experts in South Korea with knowledge of the country told Radio Free Asia. (Soram Cheon, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- North Korea marked its newly established Missile Industry Day on Saturday with silence in state-run media, as leader Kim Jong Un has remained out of the public spotlight for nearly a month. (Jesse Johnson, [The Japan Times](#))

In South Korea:

- On this peninsula, every family has tales that span the dramatic modern history of the Koreas -- from Japanese colonization, which ended in 1945, through to the division of one Korea into two. The North turned to communism and poverty, the South to democracy and relative wealth. (Michelle Ye Hee Lee, [The Washington Post](#))
- At first glance, Yu Hyuk looks like a typical K-pop rapper. He sports baggy pants, a black beanie and Air Jordans. A silver chain dangles from his neck. But Yu represents a new wrinkle in South Korea's music industry: The aspiring K-pop star is from North Korea. (Jiyoung Sohn & Dasl Yoon, [The Wall Street Journal](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea may launch its military spy satellite as early as "within a week or so," South Korea's defense minister said Sunday, citing intelligence of the North's preparations. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Korea has secured 1.5 trillion won (\$1.16 billion) in investment commitments from American firms during President Yoon Suk Yeol's U.S. visit to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit last week, according to the trade ministry. (Ko Dong-hwan, [The Korea Times](#))

- Foreign Minister Park Jin held talks with his counterparts from Canada and Mexico, as well as key business and opinion leaders, on the fringes of the summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum earlier this week, his office said Sunday. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- Russia's assessment of North Korea's strategic importance, which differs markedly from its historical dismissal of Pyongyang, will likely lead to military technology transfers and strengthened bilateral economic ties. (Samuel Ramani, [38 North](#))
- The world is facing a "polycrisis" of multiple conflicts and threats to humanity, the South Korean president has warned, as he calls for deeper security ties with Britain on the eve of a state visit. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol returned home Saturday after attending the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in San Francisco. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- This week, President Yoon Suk Yeol will become Britain's first state guest since the coronation of King Charles III in May, an indicator of Korea's changing global status. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Raymond Ha, HRNK Director of Operations & Research

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240625133638/https://mailchi.mp/3927e9ca8795/hrnk-news-items-1119-2023>

Monday, November 20, 2023

Seoul warns N. Korea not to launch spy satellite and hints 2018 military deal could be suspended

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea issues rare advance warning as excuse to scrap inter-Korean military pact](#) (The Korea Times, 11/20/2023)

[S. Korea warns N. Korea over satellite launch](#) (The Korea Herald, 11/20/2023)

[S. Korea warns N. Korea to 'immediately stop' preparations for military spy satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 11/20/2023)

[Seoul warns North Korea not to launch spy satellite and hints 2018 military deal could be suspended](#) (AP News, 11/19/2023)

[South's military warns of 'necessary' response if North launches satellite](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/20/2023)

International:

[N. Korea vows to step up 'war deterrence' against U.S arms sales](#) (Yonhap, 11/20/2023)

[NGOs lament North Korea's reluctance to accept aid despite humanitarian problems](#) (NK News, 11/20/2023)

[North Korea criticises potential sale of US missiles to Japan, South Korea](#) (Reuters, 11/19/2023)

[Unification minister discusses cooperation with UNC chief](#) (Yonhap, 11/20/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea threatened, Monday, to implement retaliatory measures if North Korea pushes ahead with its planned launch of a military spy satellite, sending a rare yet strong warning against Pyongyang's envisaged military action. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea said it would take action against North Korea for launching what it claims to be a spy satellite, potentially within the next week, in the starkest warning yet over what the South believes is a violation of UN Security Council resolutions banning missile tests. (Choi Si-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The South Korean military warned North Korea on Monday to "immediately stop" preparations for another military spy satellite launch, vowing to take "necessary measures" if it presses ahead with the launch. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's military warned North Korea not to go ahead with its planned spy satellite launch, suggesting Monday that Seoul could suspend an inter-Korean agreement to reduce tensions and resume front-line aerial surveillance in response. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))
- The South Korean military on Monday warned the North to "immediately" halt its preparations for another military spy satellite launch, warning of an unspecified "necessary" response if Pyongyang persists with the launch. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- North Korea said Monday that it will bolster its "war deterrence" capability as it accused the United States of heightening tensions on the Korean Peninsula with planned arms sales to South Korea and Japan. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's pandemic border controls and insistence on self-reliance are impeding the provision of much-needed aid, contributing to the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the country, multiple international organizations have told the U.N. Panel of Experts. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korea on Monday denounced the United States' potential sale of missiles to Japan and South Korea, calling it a dangerous act that raises tension in the region and brings a new arms race, state media reported. (Soo-hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))
- South Korea's point man on North Korea met with Gen. Paul LaCamera, chief of the United Nations Command (UNC), on Monday to discuss how to bolster cooperation, the unification ministry said Monday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607102125/https://mailchi.mp/dd0c5d895b96/hrnk-news-items-1120-2023>

Tuesday, November 21, 2023

N. Korea says it successfully placed spy satellite into orbit, plans to launch more

In North Korea:

[North Korea notifies Japan of plan to launch spy satellite as early as Wednesday](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/21/2023)

[N. Korea prepares for local elections after election law revision](#) (Yonhap, 11/21/2023)

[N. Korea says it successfully placed spy satellite into orbit, plans to launch more](#) (Yonhap, 11/21/2023)

[North Korea launches military spy satellite toward south: ROK military](#) (NK News, 11/21/2023)

[North Korean rice imports from China drop amid alleged arms trade with Russia](#) (NK News, 11/21/2023)

[North Koreans use fake names, scripts to land remote IT work for cash](#) (Reuters, 11/21/2023)

In South Korea:

[Two South Koreans indicted for allegedly colluding with North Korean hackers](#) (NK News, 11/21/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N.K. hacking group stole email accounts of about 1,500 S. Koreans: police](#) (Yonhap, 11/21/2023)

[S. Korea hints at halt to 2018 inter-Korean military accord in event of N.K. satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 11/21/2023)

[S. Korea issues navigation warning amid planned N.K. rocket launch](#) (Yonhap, 11/21/2023)

[Tours to Panmunjom to partially resume after 4-month hiatus](#) (Yonhap, 11/21/2023)

International:

[Britain and South Korea to enforce North Korea sanctions with joint navy patrols](#) (The Telegraph, 11/21/2023)

[Britain to launch South Korea trade talks as president visits](#) (Reuters, 11/21/2023)

[Korea, U.K. to sign 'Downing Street' accord establishing 'global strategic partnership'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/21/2023)

[U.S. aircraft carrier arrives as North's spy satellite launch looms](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/21/2023)

[US aircraft carrier visits ROK in response to North Korean 'threats': Seoul](#) (NK News, 11/21/2023)

[U.S. renews concerns over N. Korea-Russia military cooperation](#) (Yonhap, 11/21/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea notified Japan of a plan to launch a space satellite between Wednesday and Dec. 1. Pyongyang said that the satellite will be launched in the direction of the Yellow Sea and

East China Sea, the Japanese Coast Guard said on Tuesday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

- Meetings were held across North Korea for voters to meet candidates running in the upcoming local elections, Pyongyang's state media said Tuesday, as the reclusive regime prepares for its first election featuring more than one candidate. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said Wednesday it has successfully placed a spy satellite into orbit and will launch several more satellites in a short period of time to step up its surveillance capability on South Korea. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea launched a rocket thought to carry a spy satellite on Tuesday night, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The launch appears to be Pyongyang's third attempt to put a military reconnaissance satellite in orbit, after failed attempts in May and August. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- Trade in wigs and the raw materials for their production once again dominated official exchange between North Korea and China last month, while the DPRK's rice imports dwindled amid allegations of weapons trade with Russia. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Using fake names, sham LinkedIn profiles, counterfeit work papers and mock interview scripts, North Korean IT workers seeking employment in Western tech companies are deploying sophisticated subterfuge to get hired. (James Pearson, [Reuters](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korean authorities have arrested and indicted the operators of a data recovery company for allegedly colluding with North Korean cybercriminals in the Lazarus Group to extort money from over 700 victims. The Seoul Central District Prosecutors' Office has charged the unnamed head of the South Korean company and another employee as co-conspirators in racketeering, according to a press release on Monday. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- A North Korean hacking group has stolen the email accounts of nearly 1,500 South Korean people, including dozens of government officials, this year after taking control of about 500 transit servers at home and abroad, the Korean National Police Agency (KNPA) said Tuesday. (Yoo Cheong-mo, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's presidential office suggested Tuesday that a 2018 inter-Korean military tension reduction agreement could be suspended in the event North Korea goes ahead with its planned space rocket launch. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's oceans ministry said Tuesday it has issued a navigation warning for ships, responding to North Korea's upcoming space rocket launch set to take place in less than two weeks. (Kang Yoon-seung, [Yonhap](#))
- A tour program to the truce village of Panmunjom on the inter-Korean border will partially resume this week, the unification ministry said Tuesday. The tour program for civilian visitors had been suspended since mid-July, after U.S. Army private Travis King crossed the border into the North during a tour to the Joint Security Area in the Demilitarized Zone separating the two Koreas. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The UK and South Korea will enforce sanctions against Pyongyang with joint navy patrols under a new defense partnership. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))
- Britain rolled out the red carpet for South Korea's president on Tuesday at the start of a state visit intended to deepen diplomatic and business ties between the two countries as they launch talks on a new free trade agreement. (Alistair Smout, [Reuters](#))
- Korea and Britain will adopt the so-called "Downing Street Accord" during President Yoon Suk Yeol's state visit to London this week, elevating the two countries' ties to a "global strategic partnership." The accord, which will mark the 140th anniversary of bilateral relations, will be adopted by Yoon and British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak during their summit at Downing Street in London on Wednesday, according to the presidential office in a statement Tuesday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Regular tours of the inter-Korean border village of Panmunjom are set to resume on Wednesday after a four-month hiatus, Seoul has announced, following the program's suspension since American soldier Travis King crossed into North Korea. Seoul says only South Koreans will be able to join tours to village bordering North Korea for now. (Lina Park, [NK News](#))
- South Korea's Ministry of National Defense said Tuesday it is closely monitoring North Korea after the regime notified Japan that its third attempt to launch a military spy satellite could come as early as Wednesday. On the same day, the U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson arrived in Busan, South Korea's Navy said, in a show of force against the North's nuclear and missile threats. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- A U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier arrived in the South Korean port city of Busan on Tuesday, the third such visit just this year in what experts described as a bid to demonstrate Washington's willingness to defend the ROK against North Korean threats. (Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))
- The U.S. Department of State reiterated its concerns Monday over military cooperation between North Korea and Russia, as Pyongyang is gearing up for a space rocket launch to put a military spy satellite into orbit. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Mohona Ganguly, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607102334/https://mailchi.mp/265b5939e867/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-says-it-successfully-placed-spy-satellite-into-orbit-plans-to-launch-more>

Wednesday, November 22, 2023

Arrests and detentions continue in China one month after China's forced repatriation of North Korean refugees

Top News:

[Arrests and detentions continue in China one month after China's forced repatriation of North Korean refugees](#) (VOA, 11/09/2023)

*This press briefing has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[N. Korea releases photos of spy satellite launch success](#) (Yonhap, 11/22/2023)

[N. Korea says spy satellite transmitted photos of U.S. air base in Guam](#) (Yonhap, 11/22/2023)

[North Korea's spy satellite is a big deal, regardless of how advanced its technology is](#) (The Guardian, 11/22/2023)

[North's hackers pose as officials, journalists to steal info and crypto](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/22/2023)

In South Korea:

[N. Korean spy satellite seems to have entered into orbit: Seoul military](#) (Yonhap, 11/22/2023)

[Rival parties condemn N. Korea's satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 11/22/2023)

[Seoul pushes to restore surveillance capabilities after N.K. spy satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 11/22/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea partially suspends 2018 inter-Korean military accord](#) (Yonhap, 11/22/2023)

International:

[N. Korea makes progress in satellite program amid deepening defense ties with Russia](#) (Yonhap, 11/22/2023)

[N. Korea's claimed success in spy satellite launch raises possibility of Russian assistance](#) (Yonhap, 11/22/2023)

[Russian VIP military jetliner flies to North Korea hours after satellite launch](#) (NK News, 11/22/2023)

[S. Korea plans naval drills with U.S., Japan involving aircraft carrier: defense chief](#) (Yonhap, 11/22/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S., Japan share information on N.K. spy satellite launch: JCS](#) (Yonhap, 11/22/2023)

[U.S. nuclear-powered sub arrives in S. Korea after N. Korea's satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 11/22/2023)

Top News:

- North Korean human rights activists predict that due to the international community's unity in condemning China's forced repatriation, China will forcibly repatriate North Korean escapees on a small scale to avoid drawing attention, rather than on a large scale like last month. Human rights experts pointed out that the international community should put more pressure on China to prevent human rights violations such as the forced repatriation of North Korean refugees. (Ahn Joon-ho, [VOA](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea on Wednesday released photos of its leader Kim Jong-un celebrating with engineers and officials the successful launch of a spy satellite that was condemned as a violation of multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- A military spy satellite that North Korea claimed it has put into orbit has taken pictures of Andersen Air Force Base and Apra Harbor on the U.S. territory of Guam and transmitted them to Pyongyang, state media reported. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- While Japan, South Korea and the US could not immediately confirm if the satellite's payload had entered orbit late on Tuesday, a North Korean presence in space would add to military tensions on the peninsula and highlight the ineffectiveness of international sanctions. (Justin McCurry, [The Guardian](#))
- North Korean hackers posing as South Korean governmental agencies and journalists stole personal information to pilfer cryptocurrency, according to South Korea's National Police Agency on Tuesday. The police confirmed Tuesday that the hackers stole the information of 1,468 victims between March and October, including 57 incumbent or retired government officials in diplomacy, military and national security. (Lee Young-keun, Lee Soo-jung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- North Korea's military spy satellite appears to have entered into orbit, but more time would be needed to determine if it is operating properly, Seoul's military said Wednesday. The North launched the Malligyong-1 satellite from the country's west coast late Tuesday in its third attempt this year, claiming it has successfully entered into orbit. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- The rival parties on Wednesday condemned North Korea's latest launch of a purported spy satellite as a grave violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions. The main opposition Democratic Party (DP) also criticized the government's decision to suspend part of a 2018 inter-Korean military tension reduction agreement, saying it will end up escalating tensions on the divided peninsula. (Kang Jae-eun, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea has partially suspended an inter-Korean military tension reduction agreement in the first response against North Korea, a day after Pyongyang launched a military spy satellite in defiance of international pressure. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea suspended part of a 2018 inter-Korean military tension reduction agreement Wednesday in response to North Korea's latest launch of a military spy satellite. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korea appears to have made progress in its satellite program with technological assistance from Russia to enhance its surveillance on South Korea and effectiveness of its ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons, experts said Wednesday. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea's claimed success in placing its first military reconnaissance satellite into orbit on its third attempt has raised the possibility it could have received technological assistance from Russia. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- A Russian military aircraft flew to Pyongyang on Wednesday, less than a day after North Korea launched a military spy satellite in space, aviation tracking data shows. The flight by the Russian Air Force Ilyushin Il-62M passenger plane again draws attention to military cooperation between the two countries, after the U.S. alleged the DPRK was supplying weapons to Moscow, potentially in return for technical assistance with its space program. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Defense Minister Shin Won-sik said Wednesday South Korea plans to hold joint maritime drills with the United States and Japan involving a U.S. aircraft carrier to bolster military readiness and show their resolve against North Korea's provocations. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan shared information about North Korea's launch of what it claimed to be a military spy satellite, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said Wednesday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.S. nuclear-powered submarine arrived in South Korea on Wednesday, one day after North Korea's latest launch of a military spy satellite. The USS Santa Fe (SSN-763), a Los Angeles-class submarine, entered the Jeju Naval Base on the southern resort island in the morning, the South Korean Navy said, coinciding with North Korea's claim of success in its third attempt to send a spy satellite into orbit the previous day. (Yoo Cheong-mo, [Yonhap](#))

Arrests and detentions continue in China one month after China's forced repatriation of North Korean refugees

Ahn Joon-ho

VOA Korea

November 9, 2023

A month has passed since China forcibly repatriated hundreds of North Korean refugees to on October 9th. However, there is no way of knowing what happened to them. It has also been reported that North Korean refugees are still being arrested and detained in China. Experts have suggested that the international community should put more pressure on China. Reporter Ahn Joon-ho has the story.

Kim Chul-ok, who was sold to China at the age of 15, was arrested by Chinese police and forcibly repatriated to North Korea on October 9th. She had spent 25 years in China. Kim's family has not yet heard any news about her as of November 8th.

Kim's family has expressed frustration at this state of affairs. They have not heard anything yet, even though they shared Kim's name and photo with the U.S. and South Korean governments, the United Nations, media, and human rights organizations, hoping that this would help save Kim.

Other family members of repatriated North Korean refugees are frustrated because there is no way of knowing their whereabouts. There is currently no news of the hundreds of North Korean refugees forcibly repatriated to North Korea by Chinese authorities one month ago, and no information about their whereabouts.

The international community is condemning China's forced repatriation and calling for an end to human rights violations, such as torture and persecution, against the repatriated North Korean refugees. However, China continues to insist that there are no North Korean refugees in China, and North Korea has not issued any statements. Meanwhile, it has been reported that North Korean refugees are still being arrested and detained in China.

Lee Young-hwan, the executive director of the Transitional Justice Working Group, stated that arrests and detentions of North Korean refugees have been continuing in China, citing information from a source in China.

[Lee Young-hwan] "North Korean refugees have been arrested and detained on a small scale in various places, after the massive repatriation on October 9th. And it is very difficult now to verify whether forced repatriation is continuing. This is because China will not hastily repatriate North Korean refugees on a visible scale after the exposure of China's massive repatriation on October 9th and the resulting condemnation from the international community."

Peter Jung, the executive director of Justice for North Korea, a North Korean refugee support organization, also told VOA on the 8th that North Korean refugee arrests have continued as usual in China even after the October 9th mass repatriation, based on information from a source in China.

North Korean human rights activists predict that due to the international community's unity in condemning China's forced repatriation, China will forcibly repatriate North Korean escapees on a small scale to avoid drawing attention, rather than on a large scale like last month.

Experts point out that there is a high possibility of serious human rights violations, including torture and abuse, by the North Korean authorities after the forced repatriation.

In a report submitted to the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Elizabeth Salmón, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the DPRK, called on China to stop forced repatriation, stating that there are long-standing and credible reports that North Korean refugees forcibly returned to the DPRK would be subjected to torture and cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment and punishment and other serious human rights violations.

Human rights experts pointed out that the international community should put more pressure on China to prevent human rights violations such as the forced repatriation of North Korean refugees.

[Roberta Cohen, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights] “At the UN General Assembly, where a resolution on NK human rights will be introduced for adoption, cosponsors of the resolution should make sure the text of the resolution is strong on the subject of forced repatriation, and in the debate, cosponsors of the resolution (that usually number more than 50) should call for a moratorium on forced returns until the UNHCR is given access to the border to establish an adequate screening process for North Koreans.”

Greg Scarlatou, the Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK) in Washington, D.C, also stressed that China should be held accountable for the forced repatriation issue in a call with VOA.

[Scarlatou] “Any resolution at the UN should mention China by name, not a third country. Everybody's very shy about mentioning China by name. China continues to forcibly repatriate N. Koreans. If they stop the refoulement of North Korean refugees, the human rights situation overall in North Korea would see some improvement. So yes, China should definitely 100% be mentioned by name.”

Experts also stated that the international community should urge China to fulfill its international obligations as a party to the [1951 Refugee Convention](#), its 1967 Protocol, and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

[Phil Robertson, Deputy Director of Human Rights Watch's Asia Division] “What's most important is to press China to recognize North Koreans are refugees who deserve protection. Beijing must cease classifying them and treating them as ‘economic migrants’ subject to arrest and deportation. China's wholesale refusal to consider North Koreans as refugees is an outrageous, completely wanton denial of its obligations under the UN Refugee Convention of 1951, and its 1967 Protocol.”

Human rights experts have suggested that the international community should explain and persuade that it would also be in China's interest to stop forced repatriation and allow North Korean defectors to go to a third country of their choice.

[Cohen] “Over the past decade, China has shown interest in becoming a more active player in the worldwide refugee and humanitarian arena; such aspirations, it is important to point out, would be better achieved if they go hand in hand with the upholding of international refugee and human rights norms. Observing such norms could enhance China's international reputation and standing

and hopefully move it to encourage reforms in North Korea so that its people would be less likely to cross the border in flight.”

[Robertson] “The South Korean government and its allies must redouble their efforts to persuade the Chinese government to allow those still in detention to go to a third country of their choice. Doing so will not hurt China’s interests but rather will show that Beijing is prepared to play a responsible role in international efforts for refugee protection.”

Human rights experts added that due to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and the war between Israel and Hamas, it may be difficult for human rights issues surrounding North Korean refugees to receive attention. However, it is critical to raise awareness of the fact that North Korean refugees who are forcibly repatriated are likely to be exposed to serious human rights violations such as torture and abuse, forced abortion and forced labor, and summary executions.

[Scarlatoiu] “This is a very difficult environment. There are major crises in Ukraine, in the Middle East. As always, we unfortunately have to compete against other very important issues in order to get our message out there.”

[Scarlatoiu] “In this particular case, we have one important figure: Kim Cheol-ok. I think it’s very important for civil society to create campaigns and distribute information based on her plight. And again, it’s entirely up to like-minded governments, the United States, South Korea, Japan, to pass on this essential message.”

[Robertson] “The only way to help those forced back to North Korea is to highlight their plight, and demand that the North Korean government state clearly where these returnees are, what is being done to them, and to pledge to immediately stop any abuses against them. They should be immediately and unconditionally released, and permitted to travel quietly to a third country of their choice.”

This is Ahn Joon-ho, reporting for VOA News.

Translation by Katie (Jiwoo) Choi, HRNK Research Intern; Edited by Mohona Ganguly, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607102559/https://mailchi.mp/578d41b3c483/hrnk-news-items-arrests-and-detentions-continue-in-china-one-month-after-chinas-forced-repatriation-of-north-korean-refugees>

Thursday, November 23, 2023

North Korea scraps military deal with South, vows to deploy new weapons at border

In North Korea:

[Minor quake hits near N. Korea's nuclear test site: weather agency](#) (Yonhap, 11/23/2023)

[NK likely to restore guard posts at DMZ after ditching military agreement](#) (The Korea Times, 11/23/2023)

[N. Korea vows to restore all military measures halted under inter-Korean military accord](#) (Yonhap, 11/23/2023)

[North Korean rocket stage exploded after satellite launch, video shows](#) (Reuters, 11/23/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Defense chief says partial suspension of 2018 military agreement 'minimal defensive measure'](#) (Yonhap, 11/23/2023)

[North Korea fully suspends military pact with South](#) (BBC, 11/23/2023)

[North Korea scraps military deal with South, vows to deploy new weapons at border](#) (Reuters, 11/23/2023)

International:

[IAEA chief notes 'strong' water release from N. Korea's Yongbyon nuclear reactor](#) (Yonhap, 11/23/2023)

[IAEA chief Rafael Grossi says Yongbyon up and running again](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/23/2023)

[N Korea sends rocket data to Russia for advice: spy agency](#) (Radio Free Asia, 11/23/2023)

[North scraps military pact as South accuses Russia of satellite help](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/23/2023)

[North Korean insurance firm planning entry to Russian market, association says](#) (NK News, 11/23/2023)

[South Korea says Russian support likely enabled North Korea to successfully launch a spy satellite](#) (AP News, 11/23/2023)

In North Korea:

- A 2.6 magnitude earthquake struck near a North Korean nuclear test site Thursday, the latest in a series of natural temblors that hit the region recently, South Korea's state weather agency said. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea is likely to restore guard posts inside the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) as one of its initial moves to demonstrate the effective nullification of the 2018 inter-Korean military agreement, analysts said Thursday. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))

- North Korea said Thursday it will immediately restore all military measures it had halted under a 2018 inter-Korean military accord, a day after South Korea suspended part of the tension reduction deal following the North's launch of a military spy satellite. (Kim Soo-yeon, Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- One of the stages of North Korea's satellite launch rocket exploded after separation on Tuesday, video captured by an South Korean astronomy observatory showed, in what some analysts said may have been deliberate destruction to prevent recovery. (Josh Smith, Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Defense chief Shin Won-sik said Thursday that South Korea's partial suspension of a 2018 inter-Korean tension reduction deal is "a proportional response" and "a minimal defensive measure" against Pyongyang following its spy satellite launch. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has ripped up a five-year-old deal with Seoul aimed at lowering military tensions, in the latest escalation of a row between the two. (Jean Mackenzie, Phelan Chatterjee, [BBC](#))
- North Korea said on Thursday it would deploy stronger armed forces and new weapons on its border with the South, a day after Seoul suspended part of a 2018 military accord between the two Koreas in a protest over Pyongyang's launch of a spy satellite. (Soo-Hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))

International:

- The U.N. nuclear watchdog chief has reported a "strong" water outflow from a reactor's cooling system at North Korea's key nuclear complex in Yongbyon, hinting at the possible test-running of the facility suspected to be designed to produce more fissile material for nuclear bombs. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea is running its Yongbyon nuclear site again, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed Wednesday. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Russia has likely offered North Korea technological advice for its latest illegal satellite launch, the South's spy agency said Thursday, weighing in on weeks of speculation of Moscow's backing that could expedite Pyongyang's efforts to complete its surveillance system by 2025 (Lee Jeong-Ho, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- South Korea's intelligence agency told members of the National Assembly that Russian technological assistance enabled the North's successful launch of a spy satellite earlier this week, according to a conservative People Power Party (PPP) lawmaker on Thursday. (Lee Ho-jeong, Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- A North Korean reinsurance firm is weighing whether to enter the Russian market following the exodus of Western companies over the war in Ukraine, with a group of potential partners calling the move "promising." (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- South Korea has concluded that Russian support likely enabled North Korea to put a spy satellite into orbit for the first time this week, and it should be clear in several days whether it is functioning properly, officials said Thursday. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607102741/https://mailchi.mp/76329b8c69ad/hrnk-news-items-arrests-and-detentions-continue-in-china-one-month-after-chinas-forced-repatriation-of-north-korean-refugees-12237657>

Friday, November 24, 2023

Kim Jong-un praises North's "space guard" at celebration of spy satellite launch

In North Korea:

[How advanced are North Korea's ICBM capabilities?](#) (The Korea Times, 11/24/2023)

[Kim Jong-un praises North's 'space guard' at celebration of spy satellite launch](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/24/2023)

[Kim Jong Un says satellite launch will prevent 'invasion' by US, ROK](#) (NK News, 11/24/2023)

[New report maps chain of accountability for North Korean human rights abuses](#) (NK News, 11/24/2023)

[N. Korean leader lauds military spy satellite as 'space guard'](#) (Yonhap, 11/24/2023)

[North Korea hackers poison popular application to compromise over 100 devices](#) (NK News, 11/24/2023)

[North Korean spy satellite team attend banquet with Kim Jong-un and daughter Ju Ae](#) (The Guardian, 11/24/2023)

In South Korea:

[PUAC-Yonhap forum opens amid security challenges following N.K. satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 11/24/2023)

[South Korea says Russian support likely enabled North Korea to successfully launch a spy satellite](#) (AP News, 11/24/2023)

International:

[EU decries North Korean satellite launch as 'flagrant violation' of UN sanctions](#) (NK News, 11/24/2023)

[Fixing legal loopholes urgent to safeguard 2024 elections from China's potential interference](#) (The Korea Times, 11/24/2023)

[Foreign ministers of Korea, Japan, China to meet in Busan on Sunday](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/24/2023)

[Japan protests Seoul High Court's ruling in favor of 'comfort women' victims](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/24/2023)

[South Korea, UK issue advisory warning of North Korean cyberattacks](#) (NK News, 11/24/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea's recent launch of a space launch vehicle (SLV) has set off alarm bells in the U.S. and worldwide, intensifying concerns about progress in the regime's intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) capabilities. (Kim Hyun-bin, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un celebrated Pyongyang's successful launch of a military spy satellite during a visit to the headquarters of the regime's space agency, which he lauded as the North's "space guard," state media, Korea Central News Agency, reported Friday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un defended his country's new military reconnaissance satellite as necessary to "curb dangerous invasion moves by the hostile forces" while meeting with space program workers on Thursday, according to Korea Central News Agency. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- A new report has detailed the Ministry of State Security and the Ministry of Social Security use to hand down orders to those charged with carrying out mass incarcerations, torture and executions, findings that the authors say will help hold perpetrators responsible for violations of human rights. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has lauded the country's successful launch of a military spy satellite as an eye-opening event of deploying a "space guard" monitoring enemies' military activities, state media, Korea Central New Agency, reported Friday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean cybercriminals from Lazarus Group compromised over 100 devices worldwide by deploying a malicious version of a Taiwanese application, according to security researchers. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The North Korean dictator, Kim Jong-un, has celebrated a "new era of a space power" with his family including daughter Ju Ae and the scientists who put the North's first spy satellite into orbit. ([The Guardian](#))

In South Korea:

- The Peaceful Unification Advisory Council (PUAC) and Yonhap News Agency held a forum Friday to assess the environment for unification and discuss North Korea's evolving threats following its launch of a spy satellite earlier this week. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea has concluded that Russian support likely enabled North Korea to put a spy satellite into orbit for the first time this week, and it should be clear in several days whether it is functioning properly, officials said Thursday. Both Koreas threatened to breach a past reconciliation deal and take hostile actions along their heavily armed border. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))

International:

- The EU condemned North Korea's latest satellite launch as a "flagrant violation" of U.N. sanctions on Thursday, while expressing "deep concern" about military cooperation between Russia and the DPRK. The statement, issued on behalf of the EU's 27 states, came after North

Korea successfully placed a military spy satellite in orbit for the first time on Tuesday. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))

- Reps. Lee Sang-heon of the Democratic Party of Korea (DPK) and Cho Su-jin of the People Power Party (PPP) submitted their bills in January and February, respectively, to allow law enforcement agencies to arrest and press charges on foreign agents involved in suspicious activities. The current law defines espionage as “activities aiming to benefit an enemy,” singling out North Korea as a sole enemy state. Accordingly, the law makes it impossible for law enforcement officials to crack down on foreign agents from countries other than North Korea. (Kang Hyun-kyung, [The Korea Times](#))
- Foreign Minister Park Jin, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa will hold trilateral talks in Busan on Sunday following the North's launch of a military spy satellite earlier this week, according to Seoul's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Friday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The Japanese government on Friday expressed "regret" over a Seoul appellate court ruling calling on Tokyo to compensate Korean victims of wartime sexual slavery. Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Matsuno Hirokazu told reporters Friday that the latest decision was "extremely regrettable and absolutely unacceptable" and demanded Seoul to take "appropriate measures." (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The intelligence services of South Korea and the U.K. have issued a joint warning against North Korean cyber threats, stating that the techniques used by DPRK actors have grown “increasingly sophisticated” in recent years. (Anton Sokolin, Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607102927/https://mailchi.mp/0be5efb71477/hrnk-news-items-kim-jong-un-praises-norths-space-guard-at-celebration-of-spy-satellite-launch>

Saturday, November 25, 2023

N. Korea claims spy satellite took photos of U.S. aircraft carrier in S. Korea, Hawaii, other 'major target regions'

In North Korea:

[N. Korea claims spy satellite took photos of U.S. aircraft carrier in S. Korea, Hawaii, other 'major target regions'](#) (Yonhap, 11/25/2023)

[North Korea claims spy satellite captured images of USS Carl Vinson and military bases in Hawaii](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/25/2023)

International:

[Chinese, South Korean, Japanese Foreign Ministers to Meet](#) (VOA, 11/25/2023)

[FM Park says plans for trilateral summit with China, Japan to take form at ministers' talks](#) (Yonhap, 11/25/2023)

[Top diplomats of China, Japan in S. Korea for trilateral talks](#) (Yonhap, 11/25/2023)

[Top diplomats of S. Korea, U.S., Japan condemn N. Korea's space rocket launch in trilateral call](#) (Yonhap, 11/25/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea claimed Saturday its leader Kim Jong-un observed photos taken by the country's recently launched military spy satellite of "major target regions" in South Korea, where U.S. Army bases are located, and parts of Hawaii. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea claimed Saturday that its recently launched reconnaissance satellite has successfully captured images of the U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson and Hawaii, the central hub of the influential U.S. military command in the Pacific. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- The foreign ministers of South Korea, China and Japan are set to meet in Busan, South Korea, on Sunday, the first trilateral foreign ministerial meeting since August 2019. (Ge Jingyi, [VOA](#))
- Foreign Minister Park Jin said Saturday he expects the upcoming trilateral talks with his Chinese and Japanese counterparts will be a venue to help form the plans to resume the long-suspended summit of the three countries' leaders. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- The top diplomats of China and Japan arrived in South Korea on Saturday for trilateral talks with their South Korean counterpart on efforts to resume the long-suspended leaders' summit of the three neighbors. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- The top diplomats of South Korea, the United States and Japan "strongly" condemned North Korea's recent space rocket launch for its "destabilizing" effect in a trilateral call on Friday, the State Department said. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607103041/https://mailchi.mp/9f0524564714/hrnk-news-items-kim-jong-un-praises-norths-space-guard-at-celebration-of-spy-satellite-launch-12237662>

Sunday, November 26, 2023

Top diplomats of S. Korea, China, and Japan meet for first time in 4 years

In North Korea:

[N. Korean people urged to vote as local elections take place](#) (Yonhap, 11/26/2023)

[N. Korea registers 16 athletes for int'l weightlifting competition in Doha](#) (Yonhap, 11/26/2023)

[North Korea all tell, no show with spy satellite photos of U.S., South Korean sites](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/26/2023)

In South Korea:

[Mother devastated as daughter feared to be repatriated back to N. Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 11/26/2023)

[Yoon replaces spy agency leadership](#) (The Korea Herald, 11/26/2023)

International:

[China warns South Korea not to politicise economic issues](#) (Reuters, 11/26/2023)

[Japan complains over South Korea's 'comfort women' ruling in talks](#) (Kyodo News, 11/26/2023)

[Japan's Kishida Seeks Meeting with North Korea's Kim: Kyodo](#) (Bloomberg, 11/26/2023)

[S. Korea, China discuss N. Korea, Xi visit](#) (The Korea Herald, 11/26/2023)

[S Korea, Japan, China fail to set summit date, condemn N Korea](#) (Radio Free Asia, 11/26/2023)

[S. Korea, Japan, China agree to accelerate summit efforts](#) (The Korea Herald, 11/26/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S., Japan stage joint naval drills involving aircraft carrier](#) (Yonhap, 11/26/2023)

[Top diplomats of South Korea, China and Japan meet for first time in four years](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/26/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea called for residents to cast their ballots and "fulfill their duties as members of the republic" as the reclusive regime held its first local elections featuring more than one candidate Sunday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has registered 16 athletes to compete in an international weightlifting competition set to take place in Doha next month, according to the weightlifting governing body Sunday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea touted the capabilities of its recently launched reconnaissance satellite over the weekend, claiming to have successfully captured images of major South Korean and U.S. military bases. However, Pyongyang has yet to disclose any footage it claims to have taken, raising questions about the quality of the imagery. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- A North Korean defector, who asked to be identified only by her surname Kim, has panicked as the worst-case scenario about her daughter, appears to have become a reality. (Kang Hyun-kyung, [The Korea Times](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol accepted the National Intelligence Service head Kim Kyou-hyun's offer to step down from the post without naming his successor. (Son Ji-hyoung, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi warned his South Korean counterpart on Sunday not to politicise economic and tech issues as the two prepared to meet Japan's top diplomat on the sidelines of a trilateral meeting aimed at boosting cooperation. ([Reuters](#))
- Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa said Tokyo finds it regrettable that a Seoul court recently ruled in favor of former 'comfort women' who are seeking compensation from the Japanese government as she held talks with South Korean counterpart Park Jin in Busan on Sunday. ([Kyodo News](#))
- Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said he'll intensify efforts to realize a meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, according to Kyodo News Sunday. (Kanoko Matsuyama, [Bloomberg](#))
- China's top diplomat Wang Yi expressed concerns over intensifying tension on Korean Peninsula and said that China will play a role in stabilizing the situation during a meeting with his South Korean counterpart Park Jin, the Foreign Ministry said Sunday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea, Japan, and China have not only failed to agree on a date for a landmark trilateral summit of their leaders, but also in jointly condemning North Korea's latest illegal satellite launch, exposing the widening gaps in reinvigorating that three-party cooperation. (Lee Jeong-ho, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- The top diplomats of South Korea, Japan and China reached a consensus on Sunday to accelerate efforts to hold a trilateral summit at the earliest time, but without specifying a time frame. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan jointly conducted naval drills in waters south of the Korean Peninsula on Sunday to bolster their defense posture against North Korea's evolving nuclear and missile threats, the South's Navy said. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- The foreign ministers of South Korea, China and Japan held their first meeting in more than four years in Busan on Sunday. The last time the foreign ministers from all three countries held a trilateral meeting was in August 2019. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Prepared by Katie-Jiwoo Choi, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607103251/https://mailchi.mp/bbe0a74169fe/daily-press-1126-2023>

Monday, November 27, 2023

N. Korea vows to exercise 'sovereign rights' including satellite launch

In North Korea:

[Infamous North Korean ferry returns home after month of maintenance near Russia](#) (NK News, 11/27/2023)

[Kim Jong-un visits machinery plant amid alleged arms deal with Russia](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/27/2023)

[N. Korea vows to exercise 'sovereign rights' including satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 11/27/2023)

[Voter turnout for N. Korea's local elections at 99.63 pct: KCNA](#) (Yonhap, 11/27/2023)

In South Korea:

[South Korea: Man gets 14-month jail term for praising North in poem](#) (BBC, 11/27/2023)

[South Korean defence industry rides global order wave](#) (Financial Times, 11/27/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea claims S. Korea violated key inter-Korean agreements](#) (Yonhap, 11/27/2023)

[N. Korea restoring guard posts, bringing heavy firearms along inter-Korean border](#) (Yonhap, 11/27/2023)

International:

[China, Japan and South Korea, amid regional rivalries, line up leaders' summit](#) (The Guardian, 11/27/2023)

[North Korea closes embassy in Bangladesh, citing 'operational' realignment](#) (NK News, 11/27/2023)

In North Korea:

- A large North Korean ferry accused of sanctions-busting activities during past trips to Japan has returned to the DPRK east coast port city of Wonsan after undergoing maintenance or upgrades for a month. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, who has been frequenting the National Aerospace Technology Administration's Pyongyang General Control Center since the launching of the North's reconnaissance satellite last week, showed up at a machinery production plant. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korea said Monday it will continue to exercise what it called its sovereign rights as it dismissed international condemnation over its latest satellite launch. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said Monday the voter turnout for local elections held over the weekend was recorded at 99.63 percent, with its leader Kim Jong-un casting his ballot. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- A South Korean court has sentenced a 68-year-old man to 14 months in jail for praising the North in a poem. Lee Yoon-seop advocated for unification in his piece that was published in the North's state media in 2016, South Korean media report. He was convicted under a law that prohibits public praise of North Korea. (Kelly Ng, [BBC](#))
- When South Korean arms companies secured a package of deals from the Polish government last year worth almost \$14bn, it heralded a new era for the country's defence industry. Decades of preparation for war with North Korea have helped the East Asian country to

emerge as one of the world's top 10 defence exporters. (Christian Davies, Song Jung-a, Mercedes Ruehl, Sylvia Pfeifer, [Financial Times](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea claimed Monday that South Korea has breached a 2018 inter-Korean military accord and other key agreements between the two Koreas, condemning joint military drills between Seoul and Washington as a provocative act that violates the military accord. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has begun rebuilding guard posts and bringing heavy firearms along the border with South Korea after effectively scrapping a 2018 inter-Korean military tension reduction deal, the defense ministry said Monday. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The leaders of China, Japan and South Korea will meet, possibly next year, in the latest attempt to ease regional tensions heightened by North Korea's weapons programme and a more visible US military presence. (Justin McCurry, [The Guardian](#))
- The North Korean Embassy in Bangladesh has closed, a Bangladeshi official told NK News on Monday, the latest in a spate of DPRK mission closures over the past month. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Jody Chen, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607103418/https://mailchi.mp/8c2fa8402006/daily-press-1126-12237667>

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

HRNK Exec. Director Scarlatoiu on The John Batchelor Show

Top News:

[HRNK Exec. Director Scarlatoiu on The John Batchelor Show](#) (11/22/2023)

[U.S. Special Envoy Turner: "We need a new strategy to send outside information into North Korea"](#) ([Yonhap](#), 10/21/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[North Korea cites rare dissent in elections even as 99% back candidates](#) ([Reuters](#), 11/28/2023)

In South Korea:

[Kim's daughter might have been named successor, says defector-turned-lawmaker](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/28/2023)

[S. Korea delays spy satellite launch due to bad weather](#) (Yonhap, 11/28/2023)

[South warns North it will respond to provocations 'without hesitation'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 11/28/2023)

[Yoon vows stronger deterrence against N.K. nuclear threat](#) (Yonhap, 11/28/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korean soldiers in truce village armed with pistols: sources](#) (Yonhap, 11/28/2023)

[South Korea to restore guard posts along border after North Korea did same](#) (NK News, 11/28/2023)

International:

[North Korea to shutter embassy in Democratic Republic of Congo](#) (NK News, 11/28/2023)

[Rights experts criticize China for denying torture in North Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 11/28/2023)

[U.N. official criticizes N. Korea's rocket launch as 'serious' risk to civil aviation, maritime traffic](#) (Yonhap, 11/28/2023)

[U.S. says N. Korean actions along DMZ increasing risk of military tensions, miscalculations](#) (Yonhap, 11/28/2023)

[USS Carl Vinson Underway with Japanese, South Korean Warships for Deterrence Patrol](#) (USNI News, 11/27/2023)

[US, S. Korea cast doubt over NK's satellite photos](#) (The Korea Times, 11/28/2023)

Top News:

- HRNK Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu discusses recent developments relating to the Korean Peninsula, including President Yoon Suk-Yeol's state visit to the U.K. and North Korea's satellite launch. ([The John Batchelor Show](#))
- Julie Turner, the U.S. Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights, said on October 20th that “we need to develop a new strategy to bring information into North Korea.” (Kang Byung-chul, [Yonhap](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea on Tuesday made a rare mention of dissenting votes in recent elections, although analysts dismissed it as an attempt to portray an image of a normal society rather than signalling any meaningful increase of rights in the authoritarian state. (Soo-Hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))

In South Korea:

- People Power Party Rep. Tae Yong-ho said if a report that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's daughter has been praised as the “rising star female general,” is accurate, it means she has been selected as Kim's successor. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's plan to launch its first military spy satellite has been postponed due to bad weather, the defense ministry said Tuesday. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

- President Yoon Suk Yeol criticized North Korea for trying to sustain the regime with nuclear weapons and missiles on Tuesday, as tensions flare between the two Koreas following the suspension of a landmark military agreement. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol vowed Tuesday to work together with the United States and Japan to strengthen deterrence against North Korea's nuclear threat and improve the human rights situation in the country. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korean soldiers stationed in the Joint Security Area (JSA) of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) have been carrying pistols since the North scrapped a 2018 inter-Korean military tension reduction agreement, sources said Tuesday. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea plans to restore guard posts it withdrew from after implementing a 2018 inter-Korean military agreement, a top official said Monday, following North Korea's decision to totally scrap the deal and return to border posts with heavy weapons. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- The North Korean Embassy in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is set to close, the central African country's foreign ministry told NK News, making it the seventh DPRK overseas mission to shut its doors since late October. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- Human rights advocates were shocked last month to find out that hundreds of North Korean escapees were forcibly deported by China after three years of pandemic border restrictions came to an end. Recently, they were shocked again by Beijing's claim that the principle of non-refoulement cannot be applied to its policy because there is "no evidence of torture" in North Korea. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea's rocket launch poses a "serious" risk to international civil aviation and maritime traffic, a senior U.N. official said Monday during a U.N. Security Council (UNSC) session on the North's recent space rocket launch. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's actions taking place along the inter-Korean border are raising the risk of military tensions and miscalculations, a State Department spokesperson said Monday, as the recalcitrant regime began reinstalling guard posts and heavy firearms there. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- The Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group carried out a trilateral drill on Sunday in the East China Sea with the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force and the Republic of Korea Navy as a deterrence display following North Korea's launch of a reconnaissance satellite on Nov. 21. (Dzirhan Mahadzir, [USNI News](#))
- The U.S. responded immediately by saying, "Pyongyang must immediately cease its provocative actions." But at the same time, officials in Seoul, Washington and experts are voicing doubts about the capability of the North's spy satellite, as Pyongyang is not revealing any photos that it claimed the spacecraft took. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))

U.S. Special Envoy Turner: "We need a new strategy to send outside information into North Korea"

Kang Byung-chul

October 21, 2023

<https://www.yna.co.kr/view/AKR20231021002300071>

Julie Turner, the U.S. Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights, said on October 20th that “we need to develop a new strategy to bring information into North Korea.”

“North Korea has passed a series of laws restricting access to outside information since December 2020,” Turner said at the Korea Policy Forum, held at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

Regarding the plan to expand the flow of external information into North Korea, she mentioned the issue of content curation and delivery method development as major tasks.

First of all, regarding content curation, she said, “The increase in North Korean defectors abroad provides an opportunity to share information or perspectives that only those who have experienced North Korea in person can have.”

“The information delivery mechanism is related to new technologies such as mobile phones that increase access to information in a closed society,” she explained.

When asked if satellites would also be considered as a way to expand the supply of outside information to North Korea, Turner said, “We are not only looking for innovative content production programs, but we are also looking to invest in innovative technologies that include satellites and other available means.”

“I would like to emphasize that it is worthwhile to continue to use old technologies that have been used for decades, such as radio broadcasting,” she said.

“I will start efforts to urge North Korea to respect human rights and basic freedoms,” Turner said after citing the North's Law on Rejecting Reactionary Ideology and Culture, as a challenge to expand the flow of information to the North. “This includes directly expressing a message to North Korea on the Law on Rejecting Reactionary Ideology and Culture and the abolition of other repressive laws.”

Special envoy Turner reiterated her position that she would make efforts to revitalize efforts to hold North Korea accountable for human rights violations at the UN level, saying, “North Koreans have suffered from abusive policies for too long.”

The Security Council held a public session on North Korean human rights in August for the first time in five years, she said. “It is an achievement just to hold this meeting, but it is also important to use this momentum to continue to pursue change.”

“I will cooperate with other like-minded governments to hold those responsible for access to information and human rights abuses in North Korea,” she said.

Regarding China, Special Envoy Turner said, “I am seriously concerned about reports that China has recently repatriated a large number of North Korean defectors, including last week,” and promised, “The State Department periodically raises this issue to China and will continue to do so.”

She also explained, “The United States has a long history of raising this issue in China and has continued to do so regarding recent cases, including last week.”

However, when asked about China's response to the U.S. issue, she avoided an immediate answer, saying, “We usually do not disclose diplomatic dialogue.”

Greg Scarlatoiu, the executive director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), said in a discussion after the keynote speech, “They are afraid of the content of South Korea and hostile countries, and of even seeing such content altogether.”

“One of the big problems we have seen at the North Korean border is the deployment of closed-circuit TVs (CCTVs),” said Martyn Williams, a senior fellow at the Stimson Center. “CCTV began to appear along the border fence during COVID-19, and many control centers are equipped with CCTVs.”

“If these cameras are connected to the network and the video signal is transmitted somewhere, the problem becomes more serious,” he said. “We can bribe soldiers at the border, but we don't know who else might be watching.”

Special Envoy Turner officially began her activities after she was sworn in on October 13th.

As a result, the gap in position of the U.S. Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights, which had lasted for about six years since former Special Envoy Robert King left office in January 2017, has been filled.

Translation by Haeun Moon, HRNK Research Intern; edited by Mohona Ganguly, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Debby Kim, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607103836/https://mailchi.mp/933dc1e5f4b0/hrnk-news-items-hrnk-exec-director-scarlatoiu-on-the-john-batchelor-show>

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

Modest Beginnings: North Korea Launches Its First Reconnaissance Satellite

In North Korea:

[Modest Beginnings: North Korea Launches Its First Reconnaissance Satellite](#) (38 North, 11/28/2023)
[North Korea resumes work on new warship, months after launching sister ship](#) (NK News, 11/29/2023)
[Red flag raised on North Korea's unchecked space ambitions](#) (The Korea Times, 11/29/2023)

In South Korea:

[Human rights group slams decision to jail ROK man for poem praising North Korea](#) (NK News, 11/29/2023)
[S. Korea mulling restoring disarmed guard post on eastern front: sources](#) (Yonhap, 11/28/2023)
[Unification minister says inflow of outside information important for N.K. residents](#) (Yonhap, 11/29/2023)

International:

[From Moscow to Pyongyang: How North Korea broke with Soviets and embraced China](#) (NK News, 11/29/2023)
[N. Korea closes diplomatic missions in Bangladesh, DR Congo: reports](#) (Radio Free Asia, 11/29/2023)
[U.S. says 'plenty' of White House, Pentagon images available online after N.K. claim on satellite imagery](#) (Yonhap, 11/29/2023)
[US, S. Korea cast doubt over NK's satellite photos](#) (The Korea Times, 11/29/2023)
[U.S. slaps additional N. Korea, Iran-related sanctions](#) (Yonhap, 11/29/2023)
[Why Russian airlines may be eyeing routes to North Korea amid burgeoning ties](#) (NK News, 11/29/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea conducted a satellite launch on November 21, first reported by Japanese and South Korean sources. The next day, North Korean media announced a successful launch from the Sohae Satellite Launching Ground of the “Chollima -1” space-launch vehicle (SLV) orbiting the “Malligyong-1” reconnaissance satellite. This was the first successful launch of the Chollima-1 SLV after two previous failures. Based on images of the launch, there do not appear to have been any external changes to the SLV over the three launches, and Pyongyang probably regards the Chollima-1 as ready for further satellite launches. (Vann H. Van Diepen, [38 North](#))
- North Korea appears to have resumed work on a warship that has been under development for the last decade, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery, following the long-awaited deployment of its sister ship in August. The relocation of the roughly 250-foot (77 meter) vessel to a drydock in the northeast city of Rason may be to equip new weapons

systems in preparation for its entering service, one expert said, as leader Kim Jong Un pushes to upgrade his naval fleet. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

- North Korea's spy satellite, Malligyong-1, which entered Earth's orbit on Nov. 21, is being increasingly perceived as less threatening than initially feared after a technological setback was revealed in its images. The photographs taken by the spy satellite are believed to have a resolution far below what is required for military purposes. (Kang Hyun-kyung, [The Korea Times](#))

In South Korea:

- Amnesty International demanded South Korean authorities drop charges against a man for submitting a poem to a North Korean writing competition praising the DPRK regime. The Seoul Central District Court sentenced 68-year-old Lee Yun-seop to 14 months in jail on Monday for violating the country's National Security Act after he won a contest held by the North Korean propaganda outlet Uriminzokkiri in 2016. (Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))
- The South Korean military is considering restoring a disarmed guard post on the eastern front in a tit-for-tat response to North Korea's latest move to rebuild its own and redeploy weapons in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating the two Koreas, sources said Wednesday. South and North Korea demolished 10 guard posts each in the DMZ following a 2018 inter-Korean military tension reduction deal, while leaving one each intact but unarmed given their historical value. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's point man on North Korea stressed Wednesday the importance of providing outside information to North Korean people as a means to improve dire human rights conditions in the North. Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho made the remarks at a forum in Seoul featuring the Sages Group -- an association of prominent experts on North Korean human rights -- as the reclusive regime has been tightening its grip on residents to block the inflow of outside information. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- When a Russian military delegation attended a North Korean military parade earlier this year, it appeared to be the strongest confirmation to date that Pyongyang had shifted its attention from Beijing to Moscow. The pages of the Rodong Sinmun newspaper were filled with articles and photos on Russian defense chief Sergei Shoigu's activities in the DPRK, while a Chinese political delegation received relatively scant coverage. (Andrei Lankov, [NK News](#))
- In yet another closure of diplomatic missions, North Korea has been shutting down its embassies in Bangladesh and the Democratic Republic of Congo, foreign news reports showed Wednesday. They are the latest in the list of overseas missions Pyongyang has shut down in the past months, including those in Angola, Hong Kong, Nepal, Spain and Uganda. North Korea has said the closures are part of efforts to enhance its diplomatic efficiency. (Taejun Kang, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- The U.S. Department of Defense said Tuesday that there are "plenty" of images of the White House and the Pentagon already available online, after North Korea claimed its military spy satellite took photos of key U.S. government and military facilities. In a press briefing, Brig.

Gen. Patrick Ryder, the department's press secretary, also reiterated the United States' "ironclad" defense commitment to South Korea, as Pyongyang started reinstalling guard posts and heavy weapons along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating the two Koreas. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea claimed, Tuesday, that its military satellite took photos of the White House, the Pentagon and nuclear-powered aircraft carriers docked at a U.S. naval base. The U.S. responded immediately by saying, "Pyongyang must immediately cease its provocative actions." But at the same time, officials in Seoul, Washington and experts are voicing doubts about the capability of the North's spy satellite, as Pyongyang is not revealing any photos that it claimed the spacecraft took. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- The U.S. Department of the Treasury announced additional North Korea and Iran-related sanctions on Wednesday, after Pyongyang's space rocket launch last week and tensions with the Islamic republic over Tehran-backed militants' attacks in the Middle East. The department added Sinbad.io -- a cryptocurrency mixer thought to be linked to Lazarus, a North Korean hacker group -- and other individuals and entities to its sanctions list, according to its website. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- A proposal for Russian airlines to operate on new routes to North Korea reflects growing bilateral ties but also raises serious feasibility issues, experts say, with sanctions and limited demand likely to keep the plan from taking off. Russian aviation authorities have approached the country's main carrier Aeroflot and its former subsidiary Aurora with a proposal to operate flights to Pyongyang, the Russian newspaper Kommersant reported last week, citing anonymous sources. (Andrei Lankov, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Alejandro Cassal, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607104055/https://mailchi.mp/dfc9e11f36ff/hrnk-news-items-modest-beginnings-north-korea-launches-its-first-reconnaissance-satellite>

Thursday, November 30, 2023

North Korea's post-reform elections looked a lot like those that came before

In North Korea:

[In orbit: Everything we know about North Korea's new spy satellite so far](#) (NK News, 11/30/2023)

[North Korea's post-reform elections looked a lot like those that came before](#) (NK News, 11/30/2023)

[State media review: North Korea faults 'puppets' for collapse of military deal](#) (NK News, 11/30/2023)

In South Korea:

[Seoul defends defector remittances to North Korea as police probes raise concern](#) (NK News, 11/30/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea condemns S. Korea over suspension of military accord](#) (Yonhap, 11/30/2023)

[S. Korea halts Panmunjom tour again over armed N. Korean troops in DMZ](#) (Yonhap, 11/30/2023)

International:

[N. Korea rules out talks with U.S.](#) (Yonhap, 11/30/2023)

[N. Korea says spy satellite took photos of U.S. bases in San Diego, Japan](#) (Yonhap, 11/30/2023)

[NK will never discuss 'sovereignty' with US, says Kim Yo-jong](#) (The Korea Herald, 11/30/2023)

[U.S. military unveils photos of training near DMZ amid heightened tension](#) (Yonhap, 11/30/2023)

[U.S. sanctions cryptocurrency mixer used by N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 11/30/2023)

[U.S. slaps additional N. Korea, Iran-related sanctions](#) (Yonhap, 11/30/2023)

[Why is North Korea saying it's watching the White House?](#) (BBC, 11/29/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea finally succeeded in putting the country's first military reconnaissance satellite into low-Earth orbit this month, an achievement that state media has since trumpeted almost daily. Over a week after the launch, key details surrounding the performance, technical capabilities and limitations of the new asset still remain opaque, and some experts, including in the South Korean government, have been inclined to downplay the DPRK's success. (Hannah Harris, [NK News](#))
- North Koreans went to the polls for the first time in several years over the weekend, and while the DPRK revealed procedural changes ahead of the vote, the published results showed that it was far from a free or fair election. State media once again claimed nearly perfect voter turnout, with only a small portion of the electorate unable to cast ballots because they were overseas. (Martin Weiser, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's official news agency slammed South Korea for engaging in military cooperation with the U.S. on Thursday, holding Seoul responsible for the breakdown of a 2018 inter-Korean military agreement that has seen both sides move to boost military activities. along their shared border. State media devoted significant coverage to local elections that took place on Sunday and aired interviews with citizens who boasted they live in the world's most democratic country, even though only one candidate ran in each district. (Seung-Yeon Chung, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's unification ministry said it is "uncommon" for North Korean defectors to face legal action over the transfer of small sums of money to family members in the DPRK, after police probes raised concerns among escapees about their ability to send such remittances. The statement in response to NK News questions reasserted the government's long-standing position of allowing the money transfers on humanitarian grounds, while suggesting that the ministry opposes the police investigations. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea denounced South Korea on Thursday over the partial suspension of a 2018 military tension-reduction agreement, saying Seoul has "pulled the last remaining safety pin with its own hands." The criticism came as Seoul partially suspended part of the Comprehensive Military Agreement in protest of Pyongyang's launch of a military spy satellite. (KCNA). (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- A tour program to the truce village of Panmunjom on the inter-Korean border has been suspended again as safety concerns increased due to North Korean soldiers armed with pistols in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating the two Koreas, the unification ministry said Thursday. The government partially resumed the tour program on Nov. 22, after it had been halted since mid-July following U.S. Army private Travis King crossing the border into North Korea. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un on Thursday ruled out the possibility of resuming dialogue with the United States amid fresh tensions over Pyongyang's satellite launch. U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Linda Thomas-Greenfield has said Washington continues to call for dialogue on any topic with Pyongyang, without preconditions, and that it is up to North Korea "to make that choice" and "choose the time and the topic." (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said Thursday the country's military spy satellite has taken photos of U.S. military facilities in San Diego and Japan, as well as the Suez Canal in Egypt. Leader Kim Jong-un viewed the satellite photos taken Wednesday when he received an operations report from the Pyongyang General Control Center of the National Aerospace Technology Administration, according to the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea will never discuss its "sovereignty" in negotiations with the United States in any circumstances, Kim Yo-jong, sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, said Thursday in a statement, framing the recent launch of a purported military spy satellite as an assertion of sovereignty. Kim, vice department director of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, denounced Washington for publicly criticizing Pyongyang's launch of what it claimed to be a military reconnaissance satellite on Nov. 21 at a meeting at the UN Security Council on Monday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The U.S. Indo-Pacific Command has released photos of a U.S. Army chemical corps company conducting joint drills with South Korean forces near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) amid heightened tension along the border with North Korea. American soldiers from the 59th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear Company have been training together with U.S. Forces Korea and South Korean troops near the DMZ to bolster the combined defense posture, the command said in a post Wednesday (local time), without specifying the schedule. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. Department of the Treasury on Wednesday sanctioned a cryptocurrency mixer for serving as a "key money-laundering tool" of a North Korea-linked hacking group, in the latest effort to prevent Pyongyang's cyber activities meant to fund its weapons programs. The department added Sinbad.io, a virtual currency mixer used by Lazarus Group, to its Office of

Foreign Assets Control (OFAC)'s sanctions list. It described the group -- already sanctioned in 2019 -- as a "state-sponsored cyber hacking group" of the North. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#)).

- The U.S. Department of the Treasury announced additional North Korea and Iran-related sanctions on Wednesday, after Pyongyang's space rocket launch last week and tensions with the Islamic republic over Tehran-backed militants' attacks in the Middle East. The department added Sinbad.io -- a cryptocurrency mixer thought to be linked to Lazarus, a North Korean hacker group -- and other individuals and entities to its sanctions list, according to its website. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Still, leader Kim Jong Un has been crowing over his new surveillance toy; and he's been happily sharing the alleged results. Reports put out by state media on Tuesday trumpeted a list of targets the North says it's seen: the White House, the Pentagon and air force bases along the US north-east coast and in its Pacific territory of Guam. (Frances Mao, [BBC](#))

Prepared by Alejandro Cassal, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240625133904/https://mailchi.mp/9ccf4656dd74/hrnk-news-items-north-koreas-post-ref-orm-elections-looked-a-lot-like-those-that-came-before>

12. DECEMBER

Friday, December 1, 2023

Kim Jong Un's daughter rocks Gucci shades despite crackdown on bourgeois culture

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un appears with new Ford vans in rare endorsement of American brand](#) (NK News, 12/1/23)

[Kim Jong Un's daughter rocks Gucci shades despite crackdown on bourgeois culture](#) (NK News, 12/1/23)

[N. Korean leader urges increased aerial combat posture amid tension over satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 12/1/23)

In South Korea:

[Finding right job still a tough mission for N. Korean defectors in S. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 12/1/23)

[Korea's first homegrown spy satellite launched on SpaceX rocket](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/2/23)

[S. Korean court network hit by malware infection](#) (The Korea Herald, 12/1/23)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea imposes sanctions on 11 N. Korean individuals after spy satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 12/1/23)

International:

[Israeli ambassador urges Korea to continue support for elimination of Hamas](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/1/23)

[Japan Fears Growing Threat From North Korea's Latest Spy Satellite](#) (The Diplomat, 12/2/23)

[National security advisers of S. Korea, U.S., Japan to meet in Seoul next week](#) (Yonhap, 12/1/23)

[S. Korea, US, Japan, Australia jointly announce sanctions on NK](#) (The Korea Herald, 12/1/23)

[U.S. leaves N. Korea on state sponsors of terrorism list in 2022 report](#) (Yonhap, 12/1/23)

In North Korea:

- The entourage of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un used new passenger vans made by American brand Ford during his visit to air force headquarters on Thursday, according to NK News analysis of state media photos. The appearance of two fourth-generation Ford Transit vans manufactured since 2021 is Pyongyang's latest demonstration of its ability to evade U.N. sanctions, which have prohibited the transfer of all transportation vehicles to North Korea since 2017. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- Kim Jong Un's daughter sported what look to be Gucci sunglasses during an appearance with her father on Thursday, the latest example of Pyongyang elites flouting luxury brands

despite ongoing crackdowns on “bourgeois culture” and “anti-socialist” behavior. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has called on the air force to enhance its combat posture to “immediately and powerfully” respond to military threats by enemies, Pyongyang’s state media reported Friday. Kim made the call during a visit to the Air Force Command on Thursday on the occasion of the Day of Airmen that fell on Nov. 29, according to the Korean Central News Agency. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- For many North Korean defectors in South Korea, arriving here in one piece is one thing, but finding a job to support themselves in the capitalist society is another mission. The jobless rate of North Korean defectors in South Korea reached 6 percent in 2022, more than twofold of the 3 percent for all South Koreans, while their average retention period came in at 35.3 months, less than half of 72 months for all South Koreans, according to government data. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- Korea’s first homegrown spy satellite has been launched to orbit on SpaceX’s Falcon 9 rocket at 10:19 p.m. on Friday Pacific time at the Vandenberg Space Force Base in California. The satellite, equipped with a high-resolution imaging system, will not only monitor North Korean threats, including major facilities such as missile bases and nuclear arsenal testing sites, in near real-time but also play a key role in Korea’s kill chain defense system. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea’s Supreme Court belatedly revealed that it had confirmed the infection of computers used in courts with malware earlier this year. However, the court said it could not conclusively determine the connection of cyberattacks to North Korea. (Lee Jung-joo, [The Korea Herald](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea imposed unilateral sanctions Friday on 11 North Korean individuals involved in satellite and ballistic missile development, in response to the North’s launch of a military spy satellite last week, Seoul’s foreign ministry said. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Israeli Ambassador Akiva Tor called on Korea to continue being a “a good world citizen” with its support for the elimination of the militant group Hamas in Gaza in an interview with the Korea JoongAng Daily held at the Israeli Embassy on Thursday afternoon. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Japan is facing a new level of military threat from North Korea following the launch of a surveillance satellite on November 21. After two previous failed attempts in May and August, North Korea’s spy satellite is in orbit, as confirmed by the U.S Space Force, although its capabilities remain unknown. North Korea’s leader Kim Jong Un is celebrating the country’s “new era of space power” and promised to launch “multiple” satellites in the coming future. (Thisanka Siripala, [The Diplomat](#))

- The national security advisers of South Korea, Japan and the United States will meet in Seoul next week, government sources said Friday, amid escalating threats from North Korea following its launch of a military satellite. ([Yonhap](#))
- In an unprecedented move, South Korea, the United States, Australia and Japan collectively and consecutively declared the imposition of unilateral sanctions on North Korea on Thursday and Friday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The United States has kept North Korea on its list of state sponsors of terrorism, an annual State Department report showed Thursday, noting the reclusive regime repeatedly supported acts of international terrorism. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gabrielle Drinkwine, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607123123/https://mailchi.mp/741fe5a3c3cc/hrnk-news-items-hrnk-exec-director-scarlatoi-on-the-john-batchelor-show-12237700>

Saturday, December 2, 2023

Revitalizing America's N. Korea Policy

Top News:

[Revitalizing America's North Korea Policy](#) (*The National Interest*, 12/01/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea to hold plenary meeting of ruling Workers' Party in late Dec.: state media](#) (*Yonhap*, 12/02/2023)

[N. Korea bristles at U.S. over comments about possible disabling of spy satellite](#) (*Yonhap*, 12/02/2023)

[N. Korea vows to take countermeasures against organizations that impose sanctions](#) (*Yonhap*, 12/02/2023)

[North Korea says interference in its satellites would be declaration of war](#) (*Reuters*, 12/02/2023)

In South Korea:

[PPP slams abstainers in Assembly resolution on China's forced return of NK defectors](#) (*The Korea Times*, 12/02/2023)

[Seoul High Court calls off defector group's license repeal over anti-North leafleting](#) (*Yonhap*, 12/01/2023)

[South Korea to develop stealth submarines](#) (*UPI*, 12/01/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Koreas' spy satellite launches heat up arms race in space](#) (Yonhap, 12/02/2023)

[S. Korea imposes sanctions on 11 N. Korean individuals after spy satellite launch](#) (Yonhap, 12/01/2023)

International:

[Spanish Aristocrat Arrested For Helping Teach North Koreans How To Avoid U.S. Sanctions With Cryptocurrency](#) (Forbes, 12/01/2023)

[U.N. World Food Program extends assistance plan for N. Korea by one year](#) (Yonhap, 12/02/2023)

Top News:

- The ROK and the United States must maintain the highest state of military readiness to deter war, adopt a human rights first approach and a comprehensive and sophisticated information and influence campaign, and focus all efforts on pursuing a free and united Korea. (David Maxwell, [The National Interest](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea will hold a plenary meeting of the ruling Workers' Party (WPK) later this month to discuss this year's state policies and policy goals for next year, its state media said Saturday. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea lashed out at the United States on Saturday after a U.S. space official hinted at possible disabling of the North's military spy satellite launched last week, saying that it will take it as "a declaration of war" against the regime. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said Saturday that it will take countermeasures against individuals and organizations that impose sanctions against the regime. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea said on Saturday it would consider any interference with its satellite operations a declaration of war and would mobilise its war deterrence if any attack against its strategic assets were imminent. (Heekyong Yang, [Reuters](#))

In South Korea:

- Seven opposition lawmakers are taking flak for giving up their votes in the National Assembly adopting a resolution calling on China to stop forcibly repatriating North Korean defectors. (Nam Hyun-woo, [The Korea Times](#))
- The Seoul High court on Friday ordered the government to reverse its decision to revoke the license of a North Korean defectors' group for sending anti-Pyongyang propaganda leaflets over to the North. (Kim Hyun-soo, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea, which is still technically at war with North Korea, is planning to develop stealth submarines. (Jeong Hyeon-hwan & Kim Tae-gyu, [UPI](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Space has emerged as an extended battlefield for the rival Koreas as they have successfully launched their own spy satellites into orbit and are gearing up to send more to better

monitor each other amid an intensifying arms race, analysts said Saturday. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

- South Korea imposed unilateral sanctions Friday on 11 North Korean individuals involved in satellite and ballistic missile development, in response to the North's launch of a military spy satellite last week, Seoul's foreign ministry said. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- A Spanish citizen from an aristocratic family was arrested by Spanish police on Friday for organizing a cryptocurrency conference in North Korea--where the U.S. Department of Justice believes attendees taught the country's officials how to use the technology to evade sanctions. (Zachary Folk, [Forbes](#))
- The U.N. World Food Program has extended its food assistance plan for North Korea by another year to the end of 2024, according to an updated document on its website Saturday. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Angela Yoon, HRNK Research Inter

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607123617/https://mailchi.mp/2be2115fbadc/hrnk-news-items-revitalizing-americas-n-korea-policy>

Sunday, December 3, 2023

N. Korea warns 'physical clash, war' on Korean Peninsula a matter of time, not possibility

In North Korea:

[North Korea says new spy satellite starts mission to aid nuclear missile units](#) (NK News, 12/03/2023)

[North Korea's spy satellite operation office begins work: KCNA](#) (Kyodo News, 12/03/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea warns 'physical clash, war' on Korean Peninsula a matter of time, not possibility](#) (Yonhap, 12/03/2023)

International:

[Feulner says N. Korea pays heed to 'strength' and 'solidarity'](#) (Yonhap, 12/04/2023)

[Late Belgian vet buried in Korea 'fell in love with the country and the people'](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/03/2023)

[Korea's first homegrown spy satellite launched on SpaceX rocket](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/02/2023)

[Korean battery makers grow fearful as U.S. overhauls IRA subsidy program](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/03/2023)

[S. Korea seeks 'pragmatic' economic strategy amid Sino-U.S. rivalry: industry minister](#) (Yonhap, 12/03/2023)

[S. Korea, Japan to resume high-level economic talks](#) (Yonhap, 12/03/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea's first military reconnaissance satellite "began its mission" on Saturday, according to state media, 11 days after it was placed in orbit. The Malligyong-1 satellite's operation will help equip the country's nuclear-armed units with a "more solid readiness posture," the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported Sunday. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korea began operating a satellite control office on Saturday, the official Korean Central News Agency said, after last month successfully launching a spy satellite into orbit. ([Kyodo News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea warned Sunday that a "physical clash and war" have become a matter of time on the Korean Peninsula in the wake of the scrapping of an inter-Korean military tension reduction accord, threatening that South Korea will face "total collapse" if it undertakes any hostile act. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- What a recalcitrant North Korea respects is "strength" and "solidarity," a U.S. think tank founder has said, noting he would advise former President Donald Trump to keep up trilateral cooperation between South Korea, the United States and Japan. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Leon Bosquet became the first Belgian veteran of the 1950-53 Korean War to be buried on Korean soil recently. Although more than 70 years had passed since he served in the war, the country never left his heart, said his daughter Daniele Bosquet, who traveled to Korea with his remains. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Korea's first homegrown spy satellite has been launched to orbit on SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket at 10:19 p.m. on Friday Pacific time at the Vandenberg Space Force Base in California. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- A red alert has gone off for Korean battery makers as the United States released specific requirements on its Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) subsidy program on Friday that bans producers from acquiring battery components from China, a country that is associated with the majority of top EV battery suppliers. (Lee Jae-lim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea will further strengthen trilateral ties with the United States and Japan for supply chains of advanced industries while cooperating with China as key trade partners to navigate the intensifying Sino-U.S. technology competition, Seoul's industry minister has said. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))

- South Korea and Japan are expected to resume high-level economic talks later this month after nearly eight years of suspension due to tensions over wartime sexual slavery and other rows, diplomatic sources said Sunday. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Angela Yoon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607132446/https://mailchi.mp/7262cf575f5c/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-warns-physical-clash-war-on-korean-peninsula-a-matter-of-time-not-possibility>

Monday, December 4, 2023

North Korea's Support of Hamas Transcends a Purely Transactional Relationship, argues Greg Scarlatoiu and Abraham Cooper

Top News Items:

[North Korea's Support of Hamas Transcends a Purely Transactional Relationship](#) (*The Media Line*, 12/03/2023)

[North Korea's support of Hamas transcends a purely transactional relationship - opinion](#) (*The Jerusalem Post*, 12/04/2023)

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un lectures moms on 'growing' issue of errant youth, falling birth rate](#) (*NK News*, 12/04/2023)

In South Korea:

[South Korea launches commercial satellite to improve monitoring of North Korea](#) (*NK News*, 12/04/2023)

[S. Korea successfully conducts third test flight of solid-fuel space rocket](#) (*Yonhap*, 12/04/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N.K. hacking group Andariel steals key defense technologies from S. Korean firms](#) (*Yonhap*, 12/04/2023)

[S. Korea slams N. Korea for making false accusations over 2018 inter-Korean military accord](#) (*Yonhap*, 12/04/2023)

International:

[N. Korea raps Washington's 'double standard' over S. Korea's spy satellite launch](#) (*Yonhap*, 12/04/2023)

Top News Items:

- North Korea has been supporting Hamas with weapons for years, but the relationship isn't only transactional. Ideological motivations also drive North Korea's assistance to anti-Israel and anti-Semitic groups, argues Greg Scarlatoiu and Abraham Cooper. (Greg Scarlatoiu/Abraham Cooper, [The Media Line](#))
- Greg Scarlatoiu and Abraham Cooper argue that North Korea's provision of weapons to Hamas isn't just a business deal. They suggest that ideological reasons also motivate North Korea's support for groups opposing Israel and holding anti-Semitic beliefs. (Greg Scarlatoiu/Abraham Cooper, [The Jerusalem Post](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un summoned thousands of mothers to the capital over the weekend to warn them of a “growing problem” with “anti-socialist” behavior among young people and of the declining national birth rate, according to state media. Kim emphasized the need to give birth to more children and adhere to government child-raising standards on the opening day of the Fifth National Meeting of Mothers on Sunday. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea launched a commercial satellite into orbit using a solid-fuel space launch vehicle (SLV) on Monday, the defense ministry announced, calling it a boost to the country's reconnaissance capabilities against North Korean threats. (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- South Korea successfully conducted a third test flight of a solid-fuel space rocket Monday, the defense ministry said, as part of efforts to build its independent space-based surveillance system against North Korea. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Andariel, a North Korean hacking organization, has stolen digital data containing key technologies from South Korean defense firms and repatriated part of the money they acquired via ransomware attacks on other firms, police said Monday. The Seoul Metropolitan Police Agency made the findings in collaboration with the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation, and an investigation is currently under way into the case, police officials said. (Park Boram, [Yonhap](#))
- The unification ministry on Monday condemned North Korea for repeatedly making false accusations against South Korea over an 2018 inter-Korean military agreement, saying Pyongyang is seeking to drive a wedge in South Korea. A North Korean commentator said Sunday a “physical clash and war” have become a matter of time on the Korean Peninsula in the wake of the scrapping of the military accord, warning that South Korea will face “total collapse” if it undertakes any hostile act. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korea on Monday denounced the United States for having a "double standard" over space programs, saying Washington helped South Korea with launching a military spy satellite, while condemning Pyongyang's similar move. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Gloria Guo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607132149/https://mailchi.mp/3c14742b7d72/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-warns-physical-clash-war-on-korean-peninsula-a-matter-of-time-not-possibility-12237714>

Tuesday, December 5, 2023

N. Korea illegally dispatching workers to Chinese seafood factories, which may be linked to America's supply chains

Top News:

[N. Korea illegally dispatching workers to Chinese seafood factories, which may be linked to America's supply chains](#) (VOA Korea, 10/25/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email

In North Korea:

[Send kids to hard labor to fight foreign influence, Kim Jong Un tells moms](#) (NK News, 12/05/2023)

In South Korea:

[JCS chairman calls for robust defense posture in Seoul metropolitan area](#) (Yonhap, 12/05/2023)

[Korean Army to shut down combat boot camps](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/05/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Over 60 pct of S. Korean university students say resolution of N.K. nuclear issue necessary for reunification: poll](#) (Yonhap, 12/05/2023)

International:

[Head of pro-North Korea group arrested in Spain over US crypto charges](#) (NK News, 12/05/2023)

[N. Korea pulls out of Senegal, Guinea in series of embassy closures: official](#) (Yonhap, 12/05/2023)

[North Korean doctors working in Congo pose sanctions dilemma: Investigation](#) (NK News, 12/05/2023)

[Security advisers of S. Korea, U.S., Japan to discuss strategy on geopolitical risks, N.K. threat](#) (Yonhap, 12/05/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S., Japan's trilateral ties 'sustainable' after elections: U.S. envoy](#) (Yonhap, 12/05/2023)

Top News:

- In a congressional hearing, HRNK Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu testified that North Korea is illegally dispatching workers to Chinese seafood factories, and that further investigations would be needed to assess whether seafood processed in Chinese seafood factories is imported into the United States. (Lee Jo-eun, [VOA Korea](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un declared an “intensifying” fight against foreign influence on kids on Monday, instructing mothers to send their children to perform hard labor for the state to correct bad behavior that is not “our style.” Kim made the remarks on the [final day](#) of a large-scale national conference on improving government control over child-raising, an event the leader considers “more important than others” due to its role in ensuring “patriotism and loyalty” to his rule from a young age. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Adm. Kim Myung-soo called Tuesday for a strong defense posture in the Seoul metropolitan area to fend off threats posed by North Korea's provocations. In the latest in a series of troop visits since taking office last month, Kim inspected the Capital Defense Command, which is in charge of defending the capital with a population of about 10 million, and an air defense unit. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- The Korean Army will disband some of its training battalions beginning next year as the number of new conscripts continues to dwindle, military authorities said Tuesday. The Army said that the disbandment of training battalions will take place over time, with some being tasked with other operational objectives. (Im Soung-bin, Lee Soo-jung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Over 6 out of 10 South Korean university students think that a resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue is necessary to achieve the reunification of the two Koreas, a survey showed Tuesday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Spanish authorities arrested an aristocrat with close ties to Pyongyang last week over U.S. charges that he advised North Korea on cryptocurrency technology. But Alejandro Cao de Benos, the founder of the pro-North Korea sympathizer group Korea Friendship Association (KFA), insisted that Washington cannot force his extradition following his release a day later. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has shut down its missions in Senegal and Guinea in an apparent move to reduce spending amid economic difficulties, a South Korean foreign ministry official said Tuesday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- To fill its need for medical expertise, the Republic of the Congo has turned to professionals from an unlikely place — North Korea. A small team of DPRK doctors is working at a neighborhood clinic in the Congo's second-biggest city of Pointe Noire, an NK News

investigation has found, providing what locals say is high-quality medical care at an accessible location. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

- The national security advisers of South Korea, the United States and Japan will meet in Seoul this week to discuss joint responses to regional geopolitical risks, including North Korean threats, Seoul's top envoy in Washington said Monday. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. ambassador to Japan said Tuesday that the shared common economic and security interests among Seoul, Washington and Japan would sustain the trilateral cooperation forged at the August summit beyond the upcoming elections in each country. (Kang Yoon-seung, [Yonhap](#))

N. Korea illegally dispatching workers to Chinese seafood factories, which may be linked to America's supply chains

Lee Jo-eun
VOA Korea
October 25, 2023

It was stated at a Congressional hearing that North Korea is illegally dispatching workers to Chinese seafood factories, and that further investigations would be needed to assess whether seafood processed in Chinese seafood factories is imported into the United States. Lee Jo-eun has the story.

Ian Urbina, a journalist who is the founder and director of The Outlaw Ocean Project, a Washington-based non-profit specializing in investigative reporting, said on October 24th that there were “[seafood] processing plants in China that our investigation found tied to U.S. seafood importers and that rely on...North Korean workers.”

[Urbina] “I will mention that I am intentionally refraining from discussing additional sets of processing plants in China that our investigation found tied to U.S. seafood importers and that rely on another form of state sponsored forced labor, namely North Korean workers, for the time being. As you know, imports to the U.S. associated with this type of forced labor are also strictly prohibited by federal law. We will soon publish more findings about this topic.”

Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, emphasized at the same hearing that “The official dispatch of North Korean workers to China seafood processing plants is a breach of applicable U.N. Security Council sanctions...and most importantly, our own CAATSA.”

He added that “In many cases, these workers process seafood imported from North Korea. The importation of seafood processed by North Korean workers in China, seafood exported from North Korea to China, or a combination of both into the United States, would constitute a blatant violation of CAATSA.”

CAATSA, enacted by Congress in 2017, imposed sanctions on North Korea, Iran, and Russia and includes a ban on the import of goods produced through forced labor by nationals of these countries.

Executive Director Scarlatoiu said, “The employment of North Korean workers in Chinese seafood processing plants and labor standards violations may contravene to the ILO’s forced Labor Convention...The North Korean seafood processing workers face inhumane working conditions, long working hours, denial of proper rest and breaks, harsh treatment and minimal safety measures, posing a risk to their physical and mental well-being. North Korean workers covet overseas positions as the average monthly remittance of \$70 is dramatically higher than the \$3 average monthly industrial wage in North Korea. The average bribe paid to dispatched workers is \$2000 to \$3000. The workers must borrow the funds from moneylenders and pay them back with interest. Wage violations through compulsory contributions extracted by the North Korean authorities, unpaid overtime, precarious safety and health conditions are widespread.”

He also stressed that “The North Korean worker’s monthly wages are paid upon their repatriation in North Korean currency at the official exchange rate. During the COVID-19 quarantine, the workers received no wages and the interest on their loans increased, reportedly leading to about 30 suicides. Most of these victims were women. The Chinese companies pay the North Korean regime, mostly based on the volume of production.”

Executive Director Scarlatoiu said the U.S. government and Congress should “Continue to encourage civil society groups with relevant networks to persist with investigating conditions of work at Chinese seafood processing factories and where the products processed by North Koreans may end up in the U.S. market...[and] Propose that new findings on violations affecting North Koreans at such factories be included in the annual report on trafficking in persons.”

Regarding the official dispatch of North Korean workers to Chinese seafood processing plants, he added that efforts should be made to “determine whether the government of China has made any serious and sustained efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons as they relate to the official dispatching of North Korean workers to Chinese seafood processing plants, and finally seek to confirm whether seafood exported from China to the United States contains North Korean seafood products and whether North Korean workers officially dispatched to China process seafood exported from China to the United [States].”

The U.S. State Department has designated North Korea as a Tier 3 country in its annual Trafficking in Persons Report for 21 consecutive years, the lowest tier possible.

In the most recent Trafficking in Persons Report released in June, the State Department noted that the North Korean regime used profits earned through state-sponsored forced labor, such as dispatching workers overseas, to fund the regime’s activities.

In response to the State Department's designation of North Korea as the worst human trafficking country last year, North Korea released a statement through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stating that "the United States is talking about other countries' human rights without any evidence as if it were a human rights judge." He claimed that "the United States has no right whatsoever to talk about human rights."

At the time, China also strongly opposed the State Department's report on human trafficking, which identified China as the country where most North Korean workers work.

Liu Pengyu, a spokesperson for the Chinese Embassy in Washington, said in July last year, "The United States ignores the facts and sticks to the outdated way of preparing the so-called 'Trafficking in Persons Report' every year and baselessly slandering other countries," adding that "This exposes the United States' malicious intent to damage the reputation of other countries and interfere in their internal affairs."

Translated by Angela Yoon, HRNK Research Intern; edited by Mohona Ganguly, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Ryan Beane, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607131935/https://mailchi.mp/527522076dd6/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-illegally-dispatching-workers-to-chinese-seafood-factories-which-may-be-linked-to-americas-supply-chains>

Thursday, December 6, 2023

North Korea responds to UN General Assembly resolution by calling escapees "human scum"

Top News:

[North Korea Responds to UN General Assembly Resolution by Calling Escapees](#)

["Human Scum"](#) (VOA Korea, 11/20/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[N.K. leader 'in hurry' to highlight his daughter to show his will for succession: minister](#) (Yonhap, 12/06/2023)

[N. Korea doles out gifts to participants in mothers' conference](#) (Yonhap, 12/06/2023)

[North Korea hackers may have stolen data on laser weapon -police](#) (Reuters, 12/06/2023)

[North Korean cyber group stole weapons data from ROK defense firms, Seoul says](#) (NK News, 12/06/2023)

[Why Kim Jong-un spotlights mothers](#) (The Korea Herald, 12/06/2023)

In South Korea:

[ROK choppers spotted near DMZ after collapse of military deal with North Korea](#) (NK News, 12/06/2023)

[South confirms closure of seven North Korean embassies](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/05/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[A family's escape from North Korea through a minefield and stormy seas](#) (BBC, 10/06/2023)

International:

[Russian firms employing North Koreans to build houses in Far East: Investigation](#) (NK News, 12/06/2023)

Top News:

- North Korea's Ambassador to the United Nations hurled harsh words about North Korean escapees, calling them insults such as "human scum." The South Korean government and the UN Special Rapporteur on North Korean human rights directly refuted the ambassador's statements... Greg Scarlatou, HRNK Executive Director, stated "Kim Jong-un and Kim Yo-jong fear the truth. North Korean escapees tell the truth." (Kim Young-gwon, [VOA Korea](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un appears to have been "in a hurry" to bring his daughter to the forefront in a bid to demonstrate his commitment to the third hereditary power succession, Seoul's top point man on Pyongyang said Wednesday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has held a meeting to hand out gifts to participants in the latest national conference of mothers, state media reported Wednesday, in an apparent move to secure their loyalty amid a declining birth rate. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korean police are investigating whether a North Korean hacker group, accused of stealing data from 14 entities, obtained information on defence technology including an anti-aircraft laser, a Seoul city police official said on Wednesday. ([Reuters](#))
- North Korean cybercriminals have stolen hundreds of files containing sensitive defense technology data from South Korean companies in an operation uncovered this year, ROK law enforcement has announced following a joint investigation with the FBI. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea orchestrated a unique event on Tuesday, where personally curated gifts from leader Kim Jong-un were presented to participants at the national mothers' meeting, continuing the trend of promoting the pivotal role of mothers in state-controlled media. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

In South Korea:

- At least three South Korean military helicopters flew toward the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) on the east side of the peninsula on Tuesday, flights that were prohibited until Seoul suspended a military deal with North Korea late last month. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- North Korea shut down seven embassies due to financial struggles, said the Foreign Ministry in Seoul. (Park Hyun-ju, Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Earlier this year, Mr Kim pulled off a seemingly impossible escape from North Korea. He fled by sea with his entire family - his pregnant wife, his mother, his brother's family, and an urn containing his father's ashes. (Jean Mackenzie, [BBC](#))

International:

- At least two Russian construction firms are employing North Korean workers to build housing in Vladivostok, an NK Pro investigation has found, including one controlled by a former regional governor. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

North Korea Responds to UN General Assembly Resolution by Calling Escapees “Human Scum”

Kim Young-gwon
VOA Korea
November 20, 2023

North Korea's Ambassador to the United Nations hurled harsh words about North Korean escapees, calling them insults such as “human scum.” The South Korean government and the UN Special Rapporteur on North Korean human rights directly refuted the ambassador's statements. They stressed that North Korean escapees are not criminals, but rather harbingers of unification. They also emphasized that escapee testimonies are consistent in their content. Kim Young-gwon has the story.

Just before the UN General Assembly's Third Committee adopted a resolution on North Korean human rights by consensus last week, Kim Song, North Korea's Ambassador to the UN, claimed that there were no human rights violations in the DPRK. He also denounced North Korean escapees' claims as fabricated.

[Kim Song] “The anti-DPRK draft resolution circulated by the European Union every year, at the instigation of the United States, is a fraudulent document consisting of falsehoods, fabrications, and plots, as it is drawn out with testimonies fabricated by human scum who committed crimes in their homeland and defected, leaving their families.”

Elizabeth Salmón, the UN Special Rapporteur for North Korean Human Rights, dismissed Ambassador Kim's accusations and aggressive claims. Responding to a request for comment from

VOA, Salmón emphasized that North Korean escapees bravely share their difficult experiences because they sincerely hope that their stories will contribute to the improvement of the human rights situation in North Korea. She said that she had heard the stories of many escapees, and that many others had interviewed escapees also.

The South Korean government also dismissed Ambassador Kim's claims, saying that they were untrue. Responding to VOA's request for comment, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Unification said that North Korean escapees are harbingers of unification and important partners in preparing for the coming unification of the two Koreas. The spokesperson also emphasized that since North Korean escapees overcame adversities to come to the South in search of freedom and human rights, they should not be the target of unspeakable slanders.

In addition, the spokesperson made it clear that the North Korean leadership is responsible for defections, saying that if the North Korean authorities had worked to ensure the human rights of the North Korean people and promote economic development, people would not seek to escape. It is thus nonsensical to call escapees criminals, the spokesperson added, since they escaped after suffering from the harsh, tyrannical rule of the North Korean authorities.

Experts in the United States pointed out that the North Korean regime continues to use vulgar language against North Korean escapees because Kim Jong-un and Kim Yo-jong are afraid of the truth.

[HRNK Executive Director, Greg Scarlatoiu] "Kim Jong-un and Kim Yo-jong fear the truth. North Korean escapees tell the truth. They have no way of talking 'facts' because we know the facts...North Korean escapees have told us the facts and have told us the truth, so the only thing they can do is to insult the witnesses, and nothing else."

Scarlatoiu also pointed out that the North Korean regime criminalizes normal, everyday behaviors. In particular, the North Korean regime punishes those who obtain or disseminate outside information and those who bring Bibles into the country. He criticized North Korea for labeling escapees as criminals, when in fact they have escaped North Korea in search of fundamental human rights.

This is Kim Young-gwon for VOA News.

Transcribed and translated by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern; edited by Mohona Ganguly, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607131746/https://mailchi.mp/64b2ccfd8d1a/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-responds-to-un-general-assembly-resolution-by-calling-escapees-human-scum>

Friday, December 7, 2023

Hundreds of North Korean defectors 'vanished' after China deportations, rights group says

In North Korea:

[North Korea vaunts new satellite's nuclear attack role in propaganda posters](#) (NK News, 12/07/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Moon administration officials tried to cover up killing of South Korean by North: State audit board](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/07/2023)

[Moon govt covered up, distorted 2020 official's death by North: Audit](#) (RFA, 12/07/2023)

International:

[Conventional capabilities, nuclear ambiguity key to U.S. extended deterrence, say experts](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/07/2023)

[Envoys from Seoul, Washington, Tokyo meet in Japan to address North's cyberattacks](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/07/2023)

[Hundreds of North Korean defectors 'vanished' after China deportations, rights group says](#) (UPI, 12/07/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S., Japan hold 1st trilateral working-level talks on N.K. cyber threats](#) (Yonhap, 12/07/2023)

[Up to 600 North Korean defectors deported by China 'vanish' - rights group](#) (Reuters, 12/07/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean authorities have introduced six new propaganda posters to celebrate last month's successful spy satellite launch, according to state media Thursday, seeking to rouse public support for military development even as the government calls for people to endure "hardships." (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- The Board of Audit and Inspection (BAI) confirmed Thursday that defense officials of the Moon Jae-in administration tried to cover up evidence about the South Korean official killed by the North Korean military in 2020 near the western sea border and drive the narrative that he was killed while trying to defect to the North. (Esther Jung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea's state audit agency on Thursday released the final results of its inspection into the 2020 death of a South Korean fisheries official at the hands of North Korea, concluding that the then Moon Jae-in administration did little to save him and covered up and distorted facts related to the case. (Kang Tae-jun, [RFA](#))

International:

- Nuclear policy experts speaking at a Thursday afternoon roundtable in central Seoul emphasized that South Korea's "robust" conventional capabilities and U.S. ambiguity regarding nuclear weapons use in response to a North Korean attack form the core of Washington's extended deterrence commitment to Seoul. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Nuclear envoys and negotiators of South Korea, the United States and Japan met in Tokyo on Thursday to launch a trilateral working group to address the North's growing cyber threats. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Up to 600 North Korean escapees have "vanished" after being forcibly sent back home from China, a Seoul-based human rights organization said Thursday. (Thomas Maresca, [UPI](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan held their first trilateral working-level talks Thursday on ways to boost cooperation against North Korea's growing cyber threats, in a follow-up to the summit among their leaders in August, Seoul's foreign ministry said Thursday. (Yi Won-ju, [Yonhap](#))
- Up to 600 North Koreans have "vanished" after being forcibly deported by China in October, a Seoul-based human rights group said on Thursday, warning they may face imprisonment, torture, sexual violence and execution in the isolated state. (Shin Hyon-hee, [Reuters](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607131523/https://mailchi.mp/aa13f3cbaa03/hrnk-news-items-hundreds-of-north-korean-defectors-vanished-after-china-deportations-rights-group-says>

Saturday, December 8, 2023

North Korea's support of Hamas transcends purely transactional relationship

Top News:

[North Korea's support of Hamas transcends purely transactional relationship](#) (The Korea Times, 12/08/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea illegally running 30 S. Korean-owned facilities at Kaesong complex: Seoul](#) (Yonhap, 12/08/2023)

[N. Korea slams U.N. resolutions condemning its nuclear program](#) (Yonhap, 12/08/2023)

[N. Korea urges people to follow leader Kim in climbing Mount Paektu in winter](#) (Yonhap, 12/08/2023)

[North Korea launches rocket toy set that closely copies Lego model](#) (NK News, 12/08/2023)

[North Koreans deported from Chinese jails face torture, activists warn](#) (BBC, 12/08/2023)

In South Korea:

[Missile scientist from North Korea, pediatrician among new ruling party recruits](#) (The Korea Herald, 12/08/2023)

[S. Korea slams N. Korea for removing debris from now-destroyed joint liaison office](#) (Yonhap, 12/08/2023)

[South Korea to hold tabletop drills after collapse of inter-Korean military deal](#) (NK News, 12/08/2023)

International:

[Famous French actor made obscene remarks about women during North Korea trip](#) (NK News, 12/08/2023)

[Nat'l security advisers of S. Korea, Japan discuss N.K. threat](#) (Yonhap, 12/08/2023)

[US, ROK, Japan kick off new working group to counter North Korean cyber threats](#) (NK News, 12/08/2023)

[US, South Korean, Japanese security advisers meet to discuss North Korea](#) (Reuters, 12/08/2023)

Top News:

- The Oct. 7 savage Hamas incursion and genocidal attack on Israeli civilians has spawned revulsion from U.S. President Biden and top European leaders. Yet these crimes against humanity have earned accolades and support from Hamas' puppet master Iran, Tehran's lackeys in Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Iraq, and calls for declarations of war against Israel from as far away as Algeria. As pundits and media dig deeper they have discovered another distant player: North Korea. (Abraham Cooper, Greg Scarlatou, [The Korea Times](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea has been operating some 30 South Korean-owned facilities at a now-shuttered inter-Korean joint industrial park in the North without authorization, Seoul's unification ministry said Friday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea on Friday denounced the U.N. General Assembly for recently passing resolutions condemning Pyongyang's nuclear tests and calling on the North to abandon its nuclear weapons program. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea on Friday called on its people to climb up Mount Paektu in winter to better learn about "revolutionary spirits." The Rodong Sinmun, the main newspaper, reported that around 120,000 people at some 2,400 organizations have gone up Mount Paektu so far along the path on which North Korean leader Kim Jong-un rode his white horse in 2019. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- A North Korean toy company has introduced new building block sets that closely resemble Lego rocket ships and ninjas, in what appears to be the latest example of the country producing knockoff versions of foreign products. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- Activists say up to 600 North Korean defectors, believed to be mostly women, have not been heard from since their deportation from China. In October, China carried out the largest repatriation of North Korean detainees in years, after Pyongyang ended its Covid border lockdown. (Frances Mao, [BBC](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's ruling party on Friday announced a fresh batch of recruits to run in the 2024 general election. Among the five recruits disclosed by the People Power Party's parliamentary recruitment committee is Park Chung-kwon, a North Korean defector who worked in intercontinental ballistic missile research at the National Defense University in Pyongyang. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The unification ministry on Friday called on North Korea to "immediately" stop its work on removing debris from a now-destroyed inter-Korean joint liaison office in the North, saying it violates South Korea's property rights. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean military will conduct annual computer-simulated drills against North Korean threats next week, Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) announced Friday, emphasizing their importance following the collapse of an inter-Korean military deal. (Jeongmin Kim, Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))

International:

- The famous French actor Gérard Depardieu made a string of obscene and sexual comments about North Korean women during a weeklong trip to the DPRK in 2018, including about at least one child, new footage released on Thursday shows. (Chad O'Carroll, [NK News](#))
- The national security advisers of South Korea and Japan agreed Friday on the need to strengthen solidarity with the international community in order to respond firmly to North Korea's nuclear and missile provocations, the presidential office said. (Park Boram, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S., South Korea and Japan held the first meeting of a new cybersecurity working group aimed at countering North Korea's cyber threats, following up on an agreement between the three countries' leaders earlier this year. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The national security advisers of the United States, South Korea and Japan are meeting in Seoul on Friday and Saturday to discuss North Korea and other global issues as they step up trilateral cooperation, South Korea's presidential office said. (Soo-hyang Choi, [Reuters](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607131337/https://mailchi.mp/d9cf9f93a5be/hrnk-news-items-north-koreas-support-of-hamas-transcends-purely-transactional-relationship>

Sunday, December 9, 2023

S. Korea, U.S., Japan vow to strengthen cooperation against N.K. threat

In North Korea:

[North Korea boasts of satellite capability, says it will launch more soon](#) (Reuters, 12/08/2023)

In South Korea:

[Court win for 'comfort women' upheld after Japan decides not to appeal ruling in damages suit](#) (Yonhap, 12/09/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[South Korea defense chief threatens strikes on 'heart and head' of North Korea if provoked](#) (AP, 12/09/2023)

International:

[S. Korea, U.S. agree to enhance cooperation in semiconductors, next-gen tech](#) (Yonhap, 12/09/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S., Japan vow to strengthen cooperation against N.K. threat](#) (Yonhap, 12/09/2023)

[US, South Korea and Japan urge a stronger international push to curb North Korea's nuclear program](#) (AP, 12/09/2023)

[U.S., South Korea, Japan to step up actions on North Korea cyber threats](#) (Reuters, 12/09/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea is determined to launch more spy satellites in the near future to collect information on the military activities of its enemies, a commentary carried by state news agency KCNA said on Saturday. ([Reuters](#))

In South Korea:

- A recent court victory for South Korean victims of Japan's wartime sexual slavery was confirmed Saturday after Japan decided not to appeal the earlier ruling, sources said. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea's defense minister on Friday threatened massive retaliatory missile strikes on "the heart and head" of North Korea in the event of provocation, as the rivals escalate their rhetoric over their respective spy satellite launches in recent days. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP](#))

International:

- South Korea and the United States agreed Saturday to strengthen their cooperation in next-generation technologies, such as bio, artificial intelligence (AI), semiconductors, battery and energy technology, according to Seoul's presidential office. (Shim Sun-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- The national security advisers of South Korea, the United States and Japan vowed Saturday to strengthen cooperation against North Korea's nuclear and missile threats while also deepening their cooperation on supply chains, technology protection and other economic security issues, the three sides said. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))
- The national security advisers of the United States, South Korea and Japan on Saturday called for a stronger international push to suppress North Korea's development of nuclear weapons and missiles, its cybertheft activities and alleged arms transfers to Russia. (Kim Tong-Hyung, [AP](#))
- The United States, South Korea and Japan agreed new initiatives on Saturday to respond to North Korea's threats in cyberspace, including cryptocurrency abuses and space launches, White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said. (Hyunsu Yim and Ju-min Park, [Reuters](#))

Prepared by Tessa Aguilar, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607131218/https://mailchi.mp/098e8593e7e8/hrnk-news-items-1209-2023>

Monday, December 10, 2023

N.K. activity increases at Panmunjom after inter-Korean military deal scrapped - NNSC generals

In North Korea:

[Is Kim Jong-un's 'respected' daughter North Korea's next leader or merely a propaganda vehicle?](#)

(South China Morning Post, 12/10/2023)

[Mountain view: North Korea urges pilgrimages to peak linked to Kim 'heroism'](#) (The Washington Times, 12/10/2023)

[N. Korea slams U.S. over veto on UN resolution calling for cease-fire in Gaza](#) (Yonhap, 12/10/2023)

In South Korea:

[Former President Moon Jae-in attacks government's hardline policies on North Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/10/2023)

[In One of the Least Diverse Nations, an American Outsider Shakes Up Politics](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 12/08/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea's fear of external info grows after Seoul allows sending propaganda leaflets](#) (The Korea Times, 12/10/2023)

[N.K. activity increases at Panmunjom after inter-Korean military deal scrapped: NNSC generals](#) (Yonhap, 12/10/2023)

[Once a venue for historic summits, truce village weighed down with tension amid N.K. threats](#) (Yonhap, 12/10/2023)

International:

[Attempt to smuggle Lexus into North Korea spotlights Kim Jong-un's fondness for fine cars](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/10/2023)

[China is sending escapers back to North Korea](#) (The Economist, 12/08/2023)

['New initiative on NK' lacks balanced strategy: experts](#) (The Korea Times, 12/10/2023)

[North Korean factory workers in China to lose pay for product flaws](#) (Radio Free Asia, 12/08/2023)

[US forces in South Korea on regional agile combat mission with joint drill in Singapore](#) (South China Morning Post, 12/10/2023)

[USAID official urges boosted development cooperation among S. Korea, U.S., Japan as 'like-minded' countries](#) (Yonhap, 12/10/2023)

[Yoon says S. Korea to boost semiconductor cooperation with Netherlands, U.S., Japan: report](#) (Yonhap, 12/10/2023)

[Yoon travels to Netherlands for chip alliance, strategic partnership](#) (The Korea Herald, 12/10/2023)

In North Korea:

- Is Kim Ju-ae, the 10-year-old daughter of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, the heir apparent or is she merely filling a pacemaker role until a male successor takes the helm? (Park Chan-kyong, [South China Morning Post](#))
- North Korean state media is encouraging citizens to undertake winter climbs of Mount Baekdu, a peak venerated by Koreans ancient and modern, North and South. (Andrew Salmon, [The Washington Times](#))
- North Korea denounced the United States on Sunday for vetoing a U.N. Security Council Resolution calling for an immediate cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas war, state media reported. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- Former President Moon Jae-in criticized President Yoon Suk Yeol's North Korean policies over the weekend, emphasizing on Facebook that terminating inter-Korean agreements and dialogue has allowed North Korea to advance its nuclear program. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- Linton said he sees his outsider status, and the fact that he doesn't owe anything to anyone in the political world, as strengths. "If I were ethnically Korean, a lot of people would be second-guessing my motives." (Timothy W. Martin, [The Wall Street Journal](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Pyongyang has belatedly acted furiously to South Korean Constitutional Court's decision in September to strike down the ban on sending propaganda leaflets over the border into North Korea. (Kang Hyun-kyung, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea has increased activities in the truce village of Panmunjom after effectively scrapping an inter-Korean military tension reduction agreement last month, Swedish and Swiss military generals overseeing the armistice said. (Chae Yun-hwan & Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- Standing just south of the DMZ separating the two Koreas, Camp Bonifas, the base camp for the United Nations Command security forces, has witnessed ups and downs through 70 years of inter-Korean relations. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Japanese police cracked down on a user-car dealer in Japan for attempting to illegally smuggle a luxury Lexus vehicle to North Korea, according to the report on Thursday in the *Asahi Shimbun*. (Bae Jae-sung & Lee Soo-jung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- China has long insisted that North Koreans who secretly enter its territory are economic migrants rather than refugees. So it is more than happy to send them to the gulag. ([The Economist](#))
- A new initiative that South Korea, the United States and Japan have agreed to jointly launch in order to counter North Korea's escalating threats is likely to have a limited effect, according to analysts. (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))
- The new policy seems to be a way for the government to extract more funds from the workers, sources say. (Kim Jieun, [Radio Free Asia](#))
- The US will increase cooperation between its troops stationed in the Indo-Pacific and other militaries to deter armed conflict with China in the Taiwan Strait and South China Sea, analysts said. (Seong Hyeon Choi, [South China Morning Post](#))
- South Korea, the United States and Japan seek to demonstrate to China and others that being democratic and transparent is "the way for greater economic growth" as the three countries work to deepen cooperation in development projects amid rising global competition, a senior official at the U.S. development agency has said. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol said South Korea plans to "significantly" strengthen semiconductor cooperation with the Netherlands, the United States and Japan, a news report said Sunday. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

- President Yoon Suk Yeol is set to embark on a state visit to the Netherlands on Monday, mainly to "forge a chip alliance" and level up the existing bilateral strategic partnership in diplomacy, defense and economic security, the South Korean presidential office said Sunday. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Raymond Ha, HRNK Director of Operations & Research

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607130959/https://mailchi.mp/e11243561316/hrnk-news-items-1210>

Tuesday, December 11, 2023

Air Koryo shuttling North Koreans from Vladivostok on twice weekly flights

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un adds to growing luxury car collection with new Maybach sedan, limo](#) (NK News, 12/11/2023)

[N. Korea accuses West of abusing human rights in white paper](#) (Yonhap, 12/11/2023)

[N. Korea lambasts S. Korea-U.S. joint military drills as acts leading to 'ruin'](#) (Yonhap, 12/11/2023)

In South Korea:

[Deadly cost of slips of the tongue in N. Korea](#) (The Korea Times, 12/11/2023)

[S. Korea to make efforts to ease foreign investors' concerns about tensions on peninsula: minister](#) (Yonhap, 12/11/2023)

[U.S. F-16 fighter jet crashes into sea off Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/11/2023)

International:

[Air Koryo shuttling North Koreans from Vladivostok on twice weekly flights](#) (NK News, 12/11/2023)

[8 NATO envoys to visit Seoul to discuss Indo-Pacific security](#) (The Korea Herald, 12/11/2023)

[U.S. lawmaker urges Indo-Pacific nations to consider NATO-like alliance to deter China, North Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/11/2023)

[Yoon departs for Amsterdam for regional security, chip cooperation](#) (The Korea Herald, 12/11/2023)

In North Korea:

- Kim Jong Un has used at least four new foreign luxury vehicles in recent weeks, revealing not only Kim's taste for the newest expensive foreign goods despite the economic challenges ordinary North Koreans face, but also the ease with which he can evade sanctions to import

such bulky items — just as he is suspected of doing to accelerate his advancing nuclear weapons program. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

- North Korea accused the West of violating human rights and dismissed criticism of its own human rights conditions in a white paper. The regime claimed that North Korean residents enjoy rights while accusing the U.S. of attempting to topple it through human rights issues. The U.N. General Assembly has condemned North Korea's human rights violations annually since 2005. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's main newspaper, the Rodong Sinmun, denounced South Korea and the United States for staging joint military drills, calling it a "futile" provocative act that will only hasten the South's destruction and recklessly run amok to stage war on the Korean Peninsula. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- North Korea's constitution says it protects freedom of speech. But in reality, one misplaced word can cost you your life. Escapees' personal stories are displayed at the North Korean Human Rights Museum, which opened in central Seoul last month. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea's unification minister, Kim Yung-ho, said Monday the government will make efforts to assuage foreign investors' concerns about heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula, saying his country has been beefing up a readiness posture against North Korea's potential provocations. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.S. Air Force F-16 fighter jet crashed in Gunsan, North Jeolla on Monday. The Korea Coast Guard said the incident took place near Eocheong Island off the coast of Gunsan at 8:43 a.m. The crash is presumed to have happened during a training exercise. (Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- Air Koryo, North Korea's state-run airline, conducted two recent flights to Vladivostok, as per Russian media reports. Experts say Russian city may be 'collection point' for North Korean laborers, who may undergo reeducation or indoctrination upon returning to North Korea. Additional concerns are raised regarding the possibility that these flights might be bringing new North Korean laborers to Russia. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- NATO representatives from eight member countries are set to visit Seoul later this week, in a rare collective visit reflecting the transatlantic security alliance's heightened interest in the Indo-Pacific region amid the ongoing war in Ukraine. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- Republican Rep. Mike Lawler of New York and a group of representatives drafted the Indo-Pacific Treaty Organization Act, calling on Indo-Pacific nations to consider a NATO-like security apparatus to curb Chinese and North Korean threats. (Esther Jung, Kim Sang-jin, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol flew to the Netherlands at the invitation of King Willem-Alexander, in a bid to strengthen bilateral semiconductor supply chain cooperation and European partners' involvement in Indo-Pacific regional security amid growing North Korean hostilities. (Son Ji-hyoung, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Diana Woo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607130819/https://mailchi.mp/26d26da7c7ee/hrnk-news-items-air-koryo-shuttling-no-rth-koreans-from-vladivostok-on-twice-weekly-flights>

Wednesday, December 12, 2023

Russian Far East delegation arrives in N. Korea to discuss economic plans

In North Korea:

[How a 'shadow army' of hackers could be funding Kim Jong Un's lavish lifestyle](#) (CNN, 12/12/2023)

[Kim Jong-un adds to sanctions-busting luxury car collection with \\$200,000 armoured Mercedes sedan](#) (The Telegraph, 12/12/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korean newspaper carries photo of ex-minister in coverage of anti-gov't rally in Seoul](#) (Yonhap, 12/12/2023)

[Seoul still backs aid for North Korea despite focus on human rights: Minister](#) (NK News, 12/12/2023)

[S. Korea deplores N. Korea's publication of human rights white paper](#) (Yonhap, 12/12/2023)

[S. Korea opens probe into filmmakers over unauthorized meetings with pro-N. Korea group](#) (Yonhap, 12/12/2023)

[S. Korea to hold Pyongyang accountable over unauthorized use of Kaesong complex: minister](#) (Yonhap, 12/12/2023)

International:

[North Korea slams US veto of UN resolution on Israel-Hamas ceasefire](#) (NK News, 12/12/2023)

[Russian Far East delegation arrives in North Korea to discuss economic plans](#) (NK News, 12/12/2023)

[Russian links with China, Iran and North Korea a threat, warns Finland](#) (Reuters, 12/12/2023)

[Russian regional delegation visits N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 12/12/2023)

[South Korea, US to hold new round of nuclear consultation talks -Seoul](#) (Reuters, 12/12/2023)

[South Korea urges Russia to help sanction North Korea over satellite, labour exports](#) (Reuters, 12/12/2023)

[S. Korea's spy agency detects signs of N. Korea seeking to dispatch workers to Russia](#) (Yonhap, 12/12/2023)

In North Korea:

- CNN's Will Ripley reports on the escalating suspicions surrounding North Korea's alleged \$3 billion in stolen cryptocurrency used to fund an undisclosed arsenal. (Erin Burnett, [CNN](#))
- Kim has been spotted riding in four new foreign vehicles, including the flashy \$200,000 armored Mercedes-Maybach S560 sedan. (Nicola Smith, [The Telegraph](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea's main newspaper, the *Rodong Sinmun*, on Tuesday published a rare photo of a former South Korean justice minister Choo Mi-ae attending an anti-government rally in Seoul as part of apparent propaganda coverage criticizing the South. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- Seoul will continue to promote humanitarian assistance to support North Koreans in the year ahead, South Korea's unification minister, Kim Yong-ho, said Tuesday, despite focusing more on international efforts to draw attention to Pyongyang's human rights record. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- South Korea's foreign ministry said Tuesday it is "deplorable" that North Korea has published a white paper accusing the West of violating human rights, urging Pyongyang to "look back on itself." (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- The unification ministry handling inter-Korean affairs said Tuesday it has launched a probe to verify details of unauthorized meetings between South Korean filmmakers and members of a pro-North Korea group in Japan. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho said Tuesday the government will hold Pyongyang accountable for using South Korea-owned facilities at a now-shuttered inter-Korean joint Kaesong Industrial Complex, in the North without permission. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- North Korea has slammed the U.S. for vetoing a U.N. Security Council resolution calling for an "immediate humanitarian ceasefire" between Israel and Hamas, accusing Washington of abusing its veto power as a permanent member. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- A delegation of Russian Far East officials arrived in Pyongyang on Monday, according to North Korean state media, in a visit expected to include bilateral talks on topics ranging from revitalizing tourism to joint construction projects. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Russia's increasing cooperation with China, Iran, North Korea and its other global allies is a serious, long-term threat to European countries, Finland's Defence Minister Antti Hakkanen said on Tuesday. ([Reuters](#))
- A Russian delegation has arrived in North Korea, state media said Tuesday, in the latest sign of growing ties between the two countries. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea and the United States will hold talks on nuclear deterrence on Friday as part of Washington's commitment to share more insight with Seoul into planning in the event of conflict with North Korea. ([Reuters](#))
- Russia should help impose new sanctions against North Korea over its recent launch of a spy satellite and enforce existing bans on the isolated country's labour exports, unification minister Kim Yung-ho on Tuesday. (Hyonhee Shin, [Reuters](#))

- South Korea's spy agency, The National Intelligence Service, said Tuesday it has detected signs that North Korea is seeking to dispatch its workers to Russia in a violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions. (Kim Boram, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ava Jane Moorlach, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607130625/https://mailchi.mp/2177b6334aa0/hrnk-news-items-russian-far-east-delegation-arrives-in-n-korea-to-discuss-economic-plans>

Thursday, December 13, 2023

Experts warn of possible Russian, North Korean nuclear tests in 2024, NATO ambassadors welcome stronger cooperation with Seoul

In North Korea:

[N. Korean airliner flies to Shenyang after nearly 4 yrs since border lockdown](#) (Yonhap, 12/13/2023)

In South Korea:

[Leaders of Korea, Netherlands declare 'chip alliance,' enhance strategic partnership](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/13/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[South's defense chief warns North that 'hell of destruction' awaits 'reckless' actions](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/13/2023)

International:

[China likely re-exported millions of dollars of North Korean goods, data shows](#) (NK News, 12/13/2023)

[Experts warn of possible Russian, North Korean nuclear tests in 2024](#) (The Korea Times, 12/13/2023)

[NATO ambassadors welcome stronger cooperation with Seoul](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/13/2023)

[N. Korea likely to stage provocations next year to intervene in S. Korean, U.S. elections: think tank](#) (Yonhap, 12/13/2023)

[N. Korea, Russia discuss ways to bolster regional economic cooperation](#) (Yonhap, 12/13/2023)

[Prospects for U.S.-N. Korea dialogue remain dim amid skepticism in Washington](#) (Yonhap, 12/13/2023)

[Trump considers overhauling his approach to North Korea if he wins in 2024](#) (Politico, 12/13/2023)

[US sanctions Russian ship to 'disrupt' weapons trade with North Korea](#) (NK News, 12/13/2023)

In North Korea:

- Air Koryo, North Korea's national carrier, operated commercial flights connecting Pyongyang and Shenyang on Wednesday after a hiatus of nearly four years prompted by the COVID-19 outbreak. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- The leaders of Korea and the Netherlands declared the establishment of a chip alliance and a semiconductor dialogue channel, aimed at enhancing supply chain resilience, during their bilateral summit in The Hague on Wednesday. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korea Relationship:

- South Korean Defense Minister Shin Won-sik warned Wednesday that the "hell of destruction" awaits North Korea if it carries out any "reckless" actions. "North Korea has only two choices: peace or destruction," Shin said during a meeting of top military commanders. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

International:

- North Korea has likely exported millions of dollars worth of goods through China to countries around the world this year, including South Korea and the U.S., an NK Pro analysis has found. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Speaking at a conference about the prospects for inter-Korean relations in Seoul, analysts at the Korea Institute for National Unification, a state-funded think tank, said Russia will likely conduct its first nuclear test in more than 30 years after its presidential election planned for March. They also said this move could trigger North Korea to carry out its own nuclear test — for the first time since 2017 — amid the reinforcement of Moscow-Pyongyang military ties. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- Defense Minister Shin Won-sik, in his meeting with eight NATO ambassadors in Seoul on Wednesday, highlighted the possibility of NATO involvement in a collective response to military aggression from North Korea. Ambassadors of the United States, Britain, Italy, Denmark, Netherlands, Czechia, Romania and Poland to NATO began their visit to Korea on Wednesday, meeting with Shin and officials of U.S. Forces Korea in Seoul. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The Korea Institute for National Unification (KINU) said North Korea could intensify psychological warfare or online and offline terrorist attacks against South Korea ahead of the South's parliamentary elections in April. The U.S. is scheduled to hold the presidential election in November, and North Korea could stage major military provocations in a bid to press Washington to change its course on the U.S. policy on Pyongyang, while hoping former U.S. President Donald Trump wins the election. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- A senior North Korean official has held talks with the governor of Russia's far eastern region of Primorsky Krai, Pyongyang's state media said Wednesday, amid speculation that North Korea is seeking to send workers to Russia to earn much-needed hard currency. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

- Prospects for the resumption of dialogue between the United States and North Korea appear to be growing dimmer as Washington's diplomatic overtures have fallen on deaf ears, fanning skepticism about bilateral reengagement. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Donald Trump is considering a plan to let North Korea keep its nuclear weapons and offer its regime financial incentives to stop making new bombs, according to three people briefed on his thinking. The move would mark a sharp departure from his past stance on the issue and a shift toward accommodating the North Korean leader, Kim Jong Un, with whom Trump developed an unusually friendly relationship during his time in office. (Alexander Ward, [Politico](#))
- The U.S. has sanctioned more Russian companies and cargo ships in an effort to “disrupt” alleged weapons trade with North Korea, the State Department announced Tuesday. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Mohona Ganguly, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607130508/https://mailchi.mp/cd08224c0d88/hrnk-news-items-experts-warn-of-possible-russian-north-korean-nuclear-tests-in-2024-nato-ambassadors-welcome-stronger-cooperation-with-seoul>

Thursday, December 14, 2023

N. Korea condemns missile warning data sharing between S. Korea, U.S., Japan

In North Korea:

[N. Korea condemns missile warning data sharing between S. Korea, U.S., Japan](#) (Yonhap, 12/14/2023)
[North Korea's De-risking Strategy and Its Implications](#) (38 North, 12/13/2023)

In South Korea:

[Defense chief orders robust posture of intelligence, cybersecurity forces](#) (Yonhap, 12/14/2023)

International:

[Canadian 3-star general takes office as new deputy UNC chief](#) (Yonhap, 12/14/2023)
[China likely re-exported millions of dollars of North Korean goods, data shows](#) (NK News, 12/14/2023)
[Russian governor visit points to more worker exports](#) (RFA, 12/13/2023)
[Trump denies media article on N. Korea negotiation plan as 'fake news'](#) (Yonhap, 12/14/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea on Thursday denounced a plan by South Korea, the United States and Japan to launch a real-time missile warning data sharing system this month as an "extremely dangerous military act" to invade the North. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea) has been closing several of its embassies in 2023. However, economic problems are not sufficient to explain the recent series of embassy closures. Instead, they are an indicator of Pyongyang's long-term strategy of de-risking: a shift from managing risk to avoiding it. (Rudiger Frank, [38 North](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's defense chief on Thursday urged military intelligence and cybersecurity forces to maintain a robust posture to deter growing security threats in emerging battlefields. On Wednesday, Defense Minister Shin Won-sik presided over a meeting of top military commanders, where he stressed the need to educate troops with mental strength as part of efforts to maintain readiness against North Korean threats. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- A Canadian three-star Army general took office as the new deputy commander of the United Nations Command (UNC) on Thursday, underscoring the multinational command's role in promoting peace on the Korean Peninsula. Established in July 1950 under a U.N. mandate to support South Korea against North Korea's aggression, the UNC currently oversees the armistice agreement that ended the 1950-53 Korean War. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea has likely exported millions of dollars worth of goods through China to countries around the world this year, including South Korea and the U.S., an NK Pro analysis has found. The findings suggest the DPRK is leveraging its close ties with Beijing to disguise its exports as Chinese shipments, potentially concealing shipments from sanctions monitors. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- A visit by a Russian governor to North Korea suggests that Pyongyang will likely send more farmers and construction workers to Russia, which appears to be suffering from a manpower shortage amid its war in Ukraine, experts told Radio Free Asia. (Mok Yongjae, Kim So Young, [RFA](#))
- Former President Donald Trump on Wednesday dismissed as "fake news" a media report that he is considering a negotiation plan under which North Korea freezes its nuclear program and stops building new weapons in return for sanctions relief and other incentives. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Valerie Xu, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607130246/https://mailchi.mp/7f90ce7d07d7/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-condemns-missile-warning-data-sharing-between-s-korea-us-japan>

Friday, December 15, 2023

S. Korean official notes possibility of N. Korea launching ICBM this month

In North Korea:

[North Korea converting cargo plane into military aircraft, imagery suggests](#) (NK News, 12/15/2023)

In South Korea:

[9 N. Korean defectors to receive cultural awards from unification minister](#) (Yonhap, 12/15/2023)

[S. Korean official notes possibility of N. Korea launching ICBM this month](#) (Yonhap, 12/15/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Tension rises further as 2018 inter-Korean accord scrapped amid satellite rivalry](#) (Yonhap, 12/15/2023)

[Yoon's national security aide warns of potential NK missile launch this month](#) (The Korea Herald, 12/15/2023)

International:

[Diplomats of S. Korea, U.S. discuss N.K. spy satellite, human rights](#) (Yonhap, 12/15/2023)

[N. Korea's premier holds talks with visiting Russian governor](#) (Yonhap, 12/15/2023)

[North Korea wants more Russian tourists to visit, Far East officials say](#) (NK News, 12/15/2023)

[North Korean defector arrested in Vietnam faces repatriation to China: Activists](#) (NK News, 12/15/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea appears to be converting a large cargo plane into an Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) for use during missile tests or to help detect enemy missiles in a crisis, newly released expert findings show. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- The unification ministry in charge of inter-Korean affairs said Friday it will confer awards on nine North Korean defectors for their contributions to the arts and culture sector. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- A South Korean presidential security official on Thursday raised the possibility of North Korea launching an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) this month as he arrived in Washington for a high-profile security meeting. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Tension on the Korean Peninsula rose further this year as North Korea in November scrapped a 2018 military tension reduction agreement in a tit-for-tat move against South

Korea's partial suspension of the deal amid their intensifying spy satellite rivalry. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))

- The Presidential National Security Office's first deputy chief Kim Tae-hyo said Thursday North Korea might launch another intercontinental ballistic missile before the end of the year, as he arrived in Washington to attend a nuclear consultative group meeting Friday. (Son Ji-hyoung, [The Korea Herald](#))

International:

- South Korean and U.S. officials discussed North Korea's threats and its recent publication of its so-called human rights white paper, Seoul's foreign ministry said Friday. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean Premier Kim Tok-hun has held talks with the governor of Russia's far eastern region of Primorsky Krai, Pyongyang's state media said Friday, amid speculation that North Korea is seeking to send workers to Russia to earn much-needed hard currency. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea wants to welcome Russian tourists to its resorts and establish new travel routes between the two countries after lifting pandemic border regulations, Russian Far East said Friday, as a delegation wrapped up a five-day trip to the DPRK. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- A North Korean woman attempting to defect to South Korea was arrested in Vietnam last month and likely faces repatriation to China, according to a Seoul-based activist group, alleging that ROK authorities are not taking sufficient action to save this woman. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Rachel Baek, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240625134130/https://mailchi.mp/7f68351bcfbf/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-condemns-mis-sile-warning-data-sharing-between-s-korea-us-japan-12237780>

Saturday, December 16, 2023

Exec. Director Scarlatoiu receives award from Global Peace Foundation

Top News:

[Dr. Manu Chandaria, Father Joseph Mutie honored with Global Peace Awards](#) (KBC, 12/14/2023)

In North Korea:

[North Korea recognizes 'human rights' exist](#) (The Korea Times, 12/15/2023)

In South Korea:

[From receiver to giver - a survivor's tale of transformation](#) (The Korea Herald, 12/16/2023)

[North Korean-born artists honored for excellence](#) (The Korea Times, 12/16/2023)

[9 N. Korean defectors to receive cultural awards from unification minister](#) (Yonhap, 12/15/2023)

International:

[Ex-USFK chief notes odds of misunderstanding leading to conflict in Korea](#) (Yonhap, 12/15/2023)

[N. Korea, China hold high-level talks in Beijing](#) (Yonhap, 12/16/2023)

[North Korea-linked Lazarus Group responsible for nearly 20% of crypto losses—more than \\$300 million worth—in 2023](#) (Fortune, 12/14/2023)

[North Korea delegation in China for talks - KCNA](#) (Reuters, 12/16/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. to complete guidelines on nuclear strategy planning, operation by mid-2024: Seoul official](#) (Yonhap, 12/16/2023)

[South Korea and U.S. to incorporate nuclear operations in joint exercises](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/16/2023)

[U.S. reiterates commitment to 'complete denuclearization' of Korean Peninsula](#) (Yonhap, 12/15/2023)

[US warns North Korea against nuclear attacks](#) (Reuters, 12/16/2023)

Top News:

- Some notable awardees include former Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo, recognized for his peacebuilding efforts and commitment to regional integration in Latin America; [and] human rights advocate Greg Scarlatoiu, known for his work in promoting human rights in North Korea. (David Sirengo, [KBC](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea claimed, in a white paper on human rights released earlier this week, that its people enjoy “genuine human rights” and denounced the U.S. and other countries in the West for their failures in that area. But experts say concept and purpose differ from universal norm. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))

In South Korea:

- Ju Chan-yang, who defected from North Korea in 2010, shares her story with the Korea Herald, in light of Human Rights Day. To learn more about Ju Chan-yang's story, watch her episode of “Life In Korea” on The Korea Herald YouTube channel. (Tammy Park, Kim Soo-young, [The Korea Herald](#))
- The Unification Ministry honored nine North Korea-born artists for their contribution, Saturday, in its inaugural event to promote inclusion and artistic diversity. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- The unification ministry in charge of inter-Korean affairs said Friday it will confer awards on nine North Korean defectors for their contributions to the arts and culture sector. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- A former U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) commander voiced concerns Thursday over the chances of misunderstanding and miscalculation leading to conflict on the Korean Peninsula, as he pointed to North Korea's unwillingness for dialogue and its close ties with China and Russia. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea and China have held high-level talks in Beijing to discuss their bilateral ties, state media said Saturday, in what appeared to be a rare official visit by a North Korean official to China since Pyongyang's COVID-19 border lockdown. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- According to a new report by blockchain security platform Immunefi, the North Korea-linked hacker group Lazarus was responsible for over \$300 million in losses across crypto hacking incidents in 2023, representing 17.6% of the year's total losses. (Leo Schwartz, [Fortune](#))
- A North Korean diplomatic delegation is visiting China for talks on strengthening cooperation, North Korean state media said on Saturday, as Pyongyang slowly opens its borders and resumes trade with its neighbours after the COVID-19 pandemic. (Joyce Lee, [Reuters](#))
- South Korea and the United States agreed Friday to complete the establishment of guidelines on the planning and operation of a shared nuclear strategy by the middle of next year, a Seoul official said, as the allies held key deterrence talks on countering growing North Korean threats. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Nuclear operations will be incorporated into joint exercises between South Korea and the U.S. starting as early as next year, potentially beginning with the Ulchi Freedom Shield (UFS), an 11-day joint combined and interagency exercise scheduled for August. (Lee Ho-Jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The United States remains committed to the "complete denuclearization" of the Korean Peninsula, the State Department said Thursday, highlighting diplomacy is its "first option" to address the North Korean nuclear quandary. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- The United States has warned North Korea that any nuclear attack against the nation or its allies "is unacceptable and will result in the end of the Kim Jong Un regime," a joint US-South Korean statement said on Saturday. (Lucia Mutikani, Steve Holland, [Reuters](#))

Prepared by Jiwoo Choi, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607130051/https://mailchi.mp/4e8acf7574d0/hrnk-news-items-exec-director-scarlatou-receives-award-from-global-peace-foundation>

Sunday, October 17, 2023

N. Korea fires 1 short-range ballistic missile into East Sea

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un marks 12th anniversary of father's death](#) (NK News, 12/17/2023)

[N. Korean leader Kim marks 12th anniversary of father's death](#) (Yonhap, 12/17/2023)

[N. Korea fires 1 short-range ballistic missile into East Sea](#) (Yonhap, 12/18/2023)

International:

[China and North Korea pledge stronger cooperation in rare talks as Beijing shores up ties with neighbours](#) (South China Morning Post, 12/17/2023)

[S. Korea to coordinate bilateral, trilateral measures with U.S., Japan against N.K. provocations](#) (Yonhap, 12/17/2023)

[U.S. nuclear sub visits Busan as allies hash out deterrence guidelines](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/17/2023)

[U.S. nuclear-powered sub arrives in S. Korea amid possibility of N.K. ICBM launch](#) (Yonhap, 12/17/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un commemorated the 12th anniversary of his father's passing on Saturday, paying a visit to Kim Jong Il's final resting place at the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun in Pyongyang. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has marked the 12th anniversary of the death of his father and predecessor Kim Jong-il by visiting a mausoleum where the father's body lies in state, the North's state media said Sunday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea fired one short-range ballistic missile toward the East Sea on Sunday, the 12th anniversary of the death of late leader Kim Jong-il, according to South Korea's military. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- China and North Korea pledged to deepen cooperation as senior officials met for rare talks last week amid broader efforts by Beijing to shore up relations with its neighbours to counter external risks. (Dewey Sim, [South China Morning Post](#))
- South Korea will work toward coordinating bilateral and trilateral measures involving the United States and Japan if North Korea continues to engage in provocations, a senior Seoul security official said Sunday. (Chang Dong-woo, [Yonhap](#))
- A U.S. nuclear-powered submarine arrived in Busan on Sunday, the South Korean Defense Ministry said, in the latest efforts for the allies to strengthen their combined defense posture amid North Korean missile threats. (Sarah Kim, Lee Ho-jeong, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- A U.S. nuclear-powered submarine arrived in South Korea on Sunday, Seoul's defense ministry said, amid concerns North Korea could launch an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) this month. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Bryan Clark, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607125915/https://mailchi.mp/a89df2d1e10e/hrnk-news-items-1217-2023>

Monday, December 18, 2023

North Korea fires apparent ICBM, second missile launch in 10 hours; S. Korea, US stage joint special operations forces drills

In North Korea:

[N. Korea slams S. Korean military chiefs' warning of retaliation](#) (Yonhap, 12/18/2023)

[North Korea-China trade spikes to 4-year high as trucks and trains cross daily](#) (NK News, 12/18/2023)

[North Korea enjoys bumper harvest on back of good weather in 2023: Report](#) (NK News, 12/18/2023)

[North Korea fires apparent ICBM, second missile launch in 10 hours: ROK](#) (NK News, 12/18/2023)

In South Korea:

[Defense chief warns N. Korea against ICBM launches](#) (Yonhap, 12/18/2023)

[Unification minister says human rights violations 'status quo' in N. Korea](#) (Yonhap, 12/18/2023)

International:

[Nuclear envoys of S. Korea, U.S., Japan condemn N. Korea's missile launches](#) (Yonhap, 12/18/2023)

[Shifting Visions of the South Korea-US Alliance](#) (The Diplomat, 12/18/2023)

[S. Korea, U.S. stage joint special operations forces drills](#) (Yonhap, 12/18/2023)

[US-ROK meeting on nuke strategy draws North Korean threats of 'counteraction'](#) (NK News, 12/18/2023)

[Yoon orders joint response with U.S., Japan following N. Korea's ICBM launch](#) (Yonhap, 12/18/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea on Monday denounced South Korean military leaders' vow to overwhelmingly retaliate against Pyongyang in the event of the North's provocations, brushing it off as a show of "bravado." (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea's trade with its largest economic partner, China, hit a four-year high in November on the back of a surge in both imports and exports, according to official customs statistics. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korea's crop output increased by 6% this year thanks to better growing conditions, according to South Korea's Rural Development Administration (RDA), a development that could help ease food insecurity after concerns about famine peaked in the spring. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

- North Korea launched a “long-range” ballistic missile toward the East Sea (Sea of Japan) on Monday morning, according to South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), around ten hours after a suspected [short-range ballistic missile](#) (SRBM) test. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's defense chief on Monday warned North Korea against its intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launches, saying Seoul and Washington could deploy additional strategic assets or conduct "decapitation" drills against the North Korean leadership. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's point man on North Korea called Monday for concerted international efforts to address the North's dire human rights situation, saying such violations are the "status quo" in the reclusive country. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The top nuclear envoys of South Korea, the United States and Japan held phone talks and condemned North Korea's recent back-to-back missile provocations, Seoul's foreign ministry said Monday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Following the 55th Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) in Seoul, U.S. and South Korean defense officials released the [Defense Vision](#) of the U.S.-Republic of Korea (ROK) Alliance. It is the second such document, following the [2019](#) release of the Public Summary of the Future Defense Vision of the ROK-U.S. Alliance after the 51st SCM. A comparison of both is revealing. (Clint Work, Joo Young Kim, [The Diplomat](#))
- South Korea and the United States have recently staged a combined special operations exercise, the U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) said Monday, amid joint efforts to reinforce deterrence against North Korean military threats. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- The U.S. reaffirmed its commitment to defending South Korea using all available means, including nuclear weapons, in a recent meeting on nuclear strategy — eliciting sharp North Korean threats of “preemptive and deadly counteraction.” (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol on Monday ordered a joint response with the United States and Japan to North Korea's long-range missile launch by using the countries' missile information sharing system. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ryan Beane, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607125750/https://mailchi.mp/2a524c3a8833/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-fires-apparent-icbm-second-missile-launch-in-10-hours-s-korea-us-stage-joint-special-operations-forces-drills>

Tuesday, December 19, 2023

Secretary Blinken speaks on the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Top News:

[Secretary Blinken on 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:](#)

[“Many governments trample on human rights to seize power”](#) (VOA Korea, 12/12/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[Ahead of expansion of trade with Russia, N. Korea orders major revamp of Rason trading companies](#) (Daily NK, 12/19/2023)

[N.K. leader says ICBM launch shows what option he has if U.S. makes wrong decision](#) (Yonhap, 12/19/2023)

In South Korea:

[Drills on assassinating Kim Jong Un remain an ‘option,’ ROK defense chief says](#) (NK News, 12/19/2023)

[JCS chairman calls for robust readiness against N.K.'s surprise attacks](#) (Yonhap, 12/19/2023)

[Yoon says N. Korea will learn its provocations only bring 'greater pain'](#) (Yonhap, 12/19/2023)

International:

[Seoul urges China's 'constructive role' after Wang meets N.K. vice FM on day of ICBM launch](#) (Yonhap, 12/19/2023)

[S. Korean, US border guards resume armament in JSA](#) (The Korea Herald, 12/19/2023)

[South Korea, Japan, US sharing North Korean missile data '24/7, all year round'](#) (The Korea Herald, 12/19/2023)

Top News:

- Commemorating the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Washington issued a series of messages emphasizing freedom and human dignity. In addition to pointing out that many countries oppress human rights to seize power, there were also statements from NGOs singling out North Korea as particularly problematic in this regard. (Kim Young-kwon, [VOA Korea](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean authorities are cracking down on independent activity by trading companies in Rason and boosting state control of the trade sector. The Ministry of External Economic Relations has asked trading companies to improve conditions in joint ventures with Russia and to complete the reassignment of trading officials by the first quarter of next year. (Jeong Tae Joo, [Daily NK](#))

- North Korea confirmed Tuesday it test-fired a Hwasong-18 solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) the previous day, with Kim Jong-un saying the launch showed what option he would take "when Washington makes a wrong decision." (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- Defense Minister, Shin Won-sik, makes rare mention of decapitation strikes against North Korea as US-ROK special forces exercises kick off (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))
- Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Adm. Kim Myung-soo on Tuesday ordered strong preparedness against any possible surprise artillery attacks. (Kim Eun-jung, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon said Tuesday that North Korea will learn its provocations only bring "greater pain," as he referred to a series of missile launches by the regime this week, including its latest test of an ICBM. He further stated South Korea, the United States and Japan have activated the real-time sharing of North Korean missile warning data and that the recent launch confirmed the system's smooth operation. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- South Korea renewed its call for China to play a "constructive role" Tuesday after Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with a visiting senior North Korean official on the day of the North's test-firing of an ICBM. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- The security battalion comprising South Korean and US guard forces responsible for securing the Joint Security Area has reinstated armaments in response to North Korean soldiers carrying firearms across the inter-Korean border, according to the United Nations Command. The two Koreas had previously withdrawn firearms from the JSA in the truce village of Panmunjom in late October 2018, around a month after signing the Inter-Korean Comprehensive Military Agreement. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))
- A trilateral scheme has kicked off for sharing data on North Korean missiles in real time among defense chiefs of South Korea, Japan and the US. The Ministry of National Defense in Seoul said Tuesday its prelaunch inspections have found the missile data-sharing scheme to be "completely ready for operations" and currently "operating smoothly," allowing the three allies to detect North Korea's missiles and share related information in real-time to defend the security interests of each country. (Kim Arin, Son Ji-hyoung, [The Korea Herald](#))

Secretary Blinken on 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Many governments trample on human rights to seize power"

Kim Young-kwon

VOA Korea

December 12, 2023

Commemorating the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Washington issued a series of messages emphasizing freedom and human dignity. In addition to pointing out that many countries oppress human rights to seize power, there were also statements from

NGOs singling out North Korea as particularly problematic in this regard. This is Kim Young-kwon reporting.

In a statement released on December 10th to mark International Human Rights Day, senior U.S. officials emphasized the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which celebrates its 75th anniversary this year.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken stated, “The UDHR, now endorsed by nearly every country in the world, enumerates the human rights that must be universally protected, and sets a common standard of liberty and dignity for all people, of all nations....Too often, authorities fail to protect or – worse – trample on human rights and fundamental freedoms, often in the name of security or to maintain their grip on power.”

He particularly criticized the actions of governments that undermine progress toward realizing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, decrying actions such as the arrest and unjust detention of journalists and dissidents, restrictions on individuals’ freedoms of religion or belief, atrocities and genocide, and various other human rights violations and abuses.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is an international, universal norm that guarantees the most basic human rights, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948 in response to crimes against humanity, including the Holocaust.

Although Secretary Blinken did not mention a specific country in his statement, the State Department has consistently mentioned North Korea as one of the most prominent countries that oppress the human rights of its citizens under the pretext of maintaining power and national security.

[Picture Caption: Kara Eirich, U.S. Adviser for the Third Committee, speaks at a meeting of the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on the 15th of last month.]

Kara Eirich, advisor on economic and social issues at the U.S. Permanent Mission to the United Nations, made the same criticism in her remarks last month just before the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on North Korean human rights for the 19th consecutive

year.

[Recording: Eirich] “The DPRK continues to commit widespread human rights abuses and violations, and as with many authoritarian governments, it continues to expand its repressive policies beyond its borders in the form of transnational repression.”

Meanwhile, Uzra Zeya, Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, repeatedly emphasized the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on ‘X’ on the 10th.

She said, “75 years later, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights remains the North Star for fundamental freedoms, no matter who or where you are.” She added, “All people are born equal in rights and dignity, and governments across the world have a common obligation to protect human rights.”

The U.S. Embassy in Seoul also used ‘X’ to emphasize Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states, “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”

The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), a non-governmental organization based in Washington, D.C., also mentioned Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in a statement emphasizing that it is “a common standard that all peoples and all countries must achieve.”

Furthermore, HRNK delineated the various human rights violation issues that have been pointed out by the international community, including the United Nations and emphasized its solidarity with the North Korean people.

[HRNK] “On this historic occasion, HRNK wishes to shed light on the crimes against humanity and other grave human rights violations that persist in one of the world’s darkest corners—North Korea.... HRNK reiterates its solidarity with the people of North Korea and calls upon North Korea to cease its policy of human rights denial. We also urge the international community to hold the North Korean regime accountable for its actions and to redouble efforts to improve the human rights situation of North Koreans, both in North Korea and abroad.”

However, the North Korean government completely rejected these comments.

North Korea's state media, the Korean Central News Agency, reported on December 10th that the North Korean Human Rights Research Association published a "Human Rights White Paper" to commemorate International Human Rights Day.

Without disclosing the contents of the white paper, the news agency argued, "Under the most humane human rights guarantee system, our people enjoy true human rights to the fullest and enjoy a blessed life."

It further stated, "Our Republic is fulfilling its responsibility and role in the field of international human rights," and claimed that the United States was exaggerating human rights issues in the DPRK in order to collapse the North Korean regime and system.

Translated by Diana Woo, HRNK Research Intern; edited by Mohona Ganguly, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Diana Woo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607125622/https://mailchi.mp/774197dbf05/hrnk-news-items-secretary-blinken-speaks-on-the-75th-anniversary-of-the-universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

Wednesday, December 20, 2023

N. Korea touts ICBM launch as 'major success'; N. Korean economy shrinks for 3rd consecutive year in 2022

In North Korea:

[After Nearly 4 Year Gap, North Korea Begins Issuing Visas for Chinese Businesspeople](#) (The Diplomat, 12/20/2023)

[Hairy business: Wigs once again drive up North Korea-China trade in November](#) (NK News, 12/20/2023)

[N. Korea touts ICBM launch as 'major success'](#) (Yonhap, 12/20/2023)

[N. Korean economy shrinks for 3rd consecutive year in 2022](#) (Yonhap, 12/20/2023)

In South Korea:

[N Korea's military provocations boost S Korea's nuclear arsenal push](#) (RFA, 12/20/2023)

[South Korean naval conscript indicted for spreading North Korean propaganda](#) (NK News, 12/20/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[B-1B bombers deployed as trilateral aerial exercise sends message to North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/20/2023)

[Yoon calls for strengthening surveillance, reconnaissance against North Korea](#) (Yonhap, 12/20/2023)

International:

[Newly nominated foreign minister pledges to improve ties with China](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/20/2023)

[N. Korea may see mass exodus if China stops deportations](#) (The Korea Times, 12/20/2023)

[UN Security Council members issue joint statement blasting North Korea](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/20/2023)

[US reaffirms commitment to S. Korea after N. Korea warns US against making 'wrong' choice](#) (Yonhap, 12/20/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korea has begun issuing visas to Chinese nationals again, around three years and 10 months after the government closed the border due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The authorities are prioritizing visas for Chinese traders, investors, and technicians. (Seulkee Jang, [The Diplomat](#))
- North Korea's booming business in producing wigs for export to China once again drove bilateral trade last month, as rising wages push Chinese companies to seek cheap labor across the border. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- North Korea on Wednesday lauded its latest launch of a solid-fuel Hwasong-18 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) as a "major success" that will help the country "counter any crises." The North's missile flew about 1,000 kilometers at a lofted trajectory before coming down in the East Sea on Monday, according to South Korea's military. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The North Korean economy shrank for the third year in a row in 2022 amid international sanctions and the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic, data showed Wednesday. (Oh Seok-min, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- When South Korea's President Yoon Suk Yeol suggested the potential of Seoul acquiring nuclear capabilities, the United States promptly set up the Nuclear Consultation Group, or NCG. This initiative is aimed at addressing Seoul's security concerns, in the hopes of preventing them from developing into a significant security dilemma for Washington, namely a nuclear domino effect across Asia. (Lee Jeong-ho, [RFA](#))
- A South Korean navy sailor has been indicted for producing and distributing materials praising North Korean leaders and leaking classified military information to a Chinese contact, the Defense Counterintelligence Command (DCC) confirmed to NK News. Tuesday's

indictment follows a nine-month investigation by ROK navy prosecutors, after the petty officer who enlisted in May last year was accused of breaching the National Security Act and the military criminal law. (Jeongmin Kim and Lina Park, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea, the United States and Japan held a trilateral aerial exercise involving U.S. B-1B strategic bombers over the Korean Peninsula Wednesday in response to North Korea's intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch earlier this week. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol called Wednesday for strengthening surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities to deal better with North Korea's nuclear and missile threats. Yoon made the remark as he presided over a meeting of the presidential defense innovation committee, noting the North's recent launches of a spy satellite and an intercontinental ballistic missile. (Lee Haye-ah, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Foreign Minister nominee Cho Tae-yul vowed to work on improving ties with China on Wednesday. "Our relations with China are as important as our alliance with the United States," he told a group of reporters in his office building in Seoul. "Beijing is aware of the possible effects its rivalry with Washington has on Seoul. Such understandings should help us find grounds to advance our relations." (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- China's policy of forcibly deporting North Korean escapees is a brutal one for such freedom-seekers. What is lesser known is that it is also a costly one for political leaders in Beijing. As a signatory to the U.N. Refugee Convention and other international treaties, the Chinese government isn't pleased to see its global reputation become marred by the policy it maintains largely for Pyongyang's interest. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- Ten members of the UN Security Council, including the United States and South Korea, condemned "in the strongest terms" the North's recent intercontinental ballistic missile launch in a joint statement Tuesday. "Over 30 times the DPRK has violated multiple Security Council resolutions, seeking to undermine the Security Council's credibility, and over 30 times the DPRK has threatened the global nonproliferation regime," said Robert Wood, alternative permanent representative of the United States to the UN. (Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The United States reaffirmed Tuesday its "ironclad" commitment to South Korea's defense and willingness for dialogue with North Korea, as Pyongyang warned Washington against making a "wrong" choice after its test-firing of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). Matthew Miller, the spokesperson for the State Department, made the comments after North Korean leader Kim Jong-un said the latest launch of a Hwasong-18 ICBM shows what option he would take when "Washington makes a wrong decision." (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Alejandro Cassal, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607125356/https://mailchi.mp/5fdb3138e743/hrnk-news-items-n-korea-touts-icbm-launch-as-major-success-n-korean-economy-shrinks-for-3rd-consecutive-year-in-2022>

Thursday, December 21, 2023

N.K. leader vows to launch nuclear attack without hesitation in event of enemy's nuclear provocations

In North Korea:

[Kim's sister denounces UNSC meeting on N. Korea's ICBM launch](#) (Yonhap, 12/21/2023)

[N.K. leader vows to launch nuclear attack without hesitation in event of enemy's nuclear provocations](#) (Yonhap, 12/21/2023)

[N. Korea succeeded in ICBM flight test, re-entry technology unverified: defense chief](#) (Yonhap, 12/21/2023)

In South Korea:

[Seoul urged to bolster defense against Pyongyang's evolving cyber threats](#) (The Korea Times, 12/21/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[N. Korea's Ri Son-gwon demoted from alternate member of party political bureau: Seoul](#) (Yonhap, 12/21/2023)

International:

[N. Korea may see mass exodus if China stops deportations](#) (The Korea Times, 12/21/2023)

[UN General Assembly passes NK human rights resolution for 19th consecutive year](#) (Yonhap, 12/21/2023)

In North Korea:

- The sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un on Thursday lambasted a recent U.N. Security Council (UNSC) meeting on Pyongyang's intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch and warned of further provocations. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has said his country will launch a nuclear attack without hesitation in event of nuclear provocations from the enemy, state media said Thursday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's defense chief said Thursday that North Korea's recent launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) demonstrated its flight capability but its atmospheric reentry technology has not yet been verified. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea is no stranger to the North's disruptive cyber operations. The South Korean government, media outlets, financial institutions and other private entities have suffered the consequences of North Korea's cyber operations multiple times during the past two decades. (Kang Hyun-kyung, [The Korea Times](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- Ri Son-gwon, head of the North Korean unit handling inter-Korean relations, has been removed from his position as an alternate member of the political bureau of the ruling Workers' Party, South Korea's unification ministry said Thursday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- China's policy of forcibly deporting North Korean escapees is a brutal one for such freedom-seekers. What is lesser known is that it is also a costly one for political leaders in Beijing. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- The U.N. General Assembly has passed a resolution on North Korean human rights for the 19th consecutive year amid growing woes over the safety of North Korean escapees who were repatriated from China. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Angela Yoon, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607125240/https://mailchi.mp/fl489e00d0a8/hrnk-news-items-nk-leader-vows-to-launch-nuclear-attack-without-hesitation-in-event-of-enemys-nuclear-provocations>

Friday, December 22, 2023

Third Successful Launch of North Korea's Hwasong-18 Solid ICBM Probably Marks Operational Deployment

In North Korea:

[A New Effort to Conceal Activity at Nampho Port](#) (38 North, 12/22/2023)

[N. Korea condemns G7 over possible seizure of Russian assets for Ukraine aid](#) (Yonhap, 12/22/2023)

[N. Korea to hold key parliamentary meeting on Jan. 15 to discuss budget](#) (Yonhap, 12/22/2023)

[North Korea appears to be looking to make more bomb fuels at its main nuclear facility, experts say](#) (AP News, 12/22/2023)

[Second North Korean nuclear reactor appears to be operational, IAEA says](#) (Reuters, 12/21/2023)

[Third Successful Launch of North Korea's Hwasong-18 Solid ICBM Probably Marks Operational Deployment](#) (38 North, 12/21/2023)

In South Korea:

[S. Korea stages independent tabletop exercise simulating N.K. nuclear attack](#) (Yonhap, 12/22/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Seoul approves just two requests to send humanitarian aid to North Korea in 2023](#) (NK News, 12/22/2023)

International:

[Japan OKs record \\$56B defense budget, looking to counter North Korean missiles](#) (NK News, 12/22/2023)

[Russian region in Siberia seeks 2,000 North Koreans for construction projects](#) (NK News, 12/22/2023)

[Singapore man wanted in US indicted for smuggling oil to North Korea](#) (NK News, 12/22/2023)

In North Korea:

- Recent commercial satellite imagery indicates activity continues across North Korea's Nampho Port despite a fresh dusting of snow. An image from December 17 shows a full container yard, construction activity in the boat repair area where the second submersible test barge is berthed, a busy coal yard, and continued work in the petroleum, oil and lubricants (POL) storage area. (Martyn Williams and Peter Makowsky, [38 North](#))
- North Korea on Friday lambasted the Group of Seven (G7) economic powers as a "club of robbers" over their possible plan to seize Russia's overseas assets and provide financial support to Ukraine. The criticism came in response to a report by the Financial Times that the G7 have stepped up discussions in recent weeks over spending part of some US\$300 billion worth of immobilized Russian assets to support Ukraine. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea plans to convene a key parliamentary meeting next month to discuss the state budget for 2024, state media said Friday. The standing committee of the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) made a decision to hold the 10th session of the 14th SPA on Jan. 15, according to the North's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea launched a Hwasong (HS)-18 solid-propellant, road-mobile intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) on December 18. This was the third launch of the system and the third success, thus continuing Pyongyang's remarkable track record of successful solid-propellant missile launches. (Vann H. Van Diepen, [38 North](#))
- A new reactor at North Korea's Yongbyon nuclear complex appears to be operating for the first time, the U.N. nuclear watchdog and independent experts said on Thursday, which would mean an additional potential source of plutonium for nuclear weapons. (Francois Murphy and Josh Smith, [Reuters](#))
- North Korea appears to have started operating a light-water reactor at its main nuclear complex in a possible attempt to establish a new facility to produce bomb fuels, the U.N. atomic agency and outside experts said. If correct, the assessment would show that North

Korea has taken a step to implement leader Kim Jong Un's repeated vows to build more nuclear weapons in response to what he described as intensifying U.S.-led military threats. (Hyung-jin Kim, [AP News](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea staged an independent tabletop exercise simulating a North Korean nuclear attack this year as part of efforts to hone response capabilities against the North's military threats, the defense ministry said Friday. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea only approved two requests from private organizations to deliver aid to North Korea this year, the unification ministry said Thursday, marking a significant decline from 12 projects in 2022 as Seoul deprioritizes humanitarian assistance. The two approvals are worth around \$260,000 (400 million won) and "relate to children," the ministry said in a press release. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

International:

- Japan's cabinet approved a record \$55.9 billion (7.95 trillion yen) defense budget on Friday, allocating funds to strengthen air and missile defenses and acquire counterstrike capabilities in response to North Korean military threats. The draft budget for fiscal year 2024 represents a 16.5 percent rise from the previous year and sets a new high-water mark for the 10th consecutive year amid an increasingly severe security situation in East Asia. (Kosuke Takahashi, [NK News](#))
- A Russian region in Siberia plans to employ thousands of North Korean workers for multiple construction projects, a regional official announced Thursday, citing ongoing labor shortages amid Moscow's war in Ukraine. Alexei Kolmakov, head of the Novosibirsk Oblast construction ministry, said at a press conference that the regional construction industry is experiencing labor shortages estimated at 4,500-5,000 workers, which the region will partially address with DPRK workers in the near future. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))
- Singapore authorities have charged two businessmen for their alleged role in smuggling fuel into North Korea, including one wanted by the FBI with a \$5 million bounty. The Singapore Police Force said in a press release on Thursday that Kwek Kee Seng allegedly conspired to supply gas oil to the DPRK in 2019, while his accomplice Low Eng Yeow Justin helped facilitate the purchase of the fuel. (Anton Sokolin, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Gabrielle Drinkwine, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607125127/https://mailchi.mp/819d4c8baf6c/hrnk-news-items-nk-leader-vows-to-launch-nuclear-attack-without-hesitation-in-event-of-enemys-nuclear-provocations-12237870>

Saturday, December 23, 2023

N. Korea's New Reactor Raises Fears of Increased Plutonium Production

In North Korea:

[Is Kim Jong Un grooming his daughter to rule North Korea?](#) (Deutsche Welle, 12/22/2023)
[New North Korean Nuclear Reactor Likely Running, U.N. says](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 12/22/2023)
[North Korea Potentially Operating New Nuclear Reactor--Here's What To Know](#) (Forbes, 12/22/2023)
[North Korea's New Reactor Raises Fears of Increased Plutonium Production](#) (The New York Times, 12/22/2023)
[Publicly executed for killing a woman while trying to steal beans](#) (RFA, 12/23/2023)
[The War in Ukraine Has Created a New 'Axis of Evil'](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 12/21/2023)
[We're a Happy Family: Decoding Kim Ju Ae's Family Affiliations](#) (38 North, 12/20/2023)
[Why does North Korea keep firing missiles?](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/23/2023)

In South Korea:

[DP intensifies offensive against incoming ruling party chief](#) (Yonhap, 12/22/2023)
[JCS chief visits front-line unit with UNC commander](#) (Yonhap, 12/22/2023)

International:

[After 3 years, Chinese who left during pandemic return to North Korea](#) (RFA, 12/22/2023)
[Court decisions reignite World War II tensions, straining Japan and South Korea's new amity](#) (The Washington Times, 12/22/2023)
[Japan-South Korea Cooperation: Strength in Unity, Danger in Division](#) (The Diplomat, 12/23/2023)
[Letter: Korea armistice is wrong model to end the war](#) (Financial Times, 12/21/2023)
[Low-quality shells supplied to Russia by North Korea are injuring its own troops and damaging artillery, Ukraine says](#) (Business Insider, 12/23/2023)
[Milestones and Momentum: A Banner 2023 for the US-ROK Alliance and the Path Forward](#) (38 North, 12/20/2023)

In North Korea:

- Analysts previously believed it would be impossible for a woman to lead North Korea. But there is growing evidence that the "Morning Star of Korea" is the chosen heir to the world's only hereditary communist dynasty. (Julian Ryall, [Deutsche Welle](#))
- North Korea appears to be operating a more powerful reactor for producing plutonium at its main nuclear site for the first time, the United Nations atomic agency said late Thursday, days after Pyongyang tested an intercontinental ballistic missile that could reach across the U.S. (Laurence Norman, [The Wall Street Journal](#))
- North Korea is operating a new reactor in its main nuclear complex, according to the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog, which warned the country may be producing plutonium. (Britney Nguyen, [Forbes](#))

- In what would be a fresh breach of United Nations sanctions, a new reactor in North Korea's main nuclear complex appears to have gone into operation, providing the country with a potential source of additional plutonium for its growing nuclear arsenal, according to the United Nations' nuclear watchdog. (Choe Sang-hun, [The New York Times](#))
- Hundreds of residents were forced to gather at an airfield in frigid weather to watch authorities execute a 23-year-old man by firing squad, residents in North Korea told Radio Free Asia. (Kim Jieun, [RFA](#))
- A new acronym has already emerged in Washington to denote this autocratic lineup: the CRINKs, meaning China, Russia, Iran and North Korea. These countries have increasingly aligned their positions not just on Ukraine, but on other crises that pit them against the U.S., such as the war in Gaza. (Yaroslav Trofimov, [The Wall Street Journal](#))
- November 18 marked the one-year anniversary of Kim Jong Un's daughter, Kim Ju Ae, being in the public eye. That first observed public appearance, and the 19 subsequent events in which she has participated, have raised the question of whether she has been selected as a hereditary successor. (Michael Madden, [38 North](#))
- A growing consensus now is that the North's missile launches are as much intended to advance the credibility of its deterrence capabilities as they are to achieve the regime's stated foreign policy objective of forcing the United States to withdraw militarily from the Korean Peninsula. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- The main opposition Democratic Party (DP) stepped up its attacks on the incoming interim leader of the ruling People Power Party (PPP), urging him to "speak boldly what he has to say" to President Yoon Suk Yeol amid criticism he is nothing more than Yoon's "avatar." (Kang Jae-eun, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's top military officer and the commander of the U.S.-led U.N. command (UNC) visited a central front-line unit this week to observe North Korean border activity, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said Friday. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- After about three years, dozens of Chinese residents of North Korea who left for China during the COVID-19 pandemic are set to return home, residents in China told Radio Free Asia. (Ahn Chang-Gyu, [RFA](#))
- Rapidly warming Japan-South Korean relations felt a distinct chill at the end of 2023 as an emotive historical dispute between the two U.S. allies--compensation for World War II victims--reared up yet again. (Andrew Salmon, [The Washington Times](#))
- Deepened trilateral cooperation between the U.S. and its two key East Asian allies is a positive development, but the fragility of Japanese and South Korean leadership underscores the importance of long-term reconciliation. (James Kaizuka, [The Diplomat](#))
- No Ukrainian government could willingly accept a Korean-style armistice--it would mean, as a practical matter, giving up forever those Ukrainian territories that would remain under Russian control. (John Hewko, Mitchell Reiss, [Financial Times](#))

- Russia is using low-quality artillery shells from North Korea that are often defective and cause problems on the front lines, Ukraine's army said. (Alia Shoaib, [Business Insider](#))
- Moving forward into 2024, it is crucial for the US-ROK alliance to solidify and institutionalize the achievements of the previous year at the most granular operational levels, all while maintaining flexibility in response to potential changes in both ROK and US foreign policy. (George Hutchinson, [38 North](#))

Prepared by Raymond Ha, HRNK Director of Operations & Research

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607124958/https://mailchi.mp/2c5a8eec504b/hrnk-news-items-1223-2023>

Sunday, December 24, 2023

Yoon Government's NK Policy after Camp David - "Free and Peaceful, Unified Korea"

Top News:

[Yoon Government's NK Policy after Camp David: "Free and Peaceful, Unified Korea"](#) (East Asia Institute, 12/13/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea will likely keep amassing nuclear warheads until next negotiation](#) (The Korea Times, 12/24/2023)

[North Korea's economy contracts for third straight year](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/24/2023)

In South Korea:

[70 pct of N.K. defectors in Seoul have hard time making ends meet: think tank](#) (Yonhap, 12/24/2023)

International:

[A Korean War Christmas miracle: How a 59-person ship saved 14,000 refugees](#) (The Washington Post, 12/24/2023)

[Japan to Send U.S. Patriot Missiles, Creating Deeper Pool for Ukraine Air Defenses](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 12/22/2023)

[Kim Jong Un bans Christmas, but activists send gifts of Bibles, food and messages of hope](#) (Fox News, 12/24/2023)

[North Korea's New Hwasong-18 ICBM: Flying High Thanks to Russia?](#) (The National Interest, 12/23/2023)

[Russia Hurting Own Troops with Low-Quality Artillery: Ukraine](#) (Newsweek, 12/23/2023)

['The Other Great Game' Review: The First Korean War](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 12/22/2023)

[U.S. expresses serious concern over signs of N.K. commissioning light-water reactor](#) (Yonhap, 12/23/2023)

Top News:

- In an interview with the East Asia Institute, ROK Minister of Unification Kim Yung-ho reiterates the Ministry's commitment to achieve North Korea's complete denuclearization, human rights improvement, greater international consensus towards the ROK's vision of a free and peaceful, unified Korea, and defector settlement support. ([East Asia Institute](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea appears to have started operating a new light-water reactor at its main nuclear facility in Yongbyon in a move obviously aimed at expanding its capacity to produce fuel for nuclear bombs. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- North Korea's economy shrank for the third consecutive year while the country's population reached 25.7 million, around half of South Korea's 51.67 million. (Jeong Hye-jeong, Kim Ju-yeon, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

In South Korea:

- Around one-fifth of North Korean defectors in South Korea live in Seoul, but close to 70 percent of them have a hard time making ends meet, a think tank report showed Sunday. (Kang Jae-eun, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The Korean War caused 1.5 million North Korean citizens to flee their homeland. About 14,000 of them made their escape at Christmastime in 1950 -- on a single ship with a 59-person capacity. (George Bass, [The Washington Post](#))
- The war in Ukraine and Tokyo's concerns about China and North Korea have prompted a rethink in Japan about its contribution to international security. (Alastair Gale, Chieko Tsuneoka, [The Wall Street Journal](#))
- Christmas is banned in North Korea, but that is not stopping a group of activists from sending messages of hope, faith and freedom to the people suffering under the dictatorship of Kim Jong Un. (Eric Shawn, [Fox News](#))
- Unlike any other time in Pyongyang's ballistic missile history, we are likely to see large-scale technical support and military assistance from the Russians. (Bruce E. Bechtol, Jr., [The National Interest](#))
- Russian forces in Ukraine are facing setbacks due to the use of low-quality artillery shells, many of which are believed to be supplied by North Korea. (Alexander Fabino, [Newsweek](#))
- At the dawn of the 20th century, Korea was caught in the middle of the struggle for the balance of power in Asia. (Stephen R. Platt, [The Wall Street Journal](#))
- The United States has expressed serious concern over North Korea showing signs of starting the operation of a new light-water nuclear reactor in a possible attempt to produce nuclear weapons fuel. ([Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Raymond Ha, HRNK Director of Operations & Research

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607124816/https://mailchi.mp/89926a966e24/hrnk-news-items-1224-2023>

Monday, December 25, 2023

N. Korea set to convene plenary meeting of ruling party this week

In North Korea:

[Ask a North Korean: Can children in the DPRK express their creativity?](#) (NK News, 12/25/2023)

[Kim regime's restrictions on fishing lead some fishermen to financial collapse](#) (Rimjin-gang, 12/25/2023)

[N. Korea set to convene plenary meeting of ruling party this week](#) (Yonhap, 12/25/2023)

[North Korea expected to renew efforts to promote tourism next year](#) (The Korea Times, 12/25/2023)

[North Korean food prices show the country has not one economy, but three](#) (NK Pro, 12/25/2023)

In South Korea:

[Incoming ruling party chief faces uphill battle](#) (The Korea Herald, 12/25/2023)

[Reincarnated ROKS Cheonan frigate heads to the front lines](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/25/2023)

[South Korea Is Slowly Becoming a Submarine Superpower](#) (The National Interest, 12/25/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[South Korean city rekindles border Christmas lights that angered North Korea](#) (NK News, 12/25/2023)

International:

[Activity at North Korea's light water reactor raises 'serious concerns,' US says](#) (NK News, 12/25/2023)

[Families seek reunion with kin possibly abducted to North Korea](#) (The Japan Times, 12/25/2023)

['Not a peaceful night': Chinese state media urge citizens to remember Christmas Eve for Korean war battle victory](#) (South China Morning Post, 12/25/2023)

[Pontiff calls for Korea peace through dialogue in Christmas message](#) (Yonhap, 12/25/2023)

[Pope Francis denounces the weapons industry as he makes a Christmas appeal for peace in the world](#) (Associated Press, 12/25/2023)

[U.S., Asian Allies Quicken Response to North Korean Missiles](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 12/25/2023)

[Why China is keeping its distance as Russia and North Korea cosy up](#) (South China Morning Post, 12/25/2023)

In North Korea:

- David, who defected in 2012, writes about discovering the joys of self-expression through his work as a YouTuber. ([NK News](#))
- The results of a survey show that the COVID-19 pandemic, the Kim Jong-un regime's various controls and restrictions, the skyrocketing of fuel prices, and the considerable shrinking of available fishing grounds have led to the industry's decline. (Kang Ji-won, Ishimaru Jiro, [Rimjin-gang](#))
- North Korea is set to hold a key party meeting this week amid expectations that its leader Kim Jong-un will likely reaffirm a hard-line stance against the United States and unveil plans to strengthen its military capabilities. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea adopted a new law in August to "vitalize and expand" its tourism industry, according to its state media. Under the young leader, North Korea stepped up efforts to develop tourist sites. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- For nearly three decades, marketization has been spreading in North Korea, but persistent barriers mean that, even now, economic activity in the country remains fragmented. (Justin Hastings, [NK Pro](#))

In South Korea:

- The ruling party interim nominee, former Justice Minister Han Dong-hoon faces an uphill battle as he seeks to lead party reform while tackling opposition proposals for a special investigation into first lady Kim Keon Hee. (Jung Min-kyung, [The Korea Herald](#))
- A reincarnated ROKS *Cheonan* has embarked on a mission at the Northern Limit Line, the South Korean Navy said Saturday. The new frigate is named after the ROKS *Cheonan* corvette, which sank in the Yellow Sea after a North Korean torpedo attack in March 2010, killing 46 sailors. (Lee Keun-pyung, Lee Soo-jung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The Republic of Korea Navy (ROK Navy) continues to increase its submarine capabilities -- a significant shift after years of having largely only midget subs. (Peter Suci, [The National Interest](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- A South Korean border observatory facing North Korea flicked on the lights to a large-scale Christmas display over the weekend, nearly a decade after suspending a similar holiday installation that Pyongyang denounced as an "unpardonable provocation." (Jeongmin Kim, [NK News](#))

International:

- The U.S. has expressed concern over North Korea's operation of a new light water reactor at its nuclear complex, after the global agency regulating nuclear development reported increased activity at the facility. (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- The families of missing people who are suspected to have been abducted to North Korea, though they are not on the Japanese government's official list of abductees, are desperately hoping to be reunited with them as many of them are in their advanced years. ([The Japan Times](#))

- Viral videos about the Battle of Lake Changjin, also known as the Battle of Chosin Reservoir, stirred patriotism on social media. The battle, which ended on December 24, 1950, pushed US-allied troops back to the 38th parallel. (Phoebe Zhang, [South China Morning Post](#))
- Pope Francis expressed hope for efforts to foster lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula through "dialogue and reconciliation" in his Christmas message on Monday, amid tensions heightened by North Korea's recent missile launches and tough rhetoric. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- Pope Francis' annual "Urbi et Orbi" speech typically offers a lament of all the misery facing the world, and this year's edition was no different. From Armenia and Azerbaijan to Syria and Yemen, Ukraine to South Sudan and Congo and the Korean peninsula, Francis appealed for humanitarian initiatives, dialogue and security to prevail over violence and death. (Nicole Winfield, [Associated Press](#))
- Now the U.S., South Korea and Japan are trying to close the information gaps. The three countries began sharing the missile-tracking data they gather in real time last week. (Dasl Yoon, [The Wall Street Journal](#))
- Beijing, a close partner of Moscow and Pyongyang, is staying quiet about the growing alignment between its two neighbours. (Kawala Xie, [South China Morning Post](#))

Prepared by Raymond Ha, HRNK Director of Operations & Research

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607124706/https://mailchi.mp/f7b1ee5b78b5/hrnk-news-items-1225-2023>

Tuesday, December 26, 2023

Inside country most dangerous to celebrate Christmas where devout citizens risk death

Top News:

[Inside country most dangerous to celebrate Christmas where devout citizens risk death](#) (The Mirror, 12/24/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea highlights economic feats ahead of plenary meeting](#) (Yonhap, 12/26/2023)

In South Korea:

[Seoul flags Kim Jong-un sympathizers as inside threats](#) (The Korea Herald, 12/26/2023)

[Seoul to push for establishment of state-run North Korea human rights center](#) (The Korea Times, 12/26/2023)

[Seoul unveils ambitious plan to raise awareness about North Korean human rights](#) (NK News, 12/26/2023)

[S. Korea to push for DNA tests on descendants of separated families](#) (Yonhap, 12/26/2023)

International:

[UN refugee agency calls for China to give 'humanitarian space' to North Koreans](#) (NK News, 12/26/2023)

Top News:

- "Detention periods have been documented as being longer for Christians than other groups, and witnesses have reported that 'identified Christians are interrogated for longer periods, usually under torture', and subjected to some of the worst forms of torture to force them to incriminate others during interrogation," according to a report issued in 2022 by The International Bar Association and The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea. (Mizy Judah Clifton, [The Mirror](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean state media outlets on Tuesday ran articles on recent economic and industrial developments in what appeared to be efforts to highlight the country's economic accomplishments this year ahead of a key party meeting expected to take place this week. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- The Ministry of National Defense in Seoul has characterized sympathizers of the North Korean regime threats within South Korea. (Kim Arin, [The Korea Herald](#))
- South Korea is pressing ahead with the establishment of a state-run museum as part of its efforts to raise awareness on North Korea's human rights abuses despite budget shortages caused by the main opposition party. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea's Ministry of Unification unveiled a three-year road map to promote North Korean human rights on Tuesday, outlining plans to build a national human rights center and to disseminate information to DPRK citizens. (Ifang Bremer, Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))
- The unification ministry said Tuesday it will push to conduct DNA tests on descendants of families separated by the 1950-53 Korean War in a bid to use their gene information for potential family reunions with their relatives in North Korea. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) called on China to protect North Koreans living in the country earlier this year, months before Beijing reportedly deported hundreds of DPRK escapees, a newly released U.N. document shows. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))

Prepared by Yubin Jun, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

[https://web.archive.org/web/20240607124549/https://mailchi.mp/ef55eb771d0a/hrnk-news-items-inside-country-most-d
angerous-to-celebrate-christmas-where-devout-citizens-risk-death](https://web.archive.org/web/20240607124549/https://mailchi.mp/ef55eb771d0a/hrnk-news-items-inside-country-most-dangerous-to-celebrate-christmas-where-devout-citizens-risk-death)

Wednesday, December 27, 2023

Kim Jong Un kicks off major meeting to round out 'year of great transformation'

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un kicks off major meeting to round out 'year of great transformation'](#) (NK News, 12/27/2023)

[N. Korea convenes year-end party meeting with leader Kim in attendance](#) (Yonhap, 12/27/2023)

[N. Korea will seek to increase nuclear weapons to improve 'second-strike capability': experts](#) (Yonhap, 12/27/2023)

[N. Korean officials show up for year-end party meeting in luxury sedans](#) (Yonhap, 12/27/2023)

In South Korea:

[Defectors from North happier, more employed than before](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/27/2023)

[Employment rate of N.K. defectors in S. Korea hits record high of 60.5 pct: report](#) (Yonhap, 12/27/2023)

[Life satisfaction rate among North Korean defectors hits record high](#) (The Korea Times, 12/27/2023)

['Mercilessly bury' North Korea if it attacks, ROK defense chief orders sailors](#) (NK News, 12/27/2023)

[7 in 10 North Korean defectors struggle to make ends meet in Seoul, survey finds](#) (NK News, 12/27/2023)

[South to prosecute North's human rights violators after unification](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/27/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[S. Korea imposes sanctions on 8 N.K. individuals for illicit arms trade, cyberactivities](#) (Yonhap, 12/27/2023)

[S. Korea slaps sanctions on NK foreign intelligence chief](#) (The Korea Herald, 12/27/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un kicked off the ruling party's end-of-year meeting on Tuesday, projecting optimism as he highlighted the country's achievements in fields ranging from military development to construction in a "year of great transformation." (Shreyas Reddy, [NK News](#))
- North Korea has convened a key year-end meeting of the ruling Workers' Party with leader Kim Jong-un in attendance to discuss next year's policy direction, Pyongyang's state media said Wednesday. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea will continue to escalate its nuclear threats against the United States and South Korea next year while seeking to improve its capabilities to strike back with a nuclear weapon if it comes under a nuclear attack, experts said Wednesday. (Yi Wonju, [Yonhap](#))
- Key North Korean officials arrived for a year-end meeting of the ruling Worker's Party in luxury vehicles, state media footage showed Wednesday, despite international sanctions banning the supply of luxury goods to the North. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- North Korean defectors have reported higher levels of employment and satisfaction with life in South Korea this year compared to previous years, a recent study has shown. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- The employment rate of North Korean defectors in South Korea reached a new high of 60.5 percent earlier this year, a report showed Wednesday, in a sign of improving living conditions for those who fled from the North. (Lee Minji, [Yonhap](#))
- The rate of North Korean defectors satisfied with their lives in South Korea hit a record high of 79.3 percent this year amid an overall improvement in their economic conditions. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korea's defense chief ordered navy sailors to "mercilessly bury" North Korean adversaries at sea in the event of another attack, addressing the crew of a new frigate named for a ship sunk by the DPRK. (Joon Ha Park, [NK News](#))
- Seven in 10 North Korean defectors living in Seoul according to a new survey by a government think tank, while escapees' earnings continue to lag behind the South Korean national average. (Ifang Bremer, [NK News](#))
- The perpetrators of human rights violations in the North will face criminal punishments once the two Koreas are unified, said the government in Seoul on Tuesday. (Park Hyun-ju, Esther Chung, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea imposed independent sanctions Wednesday on eight North Korean individuals, including the chief of the North's spy agency, for their involvement in arms trade and cyberactivities banned under international sanctions. (Kim Seung-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- The South Korean government on Wednesday imposed sanctions on the head of North Korea's primary intelligence agency responsible for overseas operations, along with seven other North Koreans. (Ji Da-gyum, [The Korea Herald](#))

Prepared by Kate Refolo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607124413/https://mailchi.mp/28fa1a986846/hrnk-news-items-kim-jong-un-kicks-off-major-meeting-to-round-out-year-of-great-transformation>

Thursday, December 28, 2023

Ambassador Lee Shin-wha Proposes Int'l Dialogue for N. Korean Human Rights

Top News:

[Ambassador Lee Shin-wha Proposes Int'l Dialogue for N. Korean Human Rights](#) (RFA, 11/29/2023)

*This article has been translated from Korean. Please see the full English text at the bottom of the email.

In North Korea:

[Kim accuses U.S. of 'unprecedented' acts against North](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/28/2023)

[Kim Jong Un tells nation to prepare for economic hardships and war in 2024](#) (NK News, 12/28/2023)

[N. Korean leader calls for stepped-up war preparations](#) (Yonhap, 12/28/2023)

[North Korea's Kim orders military to accelerate war preparations](#) (Reuters, 12/28/2023)

In South Korea:

[Seoul halts plans to lift ban on North Korean media](#) (The Korea Times, 12/28/2023)

[Seoul holds drills simulating North Korean bioterrorist and drone attacks](#) (NK News, 12/28/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Dossier shows N. Korea using peace as tactic in inter-Korean ties in late 70s, early 80s](#) (Yonhap, 12/28/2023)

[NIS sees high chance of N. Korea's provocations ahead of S. Korea's April elections](#) (Yonhap, 12/28/2023)

International:

[Trump may bring about 'bolder' N. Korea policy shift if reelected: U.S. expert](#) (Yonhap, 12/28/2023)

Top News:

- An official from Seoul's foreign ministry proposed the establishment of an international consultative body for discussing North Korean human rights issues. Reporter Cho Jin-woo has the story. (Cho Jin-woo, [RFA](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un called for increased war preparations on the second day of a key Workers' Party meeting as he accused the United States of engaging in "unprecedented" acts of confrontation against his regime, Pyongyang's state media reported Thursday. (Michael Lee, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un told the nation that economic problems will increase in 2024 and to prepare for war with the U.S., speaking on the second day of a year-end party meeting, according to state media on Thursday. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has called for stepped-up efforts to prepare for war, saying the United States is engaged in "unprecedented" acts of confrontation against the country, state media reported Thursday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea leader Kim Jong Un has ordered his country's military, munitions industry and nuclear weapons sector to accelerate war preparations to counter what he called unprecedented confrontational moves by the U.S., state media said on Thursday. (Choi Soo-hyang, [Reuters](#))

In South Korea:

- Faced with strong opposition from conservatives, the South Korean government decided to halt plans to lift a ban on public access to North Korean media content, sources said, Thursday. (Jung Min-ho, [The Korea Times](#))
- South Korean civic and military agencies conducted drills on Wednesday simulating a range of North Korean attacks on Seoul, including drone incursions, artillery shellings, biochemical attacks and terrorism. (Kim Jeong-min, [NK News](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- South Korea's unification ministry on Thursday unveiled newly declassified documents offering a glimpse of inter-Korean relations from 1979-81, when Seoul was reeling from political confusion in the aftermath of the assassination of military dictator Park Chung-hee. (Lee Min-ji, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea's spy agency said Thursday there is a high possibility that North Korea could carry out military provocations early next year ahead of major elections in South Korea and the United States. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Former U.S. President Donald Trump could make a "bolder" shift in North Korea policy if reelected, an American expert said Wednesday, raising the prospects of him eyeing another summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. (Song Sang-ho, Kim Dong-hyun, [Yonhap](#))

Ambassador Lee Shin-wha Proposes Int'l Dialogue for N. Korean Human Rights

Cho Jin-woo
Radio Free Asia
November 29, 2023

An official from Seoul's foreign ministry proposed the establishment of an international consultative body for discussing North Korean human rights issues. Reporter Cho Jin-woo has the story.

Ambassador Lee Shin-hwa, South Korea's Ambassador for International Cooperation on North Korean human rights, stressed the need for an international platform—a consultative body—for discussing global human rights issues, including North Korean human rights, during a webinar hosted by the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK) on November 29.

She stated the necessity of a human rights-focused consultative platform such as a “Seoul Dialogue” or a “Washington Dialogue,” similar to the likes of the Shangri-La Dialogue, Asia’s defense summit held annually in Singapore.

Ambassador Lee pointed to the need for international action to address and improve North Korean human rights, as well as in-depth research on this issue drawing a wide range of disciplines.

Ambassador Lee: It would be good for South Korea to keep a record of discussions at historic human rights-focused meetings in the coming years.

Ambassador Lee also proposed the enactment of a South Korean version of the “Magnitsky Act.”

The Magnitsky Act, enacted in 2012, authorizes the U.S. government to impose economic sanctions on foreigners who violate human rights or are involved in corruption, and ban them from entering the U.S.

She referred to the parents of Otto Warmbier, the American college student who died shortly after his release from a lengthy detention in North Korea, noting that they received compensation based on this law.

On November 23, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York ruled that North Korean funds of \$2.2 million seized from a U.S. bank must be paid to the parents of Otto Warmbier.

She also added that it is important for South Korea to independently implement and regularly renew its sanctions against North Korea.

Regarding a statement condemning China for its forced repatriation of North Korean escapees, Ambassador Lee said “I have been working to make a joint statement for the last month and, in particular, I urged the Ministry of Foreign Affairs act on this matter because I am scheduled to meet with U.S. Special Envoy Julie Turner next week. I hope that a joint statement of like-minded countries can be made as soon as possible.”

Earlier this month, Ambassador Lee stated that she would promote a joint statement of like-minded countries—including South Korea and the U.S—to send a stronger message to the Chinese government regarding the forced repatriation to North Korea, stressing that efforts of the international community are important to improve the human rights situation in North Korea.

Meanwhile, during the webinar, Greg Scarlatou, HRNK Executive Director, argued that it is time to elevate human rights in North Korea policy, emphasizing that sidelining human rights issues for the past 30 years has failed to deter North Korea’s nuclear and missile development.

Translated by Jiwoo (Katie) Choi, HRNK Research intern; edited by Mohona Ganguly, HRNK Research Intern

Prepared by Jiwoo Hwang, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607124138/https://mailchi.mp/dbf8d6497612/hrnk-news-items-ambassador-lee-shin-w-ha-proposes-intl-dialogue-for-n-korean-human-rights>

Friday, December 29, 2023

North Korea likely to carry out 'provocations' around US and ROK elections

In North Korea:

[Kim Jong Un appears to reward top officials with luxury Mercedes cars](#) (NK News, 12/29/2023)

[N.K. leader invites contributors in economic sector to New Year's celebrations](#) (Yonhap, 12/29/2023)

[N.K.'s total fertility rate estimated at 1.38, far lower than U.N. estimate: BOK report](#) (Yonhap, 12/29/2023)

[North Korea touts new ice skating rink in Pyongyang in push to provide amenities](#) (NK News, 12/29/2023)

[Previewing North Korea's Strategic Moves in 2024](#) (The Diplomat, 12/25/2023)

In South Korea:

[Defense chief apologizes over Dokdo's description as disputed territory in education material](#) (Yonhap, 12/29/2023)

[Yoon orders military to retaliate first, report later in case of enemy attacks](#) (Yonhap, 12/28/2023)

International:

[Nicaraguan ambassador to North Korea to take up post 'in coming days': Managua](#) (NK News, 12/29/2023)

[North Korea likely to carry out 'provocations' around US and ROK elections: NIS](#) (NK News, 12/29/2023)

[U.S. reaffirms 'no hostile intent' to N. Korea after Kim calls for stronger war preparations](#) (Yonhap, 12/29/2023)

In North Korea:

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un appears to have recently gifted new and hand-me-down armored Mercedes cars to his inner circle, providing perks to his trusted officials and again demonstrating his ability to bypass international sanctions. (Colin Zwirko, [NK News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has invited people who contributed to attaining this year's key economic goals to Pyongyang for New Year's celebrations, state media reported Friday.

North Korea is preparing to hold celebration events in the capital to mark the start of the new year, according to the Korean Central News Agency. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))

- North Korea's total fertility rate is presumed to have been far lower than a U.N. estimate amid a delay in marriages and women's increased economic activities, a report from South Korea's central bank showed Friday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- Residents of North Korea's capital will be able glide and twirl across the ice at a new outdoor rink this winter, though such opportunities likely won't be available to most of the country's people. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- Expect North Korea to continue to advance military ties with Russia, push forward key advanced weapons programs (like nuclear subs), and generally shun diplomacy with the U.S. and South Korea. (Mitch Shin, [The Diplomat](#))

In South Korea:

- South Korea's defense chief has apologized over the description of the country's easternmost islets of Dokdo as a disputed territory in the military's newly published educational material for troops. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol on Thursday ordered the military to immediately retaliate first and report it later in case of enemy attacks, as he paid a year-end visit to a front-line Army unit. (Kim Han-joo, [Yonhap](#))

International:

- Nicaragua's new ambassador to North Korea will soon take up his post in Pyongyang, according to Managua, as the Latin American country prepares to open an embassy in the capital. (Joe Smith, [NK News](#))
- North Korea is likely to carry out "military and cyber provocations" next year to coincide with elections in the U.S. and South Korea, Seoul's spy agency warned Thursday. (Joon Ha Park and Lina Park, [NK News](#))
- The United States has "no hostile intent" toward Pyongyang and remains committed to diplomacy, a State Department spokesperson said Thursday, after North Korean leader Kim Jong-un called for beefed-up war preparations. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))

Prepared by Ryan Beane, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607124006/https://mailchi.mp/5c1dfdd67a2c/hrnk-news-items-north-korea-likely-to-carry-out-provocations-around-us-and-rok-elections>

Sunday, December 31, 2023

The Economics of a Korean Unification - Thinking the Unthinkable?

Top News:

[The Economics of a Korean Unification: Thinking The Unthinkable?](#) (AEI, 12/27/2023)

In North Korea:

[N. Korea to launch 3 more military spy satellites, build more nukes next year: state media](#) (Yonhap, 12/31/2023)

[North Korea says it will launch three new spy satellites in 2024](#) (BBC News, 12/31/2023)

[North Korea's Kim vows to launch 3 more spy satellites and produce more nuclear materials in 2024](#) (AP, 12/31/2023)

[Sacked N. Korean military official returns to No. 2 post of military](#) (Yonhap, 12/31/2023)

In South Korea:

[Democratic Party faces fracture after Lee rejects calls to resign](#) (Korea JoongAng Daily, 12/31/2023)

[S. Korea holds joint enshrinement ceremony for unidentified Korean War remains excavated in 2023](#) (Yonhap, 12/29/2023)

[South Korea's military has a new enemy: Population math](#) (CNN, 12/29/2023)

[Yoon to give live New Year's address](#) (Yonhap, 12/31/2023)

Inter-Korean Relationship:

[Defense chief says N. Korea's light-water reactor likely to be in full operation next summer](#) (Yonhap, 12/29/2023)

[Kim Jong-Un orders military chiefs to plan nuclear strike against South Korea](#) (The Telegraph, 12/31/2023)

[More turbulent inter-Korean relations expected in 2024](#) (The Korea Times, 12/31/2023)

[N.K. leader says 2 Koreas are 'hostile nations at war' with no chance of unification](#) (Yonhap, 12/31/2023)

[North Korea says it will no longer seek reunification with South Korea, will launch new spy satellites in 2024](#) (CNN, 12/30/2023)

International:

[Can Washington and Seoul tame South Koreans' nuclear ambitions?](#) (Nikkei Asia, 12/31/2023)

[Kim raps Japan-US-S.Korea cooperation, threatens 'super-tough counteraction'](#) (NHK World, 01/01/2024)

[The New Star on the Political Scene: The Chip Industry](#) (The Wall Street Journal, 12/29/2023)

[U.S. warns N. Korea's space rocket launches flout U.N. Security Council resolutions](#) (Yonhap, 12/31/2023)

[Where is the world headed in 2024 and beyond?](#) (The Korea Times, 12/31/2023)

[Why did Putin admit Soviet Union's secret role in Korean War now?](#) (Nikkei Asia, 12/30/2023)

Top News:

- As a foreign well-wisher of long standing, my message today for my Korean friends is simple: Korean reunification is not thinking the unthinkable. (Nicholas Eberstadt, [AEI](#))

In North Korea:

- North Korea aims to launch three additional spy satellites and produce more nuclear weapons next year, as it is accelerating war readiness against various forms of U.S. military threats, Pyongyang's state media said Sunday. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea plans to launch three more spy satellites in 2024, bolstering its military surveillance, following a recent launch that reportedly captured images of US and South Korean military sites. (Nick Marsh, Francesca Gillett, [BBC News](#))
- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed to launch three additional military spy satellites, produce more nuclear materials and introduce attack drones in 2024, as he called for "overwhelming" war readiness to cope with U.S.-led confrontational moves, state media reported Sunday. (Hyung-Jin Kim, [AP](#))
- North Korean Marshal Pak Jong-chon, who was sacked earlier this year, has returned to the second most powerful position of the country's military after the country's leader Kim Jong-un as part of a year-end ruling party reshuffle, according to state media Sunday. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))

In South Korea:

- The majority Democratic Party (DP) may splinter in the new year with current leader Lee Jae-myung shooting down former DP chief Lee Nak-yon's call for his resignation over the weekend. (Sarah Kim, [Korea JoongAng Daily](#))
- South Korea on Friday held a joint enshrinement ceremony for the unidentified remains of 192 soldiers killed during the 1950-53 Korean War, the defense ministry said. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- South Korea, with the world's lowest birth rate, may soon find itself without enough troops to keep its military fully staffed as it deals with new threats in an increasingly tense Western Pacific region, analysts say. (Gawon Bae, [CNN](#))
- President Yoon Suk Yeol will deliver a New Year's Address live from his office, focusing on people's livelihoods and the economy, a presidential official said Sunday. (Park Boram, [Yonhap](#))

Inter-Korean Relationship:

- North Korea's experimental light-water nuclear reactor is expected to be in full-fledged operation next summer, South Korea's defense chief has said, although it is unlikely to be used to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons. (Chae Yun-hwan, [Yonhap](#))
- Kim Jong-Un ordered his military chiefs to draw up plans for nuclear strikes on South Korea as he said war could break out at "any time". (Jordyn Haime, [The Telegraph](#))
- Relations between South and North Korea are expected to go from bad to worse in 2024, according to analysts, with Pyongyang declaring on Sunday that Seoul is no longer "a counterpart for reconciliation and unification." (Lee Hyo-jin, [The Korea Times](#))

- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's characterization of inter-Korean relations as those of "two hostile countries in a state of war" appears to be a veiled threat that the regime could use its nuclear weapons against South Korea, experts said Sunday. (Kim Soo-yeon, [Yonhap](#))
- North Korea will no longer seek reconciliation and reunification with South Korea, Kim Jong Un has declared, as his nation vowed to put three new military spy satellites into orbit in 2024. (Heather Chen, Yoonjung Seo, [CNN](#))

International:

- Despite the U.S. guarantee of a shield to counter the North Korean nuclear threat, many South Koreans are skeptical of America's commitment and willingness to defend them in a crisis. (Toru Tsunashima, Junnosuke Kobara, [Nikkei Asia](#))
- North Korea's state-run news outlet says the country's leader Kim Jong Un has condemned security cooperation among Japan, the United States and South Korea and threatened what he calls a "super-tough counteraction." ([NHK World](#))
- Increased attention from politicians poses opportunities and challenges for the semiconductor industry. (Jiyoung Sohn, Asa Fitch, [The Wall Street Journal](#))
- North Korean space rocket launches violate U.N. Security Council resolutions, a State Department spokesperson said Sunday, after Pyongyang announced a goal of launching three more military spy satellites in 2024. (Song Sang-ho, [Yonhap](#))
- What we are witnessing is a serious gap between global challenges and global responses -- an over-supply of problems with a clear deficit of solutions. (Yun Byung-se, [The Korea Times](#))
- A letter has attracted attention from geopolitical experts on the Korean Peninsula, a congratulatory message sent in July by Russian President Vladimir Putin to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Korean War armistice. (Yosuke Onchi, [Nikkei Asia](#))

Prepared by Gloria Guo, HRNK Research Intern

Original newsletter archived and available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20240607123755/https://mailchi.mp/17c6f6a9d475/hrnk-news-items-1231-2023>

RESEARCH NOTES

STATEMENT ON ACCURACY

This compilation of daily news digests is designed to faithfully reproduce the content of the original email newsletters. We have sparingly made minor corrections for accuracy and clarity, leaving in place most of the original editorial choices. The original versions remain accessible through the urls listed under each daily digest.

ONLINE ACCESS AND URL ARCHIVAL

We have utilized the Wayback Machine (<http://web.archive.org/>), the web page archival service of the Internet Archive, to ensure long-term preservation and accessibility to the original newsletters as well as to most of the news linked within them. Through the Wayback Machine, users of this report can view the original newsletters, verify information, and conduct further research.

ADDITIONAL OUTSIDE RESOURCES

For researchers interested in other publications that offer annual summaries of events in North Korea, the *Asian Survey* journal may be of interest to them. This report was prepared independently from the *Asian Survey*.



THE COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN
RIGHTS IN NORTH KOREA