



# **NORTH KOREA SECURITY ANALYSIS REPORT**

## **AI-Assisted Open Source Intelligence Assessment**

Analysis Period: March 01, 2026 - March 08, 2026

This report was produced using automated open-source intelligence analysis. The assessment is grounded in publicly available reporting and should be cross-referenced with primary sources. RSS feed articles are listed in the annex for reference.

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## Executive Summary

North Korea has demonstrated a significant push towards enhancing its naval nuclear capabilities, with leader Kim Jong Un overseeing a strategic cruise missile test from a new 5,000-ton destroyer, the Choe Hyon, on March 4, 2026. This development, coupled with a directive to build two such destroyers annually, signals a clear intent to establish a robust sea-based nuclear deterrent. Concurrently, the outcomes of the 9th Party Congress, reported in early March, solidified North Korea's stance as a permanent nuclear-armed state, rejecting denuclearization and formally designating South Korea as a "hostile state." Pyongyang's cyber activities also escalated, with multiple reports detailing advanced AI-powered scams and sophisticated attacks targeting air-gapped systems and software supply chains. These military and cyber advancements, alongside strengthened ties with Russia and China, underscore North Korea's commitment to self-reliance and its nuclear program, posing continued challenges to regional stability and international security.

## Key Security Developments

- Naval Strategic Cruise Missile Test and Nuclear Armament Push

On March 4, 2026, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un oversaw the test-firing of a sea-to-surface strategic cruise missile from the newly built 5,000-ton destroyer, the Choe Hyon, in the western port city of Nampo. This test followed his inspection of the vessel on March 3, where he reviewed combat training and operational capabilities ahead of its commissioning. Kim expressed satisfaction with the progress of equipping the navy with nuclear weapons, describing the destroyer as a "new symbol of sea defense" and ordering the construction of two such destroyers annually during the new five-year plan period to rapidly expand the navy's offensive capabilities. This event signifies North Korea's intent to develop a sea-based nuclear deterrent, adding a mobile maritime strike option to its existing missile forces.

- Formal Rejection of Denuclearization and Hostility Towards South Korea

The 9th Party Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea, which concluded around February 25 but whose outcomes were widely reported and analyzed in early March, formally codified North Korea's status as a permanent nuclear-armed state, emphasizing further nuclear expansion and modernization. The congress also explicitly reaffirmed hostility toward South Korea, designating it the "first hostile state" and institutionalizing severed ties, effectively discarding the long-standing

policy of reunification. This shift indicates Pyongyang's unwillingness to engage in denuclearization talks and a hardened stance against Seoul.

- Establishment of "Haekpangasoe" (Nuclear Trigger) System

During the 9th Party Congress, North Korea formalized a new concept referred to as "Haekpangasoe" (nuclear trigger). This is described as an integrated nuclear crisis response system designed to ensure the national nuclear shield could be operated promptly and accurately at any moment, ensuring responsiveness to perceived threats. This development suggests an advanced operational doctrine for its nuclear arsenal, potentially including pre-emptive strike capabilities.

- Advanced AI Use in Cyberattacks and Fake Worker Schemes

On March 6, 2026, Microsoft Threat Intelligence reported that North Korean threat groups, specifically Coral Sleet, Sapphire Sleet, and Jasper Sleet, are increasingly using artificial intelligence (AI) tools to accelerate and expand their long-running schemes to get remote technical workers hired at global companies. AI is being used as a "force multiplier" to research targets, develop malicious resources, create convincing digital personas, generate lures, and refine post-compromise activities, including using AI applications like Faceswap to insert North Korean IT workers' faces into stolen identity documents.

- Targeting Air-Gapped Systems with New Malware

A report by Zscaler on March 2, 2026, revealed that a North Korea-linked threat actor, APT37 (also known as ScarCruft, Ruby Sleet, and Velvet Chollima), has been observed using five new malicious tools in a recent campaign targeting air-gapped systems. The campaign, named "Ruby Jumper" and discovered in December 2025, utilizes LNK files to execute PowerShell scripts and deploy multiple payloads, including a decoy document in Arabic about the Palestine-Israel conflict, and uses Zoho WorkDrive for command-and-control (C2).

- Malicious npm Packages for Cross-Platform RAT Distribution

Cybersecurity researchers disclosed on March 2, 2026, a new iteration of the "Contagious Interview" campaign, attributed to the North Korean threat activity cluster Famous Chollima. This campaign involved the publication of 26 malicious npm packages to the npm registry. These packages masquerade as developer tools but contain functionality to extract C2 URLs steganographically encoded within Pastebin content, ultimately dropping a developer-targeted credential stealer and remote access trojan.

- Condemnation of US-Israeli Strikes on Iran

On March 1, 2026, North Korea issued a Foreign Ministry spokesperson's press statement condemning the US and Israeli strikes on Iran, calling them "an illegal act of aggression and the most despicable form of violation of sovereignty." This response

was notably stronger than previous condemnations, reflecting a hardened view of the United States and the global order, and is likely to reinforce North Korea's mistrust of the US.

- Strengthened Diplomatic Ties with Russia and China

The 9th Party Congress saw the election of veteran diplomats with experience in negotiations with the United States and diplomacy with China and Russia to the Politburo, notably Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui and Kim Song Nam. These promotions suggest a heightened focus on consolidating ties with both Moscow and Beijing, further solidifying North Korea's alignment with non-Western aligned countries.

- US-South Korea Freedom Shield Drills Scheduled

The US and South Korean militaries announced on February 25, 2026, that they would conduct their annual springtime Freedom Shield exercises from March 9-19, 2026. These largely computer-simulated drills, accompanied by a field training program called Warrior Shield, are designed to bolster combined defense capabilities, a move North Korea consistently describes as invasion rehearsals.

- Heritage Foundation Report on North Korea's Nuclear Threat

The Heritage Foundation's "2026 Index of U.S. Military Strength," published on March 4 and reported on March 6-7, assessed that North Korea's nuclear and missile capabilities pose a direct security challenge to US military bases in South Korea, Japan, and Guam. The report noted that North Korea can strike the US mainland with ICBMs like the Hwasong-17 and has likely achieved the miniaturization of nuclear warheads. It also warned that Pyongyang could use nuclear threats to "block U.S. military reinforcements and separate the U.S. from South Korea."

- Domestic Localization Drive and Import Restrictions

North Korea is tightening import controls on consumer goods such as detergents, soap, stationery, cookies, candy, and beverages, as part of a broader push to promote domestic consumer goods. This initiative follows the 9th Party Congress, which identified the modernization of local industrial factories and the localization of consumer goods as key priorities, potentially leading to reduced market supply and higher prices for ordinary citizens.

## Geopolitical Impact and Regional Dynamics

North Korea's recent security developments, particularly its explicit commitment to nuclear expansion and the development of a sea-based nuclear deterrent, significantly heighten regional instability. The formal designation of South Korea as a "hostile state" and the rejection of denuclearization at the 9th Party Congress

effectively dismantle any remaining framework for inter-Korean dialogue and escalate tensions on the Korean Peninsula. This hardened stance, coupled with the operationalization of a "nuclear trigger" system, signals a more aggressive and less compromising North Korean foreign policy, making de-escalation efforts increasingly challenging. The upcoming US-South Korea Freedom Shield drills are likely to be met with further North Korean military demonstrations, perpetuating a cycle of provocation and counter-response.

The deepening alignment between North Korea, Russia, and China is a critical factor shaping regional dynamics. The promotion of diplomats focused on Moscow and Beijing at the 9th Party Congress underscores Pyongyang's strategic pivot away from engagement with the US and South Korea, favoring a consolidated non-Western bloc. This partnership provides North Korea with crucial economic and military support, potentially including advanced military technology from Russia, which could further accelerate its weapons programs, such as nuclear-powered submarines or enhanced missile capabilities. This trilateral cooperation complicates international efforts to enforce sanctions and pressure North Korea towards denuclearization, as Beijing and Moscow have shown a more tolerant attitude towards Pyongyang's nuclear status.

The Heritage Foundation's assessment that North Korea's nuclear and missile capabilities directly threaten the US mainland and could be used to fracture the US-South Korea alliance has profound implications for the broader strategic landscape. Such a threat scenario could test the resolve of the US extended deterrence commitment and potentially lead to a more aggressive US military posture in the region. North Korea's condemnation of US-Israeli strikes on Iran also highlights its perception of US "hegemonic" actions, reinforcing its own nuclear ambitions as a deterrent against perceived external threats. This confluence of factors points to a more volatile and unpredictable security environment in Northeast Asia, with North Korea increasingly confident in its nuclear status and its ability to leverage geopolitical shifts.

## Military and Defense Analysis

North Korea's military posture is undergoing a significant transformation, driven by a clear directive to enhance its nuclear and conventional capabilities, particularly its naval forces. The inspection and cruise missile test from the new Choe Hyon-class destroyer on March 4, 2026, is a tangible demonstration of this modernization. This 5,000-ton warship, designed to launch strategic cruise missiles, marks a crucial step towards establishing a credible sea-based nuclear deterrent, which would diversify North Korea's nuclear delivery platforms and complicate adversary detection and targeting. Kim Jong Un's order to produce two such destroyers annually for the next five years indicates a sustained, ambitious shipbuilding program aimed at rapidly

expanding this new naval capability.

Beyond surface vessels, North Korea is also actively developing other advanced military assets. This includes unmanned underwater attack vehicles, known as "Haeil," and new intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) like the Hwasong-20, along with hypersonic missiles. While South Korean officials question the readiness and actual combat capabilities of some of these new weapons, their continued development underscores Pyongyang's commitment to a multi-faceted military modernization program. The formalization of the "Haekpangasoe" (nuclear trigger) system at the 9th Party Congress further suggests an evolving nuclear doctrine that emphasizes prompt and accurate response to perceived threats, potentially including pre-emptive use. Defense spending trends are implicitly on an upward trajectory, as evidenced by the ambitious production targets for naval vessels and the continuous development of advanced weapons systems, likely supported by illicit cyber activities and cooperation with Russia.

## Outlook and Forecast

Short-term trends (1-3 months): In the immediate future, North Korea is highly likely to continue its pattern of military provocations, especially in response to the ongoing US-South Korea Freedom Shield military drills (March 9-19, 2026). This could manifest as further missile tests, including short-range ballistic missiles or additional cruise missile launches, potentially from new platforms or in new configurations, to demonstrate its enhanced capabilities and express defiance. Pyongyang will also likely maintain its hardened diplomatic stance towards South Korea, rejecting any overtures for dialogue, while conditionally signaling openness to talks with the US if its nuclear status is acknowledged. Cybersecurity threats from North Korean actors are expected to intensify, leveraging advanced AI tools for more sophisticated and scalable campaigns aimed at financial gain and intelligence gathering.

Critical flashpoints and risk areas: The most critical flashpoint remains the Korean Peninsula, where any miscalculation during military exercises or a perceived threat could rapidly escalate. North Korea's explicit nuclear doctrine, including the "Haekpangasoe" system, and its declared hostility towards South Korea increase the risk of conventional or even tactical nuclear engagements. The potential for North Korea to use or threaten nuclear weapons to "split the U.S. from South Korea" during a contingency, as highlighted by the Heritage Foundation, represents a significant strategic risk. The deepening military and technological cooperation with Russia also poses a risk, as it could provide North Korea with critical advancements in nuclear propulsion or missile technology, further destabilizing the regional power balance.

Indicators to monitor: Key indicators to monitor include the frequency and nature of North Korean missile tests, particularly any further demonstrations of sea-based launch capabilities or advancements in ICBM and hypersonic missile technology. Observing the rhetoric from Pyongyang regarding the US-South Korea drills and any shifts in its conditional diplomacy towards Washington will be crucial. Monitoring reports on North Korean cyber activities, especially those detailing the use of AI and targeting critical infrastructure or financial institutions, will provide insights into its illicit revenue generation and intelligence efforts. Any evidence of direct military or technological transfers from Russia to North Korea, particularly related to nuclear or advanced missile programs, would be a significant development to track.

Strategic recommendations: Given North Korea's unwavering commitment to its nuclear program and its increasingly aggressive posture, a multi-pronged strategy is recommended. First, maintaining a robust and visible deterrence posture through continued US-South Korea joint exercises and advanced military deployments is essential to signal resolve. Second, international efforts to strengthen sanctions enforcement against North Korea, particularly targeting its illicit cyber activities and arms trade, must be redoubled to curb its funding for weapons programs. Third, diplomatic channels, while challenging, should remain open, but any engagement must be predicated on concrete steps towards verifiable denuclearization, rather than accepting North Korea's nuclear status. Finally, close intelligence sharing and coordinated responses among allies (US, South Korea, Japan) are vital to counter North Korea's evolving military and cyber threats and to manage potential escalations effectively.

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## ANNEX: COLLECTED ARTICLES BY SOURCE

### Source: NK News

- [UN envoy proposes new system for monitoring North Korean human rights](#) (2026-03-06 09:30)

The U.N. special envoy for North Korean human rights has proposed almost 50 indicators to track Pyongyang's compliance with its human rights commitments, calling for greater efforts to hold the country accountable for violations. In an advance, unedited copy of her report to the U.N. Human Rights Council's ongoing 61st session, special rapporteur Elizabeth Salmón [...]

- [Russian, North Korean firms building plastics factory in Vladivostok](#) (2026-03-06 09:19)

A Russian company has joined forces with a North Korean partner to build a plastics manufacturing plant in Vladivostok, despite U.N. sanctions that prohibit joint ventures with DPRK entities. The Moscow-based Golden Autumn Agroholding is in charge of the factory's construction in the Far East city, according to the social media account of Vladimir Sokolov, [...]

- [Seoul seeks to build blockchain-based 'peace trade system' with North Korea](#) (2026-03-06 09:18)

Seoul has announced a new plan to establish a blockchain-based "peace trade system" that would allow North Korea to export minerals under international oversight, despite Pyongyang's rejection of all inter-Korean dialogue at its recent Ninth Party Congress. The proposal is part of a "Korean Peninsula Peace Package" that the Unification Ministry released on Friday, laying [...]

- [North Korean doctors illegally working at clinics in Russia and Kyrgyzstan](#) (2026-03-06 08:02)

North Korean practitioners of traditional medicine are working at clinics in Russia and Central Asia, an NK News investigation has found, in what appear to be rare examples of the DPRK exporting skilled labor in violation of U.N. sanctions. In one case, a hospital in Moscow openly advertised the services of a DPRK physician, releasing [...]

- [North Korean and Russian cyber actors are teaming up. So must allies.](#) (2026-03-06 05:50)

Editor's note: The following article is an opinion piece by Pia Hüscht and Joseph Jarnecki of the Royal United Services Institute, based on their research paper entitled "Strengthening UK-South Korea Cyber Security Cooperation." Views expressed in opinion articles are exclusively the author's own and do not represent those of NK News. Emerging evidence of cooperation [...]

- [China’ s repatriation of North Koreans may be crimes against humanity: Report](#) (2026-03-05 09:53)

China’ s forced repatriations of North Korean defectors could amount to crimes against humanity under international law, according to a new report that documented cases of abuse, including forced abortions and physical beatings. In its report released Thursday, the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (NKDB) states that Chinese security officials’ actions targeting a group [...]

- [US and Russia clash over North Korean nukes at UN forum](#) (2026-03-05 07:54)

The United States and Russia clashed over North Korea’ s nuclear program at a major international forum this week, with Moscow defending its ally’ s nuclear arsenal and demanding the U.N. watchdog stop releasing “speculative” reports on its enrichment activities. The head of the U.S. mission in Vienna condemned the DPRK’ s nuclear program as unlawful and called [...]

- [Lee Jae Myung dismisses talk of strikes on North Korea like those on Iran](#) (2026-03-05 06:34)

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung has dismissed speculation that U.S.-style military strikes similar to Iran could be directed at North Korea, warning that such rhetoric risks destabilizing the Korean Peninsula and urging officials to focus on maintaining peace. Lee made the remarks during a special Cabinet meeting on Thursday focused on the administration’ s response [...]

- [North Korean education officials visit Chinese school furniture factory](#) (2026-03-05 04:43)

A North Korean delegation visited a Chinese factory producing classroom desks and chairs, highlighting Pyongyang’ s interest in modernizing schools through potential imports of Chinese supplies. A short video posted on Chinese social media platform Douyin on March 3 showed North Korean Ministry of Education officials touring a factory owned by the Hebei Comnenir Furniture Sales [...]

- [Kim Jong Un oversees cruise missile test from new warship ahead of deployment](#) (2026-03-04 21:45)

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un oversaw cruise missile launches from the Choe Hyon destroyer on the west coast on Wednesday, according to state media, as part of testing before the warship’ s commissioning. He also boarded the “nuclear armed” vessel for maneuverability and navigation system tests on Tuesday, and attended sniper shooting competition that day [...]

- [North Korea, Russian nukes are ‘primary existential threat’ to US: Pentagon](#) (2026-03-04 08:37)

North Korean and Russian nuclear weapons constitute the “primary existential threat” facing the U.S., Undersecretary of Defense Elbridge Colby told lawmakers on Tuesday, defending the Trump administration’s push for Seoul to take the lead in conventional defense planning against Pyongyang. Colby made the remarks during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on the 2026 National […]

- [North Korea to hold elections for rubber-stamp parliament after two-year delay](#) (2026-03-04 08:16)

North Korea will hold elections for its rubber-stamp parliament this month after a nearly two-year delay, in what appears to be rapid preparations for endorsing new plans laid out at the Ninth Party Congress. State media on Wednesday released two decrees from the Standing Committee of the Supreme People’s Assembly (SPA), which set the date […]

- [How Kim Yo Jong’s secretive new job helps her brother solidify control](#) (2026-03-04 07:55)

The promotion of the North Korean leader’s sister Kim Yo Jong has put her in charge of a highly secretive party organ that plays a central role in overseeing the implementation of state policies, as well as in governing the flow of information to and from the leader. In other words, to get to Kim […]

- [UN announces 8 new sanctions exemptions for humanitarian aid to North Korea](#) (2026-03-04 05:33)

The U.N. announced eight new sanctions exemptions to support humanitarian assistance bound for North Korea, in the first wave of approvals since the U.S. reversed course on blocking aid last month. On Tuesday, the website of the U.N. Security Council’s 1718 Committee overseeing DPRK sanctions was updated to reflect the new exemptions awarded to multiple […]

- [Russia asked for North Korean POWs in prisoner exchange, lawmaker says](#) (2026-03-03 09:34)

Russia has repeatedly sought the repatriation of North Korean prisoners of war during prisoner exchanges with Ukraine, according to an ROK lawmaker, warning that they are in danger of forced repatriation. Kyiv has confirmed that Russia included the two POWs detained in Ukraine in lists of prisoners to be exchanged, Yu Yong-weon of the conservative […]

- [North Korea reveals first-known Kim Jong Un sculpture, boosting personality cult](#) (2026-03-03 09:30)

North Korean state TV has revealed a new sculpture depicting Kim Jong Un at a groundbreaking ceremony, in what appears to be the first such artwork of the country’s current leader. “A statue of Chairman Kim Jong Un appeared this time on Korean Central Television (KCTV), and to our knowledge it was the first time […]

- [Russian TV touts North Korean troops’ ‘selfless’ sacrifice after US strikes Iran](#) (2026-03-03 08:46)

Russian state TV aired footage of half-dressed North Korean soldiers practicing martial arts and glorifying suicide over capture in a segment on Sunday, praising the DPRK as the “only country” that has come to Russia’s aid. The segment ran during a two-hour show that largely focused on U.S.-Israeli strikes against Iran, with an expert telling [...]

- [China seizes 100 tons of frogs and scallops, possibly from North Korea](#) (2026-03-03 04:06)

A 100-ton shipment of scallops and frogs recently seized by China’s coast guard may have originated from North Korea, according to NK News analysis. The Chinese coast guard said it seized a ship carrying the Yezzo scallops and Dybowski’s frogs on Feb. 21. Twenty-seven suspects were detained and two trucks were seized in connection to [...]

- [North Korea has finished new facility at nuclear complex, watchdog says](#) (2026-03-03 03:50)

North Korea has completed external construction of a new facility at its main nuclear research center in Yongbyon, according to the head of the U.N. nuclear watchdog, while continuing to operate its nuclear reactors in support of uranium enrichment. In a statement to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors on Monday, Director-General [...]

- [Ankit Panda: North Korea’s deterrence calculus after US strikes on Iran](#) (2026-03-03 02:53)

International security expert Ankit Panda joins the podcast this week to unpack the latest U.S.-Israel strikes on Iran and what they could mean for North Korea’s deterrence thinking. The conversation covers what does and doesn’t translate to the Korean Peninsula: the impact of geography and escalation dynamics, why saturation tactics and interceptor “magazine depth” matter [...]

- [Why Khamenei’s death could spell the end of North Korea’s friendship with Iran](#) (2026-03-02 09:43)

The death of Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei after a series of U.S. and Israeli attacks over the weekend has left a void at the top of Tehran’s power structure — and taken one of North Korea’s longest-lasting international partners off the board. Khamenei’s relationship with the DPRK goes back decades, anchored by a [...]

- [New Indonesian ambassador to North Korea takes up post in Pyongyang](#) (2026-03-02 08:53)

The new Indonesian ambassador to North Korea has arrived in Pyongyang to lead the embassy, heralding the full resumption of diplomatic activities that were suspended since the pandemic. Indonesian Ambassador to North Korea Gina Yoginda cut a ribbon at the entrance of the reopened mission and toured the facility in Pyongyang on Feb. 21, according to [...]

- [Lee urges North Korea to return to talks, rejects ‘unification by absorption’](#) (2026-03-02 07:27)

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung urged North Korea on Sunday to return to dialogue so the two countries can “leave behind the dark past and move forward together toward a new future,” repudiating the goal of unification by force. Lee’s speech to mark March 1 Independence Movement Day came days after Pyongyang reaffirmed that [...]

- [Kim Jong Un lauds cement factory near capital for supporting construction goals](#) (2026-03-02 07:14)

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited a key cement production plant near the capital on Sunday, stressing the facility’s role in achieving the “gigantic” construction tasks laid out at last week’s Ninth Party Congress. Kim delivered a “significant speech of encouragement” to workers at the Sangwon Cement Complex, describing them as “ardent revolutionaries” who [...]

- [North Korea has sent 5K containers of munitions to Russia since August: Seoul](#) (2026-03-02 06:56)

North Korea has supplied Russia with around 5,000 containers of munitions over the last six months, the ROK military has assessed, underscoring Pyongyang’s continued support for the war against Ukraine. The new shipments bring the number of containers that the DPRK has provided to roughly 33,000 as of February, up from 28,000 containers in August, [...]

- [UNICEF says it completed two drinking water projects in North Korea last year](#) (2026-03-02 05:41)

UNICEF completed two water supply projects to provide access to safe drinking water for over 23,000 North Koreans last year, according to an agency spokesperson. The water supply systems provide water to five schools and four health care facilities in two counties across two North Korean provinces, Eliane Luthi of UNICEF East Asia and Pacific [...]

- [North Korean condemns US attacks on Iran but doesn’t mention Khamenei’s death](#) (2026-03-02 04:04)

North Korea slammed the U.S. and Israel on Sunday for launching a “war of aggression” against Iran a day earlier without mentioning Tehran’s retaliatory strikes and the death of Iran’s supreme leader. In a statement released through the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), a DPRK Foreign Ministry spokesperson strongly condemned Washington and Tel Aviv’s “shameless [...]

## Source: NK Pro

- [North Korea goes into overdrive to promote Party Congress plans](#) (2026-03-06 05:55)

the recently concluded Ninth Party Congress this week, depicting the entire country as mobilizing behind the Workers' Party of Korea to implement its plans. Reports on workers, soldiers and party organizations pledging their support for the congress' decisions filled the pages of official outlets daily, while leader Kim Jong Un' s inspections of a concrete factory [...] The post North Korea goes into overdrive to promote Party Congress plans appeared first on NK PRO.

- [Why health insurance could be coming to North Korea](#) (2026-03-04 02:17)

North Korea appears to be preparing a major shift in how it funds health care, seeking to fix a broken system that has increasingly fallen outside state control. For most of the DPRK' s history, free medical care has been a basic promise of the communist state, with the government paying to build hospitals and provide [...] The post Why health insurance could be coming to North Korea appeared first on NK PRO.

- [North Korea in February 2026: A month in review and what' s ahead](#) (2026-03-03 09:26)

About the Month in Review Every month, NK Pro conducts an in-depth analytic review of news on the Korean Peninsula. This Month in Review covers the period of Feb. 1, 2026 to Feb. 28, 2026. In addition to an executive summary providing top-line findings, the following review includes detailed analysis on a wide range of [...] The post North Korea in February 2026: A month in review and what' s ahead appeared first on NK PRO.

- [New construction starts at North Korean shipyard, site of failed warship launch](#) (2026-03-03 09:10)

Large new construction recently began at North Korea' s Chongjin Shipyard, possibly signaling progress in Pyongyang' s efforts to build another destroyer-type warship at the site after a disastrous failed launch last year, according to NK Pro analysis of satellite imagery. Planet Labs imagery shows digging work started in late January to the south of the outdoor [...] The post New construction starts at North Korean shipyard, site of failed warship launch appeared first on NK PRO.

- [How the Iran strikes could reshape Kim Jong Un' s calculus on US talks](#) (2026-03-02 09:59)

The U.S. turned on a dime from high-level diplomatic negotiations with Iran on its nuclear program to a full-blown military operation to take out Tehran' s leadership, an extraordinary sequence of events that could shape North Korea' s own willingness to engage in talks. For weeks, Oman had brokered talks involving Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and [...] The post How the Iran strikes could reshape Kim Jong Un' s calculus on US talks appeared first on NK PRO.

- [Kim Jong Un' s new five-year weapons plan keeps nukes front and center](#) (2026-03-02 04:47)

North Korea’s much-anticipated Ninth Party Congress concluded with new announcements about Kim Jong Un’s core weapons modernization plans, and while the regime offered less information than many had hoped, it still provided a good sense of Kim’s high-level priorities in the years ahead. In order to “usher in a new era of building a powerful [...] The post Kim Jong Un’s new five-year weapons plan keeps nukes front and center appeared first on NK PRO.