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N. Korea Sends Russia Artillery Rounds for Satellite Technical Advice – Seoul

By AFP

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Kim Jong Un seen standing with Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu during a military parade in Pyongyang. **KCNA / AP / TASS**

North Korea has sent Russia over one million artillery shells to use in its war against Ukraine, with Pyongyang appearing to receive advice on the development of satellite technology in return, a South Korean lawmaker said Wednesday, citing information provided by Seoul's spy agency.

Russia and North Korea are both heavily sanctioned by Western nations — Moscow for its invasion of Ukraine, and Pyongyang for nuclear weapons testing.

In September, the countries' leaders, Kim Jong Un and Vladimir Putin, held a summit in Russia's Far East, with the United States subsequently claiming Pyongyang had begun supplying Moscow with weapons.

South Korea's National Intelligence Service (NIS) told lawmakers at a closed-door parliamentary audit on Wednesday that North Korea had made at least 10 arms transfers to Russia since August.

"The NIS has learned that more than one million artillery rounds have been transferred," lawmaker Yoo Sang-bum told reporters after the audit.

"It's analyzed to be sufficient for around two months in the Russia-Ukraine war," Yoo added.

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In return, North Korea appeared to have received technical advice from Moscow in its bid to launch a military reconnaissance satellite, he said.

After a failed second launch attempt in August, Pyongyang had said it would carry out a third satellite launch in October — but this plan never materialized.

Yoo said that "while the October launch date has been postponed, final preparations, such as inspections of the engine and launch device, are in full swing."

"It appears that North Korea received technical advice from Russia, so we are expecting a higher rate of success."

The United States said last month that arms shipments from Pyongyang to Moscow were underway, with North Korea delivering more than 1,000 containers of military equipment and munitions to Russia in recent weeks.

Seoul, Tokyo and Washington issued a joint statement last week saying they "strongly condemn" North Korea supplying arms to Moscow.

During his visit to Russia in September, Kim declared bilateral ties with Moscow were his country's "number one priority," with Pyongyang ardently supporting Moscow's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Washington and experts have said Pyongyang was seeking a wide range of military assistance in return for the supplied munitions, such as satellite technology and upgrading its Soviet-era military equipment.

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