

N Korea fires about 10 missiles toward sea in show of force

SEOUL, Mar 14 (AP)

NORTH Korea on Saturday fired about 10 ballistic missiles toward the eastern sea, South Korea's military said, staging its own show of force as the rival South conducts a joint military exercise with the United States.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the missiles were fired from an area near the North Korean capital of Pyongyang, but didn't immediately say how far they flew. Japan's Defence Ministry said the weapons landed in waters outside the country's exclusive economic zone.

The South's Joint Chiefs said the military has stepped up surveillance and is maintaining readiness against possible additional launches while closely sharing information with the US and Japan.

The launches came as the US



and South Korean militaries conduct their annual springtime exercises involving thousands of troops while the Trump administration also wages an escalating war in the Middle East.

The war has raised concerns about potential security lapses

in South Korea, as local media - citing security camera footage and other images - have speculated that the US is relocating some missile defence assets stationed in the country to support operations against Iran.

When asked by *The Associated*

Press this week whether US Forces Korea was moving interceptor missiles from its Terminal High Altitude Area Defence, or THAAD, system in Seongju to the Middle East, President Lee Jae Myung's office said it could not confirm details about US military operations.

The office said the potential relocation of US military assets would not affect the allies' defence posture against nuclear-armed North Korea, while also citing South Korea's conventional military strength. It earlier gave a similar response to reports about the possible relocation of Patriot missile defence systems from South Korea.

North Korea has long described the allies' drills as invasion rehearsals and often uses them as a pretext to dial up its own military demonstrations or weapons testing.

PM Modi inaugurates APSEZ's Haldia terminal; India's 1st fully automated dry bulk facility

AHMEDABAD, Mar 14 (ANI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday commissioned the Haldia Bulk Terminal (HBT) and formally dedicated it to the nation. Designed to handle dry bulk cargo at an annual capacity of 4 MMTPA, the terminal is a fully automated bulk facility on the Hooghly River with direct rail connections - a structural upgrade for bulk cargo movement through India's eastern maritime corridor.

"The Haldia Bulk Terminal is a next-generation facility that brings full mechanisation and direct rail evacuation to the Hooghly, setting a new benchmark for efficiency on India's eastern seaboard. By eliminating jetty dumping and lowering cargo loss through advanced automated systems, we are ensuring cleaner, safer and more sustainable operations. The terminal will play a pivotal role in strengthening industri-



al supply chains of West Bengal, Odisha and Jharkhand, while supporting the Prime Minister's vision of lowering logistics costs through modern multimodal infrastructure," said Ashwani Gupta, Whole-time Director and CEO, APSEZ.

Located within the Haldia Dock Complex (HDC) of Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata, the terminal has been developed under a 30-year concession through the Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer (DBFOT) model by HDC Bulk

Terminal Ltd, and delivered within its construction window, from commencement on 14 July 2023 to commissioning readiness today. This showcases the execution capability of APSEZ in executing projects on time, every time.

Strategically positioned on the western bank of the Hooghly River, the terminal is equipped to handle imported coal and a range of dry bulk commodities.

The east coast accounts for about 60% of India's dry bulk imports, including coal, baux-

ite and limestone, making Haldia the most efficient and direct maritime entry port for the steel, aluminium and power industries of West Bengal, Odisha and Jharkhand. This capacity addition will materially reduce logistics costs and turnaround times for these industries.

Since the commencement of construction, APSEZ has executed the infrastructure works, such as the installation of a 2,000 T Railway Wagon Loading System (RWLS) and the commissioning of a 1.54 km dedicated railway line, enabling direct ship-to-train cargo evacuation; Refurbishment of the existing jetty; Installation of advanced conveyor systems, automating the process; Deployment of two stacker-cum-reclaimers for automated stockyard management; Addition of two mobile harbour cranes for faster vessel discharge

US bombs Iran military sites as Trump threatens its oil targets

DUBAI, Mar 14 (AP)

PRESIDENT Donald Trump said the US destroyed military sites on an island vital to Iran's oil network and warned that its oil infrastructure could be next if Iran continues to interfere with

the passage of ships through the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump said US forces on Friday "obliterated" targets on Iran's Kharg Island, which is home to the primary terminal that handles the country's oil exports. The speaker of the

Iranian parliament had warned that such strikes would provoke a new level of retaliation.

A missile struck a helipad inside the US Embassy compound in Baghdad and debris from an intercepted Iranian drone hit an oil facility in the

United Arab Emirates as the US-Israel war with Iran entered its third week Saturday.

'Associated Press' images showed a column of smoke rising over the embassy

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are being sent to the Middle East nearly two weeks into the war with the Islamic Republic. Iran has continued to launch widespread missile and drone attacks on

Two more Indian ships safely cross Strait of Hormuz, 22 others on standby

NEW DELHI, Mar 14 (PTI)

TWO Indian ships carrying LPG from the Gulf countries crossed the Strait of Hormuz early on

Saturday morning, raising the number of Indian vessels safely passing through the war-hit, narrow shipping lane to three. The remaining 22 ships on

the west side of the strait are on standby as the Indian Government engages with Governments in the region for ensuring their safe passage.

LPG carriers Shivalik and Nanda Devi are now headed to Mundra and Kandla ports in Gujarat, Rajesh Kumar Sinha, Special Secretary in Ministry of Shipping, told a media briefing.

The vessels are carrying 92,700 tonnes of LPG, he said adding Shivalik is likely to reach Mundra on March 16 and Nanda Devi is likely to dock at Kandla the next day.

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Indian LPG carrier 'Nanda Devi'



Smoke rises from the US embassy building in Baghdad, Iraq on Saturday. (AP/PTI)

compound in the Iraqi capital and a fire in the Fujairah port in the UAE that broke out after what authorities said was a drone interception.

Meanwhile, an American official said 2,500 more Marines and an amphibious assault ship

Israel and neighbouring Gulf states, and effectively closed the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world's traded oil passes, even as US and Israeli warplanes pummel military and other targets across Iran.

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Trump duped by Netanyahu: Iranian Parl Speaker Ghalibaf

Ghalibaf vows war to continue until "enemy's calculus altered"

TEHRAN, Mar 14 (ANI)

IRANIAN Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf has asserted that the Islamic Republic now views the United States and the Israeli regime as indistinguishable regarding the severity of their actions against the Iranian people.

In a statement shared on X, Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf remarked, "Trump was duped by [Israeli prime minister Benjamin] Netanyahu into starting the war and is now acting under his control."

The Speaker further (Contd on page 5)

Afghanistan retaliates after PAF airstrikes, kills 14 Pak soldiers

KABUL, Mar 14 (ANI)

AFGHANISTAN'S Ministry of Defence (MoD) has claimed that its forces carried out operations against Pakistani military positions along the disputed Durand Line, as tensions between the two neighbours continue to escalate following cross-border airstrikes and artillery exchanges.



In a statement, the Afghan Defence Ministry said its forces conducted operations in the eastern zone covering Kunar and Nangarhar provinces in response to what it described as actions by Pakistan's military regime.

"In response to the crimes committed by the Pakistani military regime, Afghan Defense Forces carried out operations along the Durand Line in the eastern zone of Kunar and Nangarhar provinces. During the operation... which resulted in the killing of 14 soldiers and the injury of 11 others. An armored tank and an International

vehicle were also completely destroyed and taken out of service," the Islamic Emirate's MoD said.

4 injured after being hit by drone debris in Pak

■ By Sajjad Hussain

ISLAMABAD, Mar 14 (PTI)

AT LEAST four persons, including two children, were injured when hit by the debris of the Afghan Taliban drones which were destroyed before reaching their targets, the Army said on Saturday.

The drones were intercepted and destroyed on Friday in Quetta, Kohat and Rawalpindi, adjacent to the capital Islamabad. Â

According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the army's media wing, these attacks were aimed at inducing fear in the public and "remind us of the terrorist mindset which drives the Afghan Taliban".

"The drones were intercepted through soft and hard kills and did not reach their intended targets," the military's media wing said.

However, the debris from these drones resulted in injuries to two children in Quetta and a civilian each in Kohat and Rawalpindi, it added.