

Moon Seeks Putin's Help, Warns of 'Uncontrollable' North Korea

South Korean President Moon Jae-in sought to find common ground with Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin to prevent the situation on the Korean peninsula from spinning out of control.

"If we fail to stop North Korea's provocations now, it could sink into an uncontrollable situation," Moon said in opening remarks before a meeting with Putin in Vladivostok, Russia, on Wednesday. "I want to seek a fundamental solution to resolve the North Korea nuclear problem here."

Putin, who derided increased sanctions as "useless and ineffective" a day earlier, said that he welcomed the opportunity to discuss North Korea with Moon.

"There's no point in giving into emotions and backing North Korea into a corner," Putin said. "More than ever now we need to show restraint and avoid any steps that could escalate tensions."

Russia and China both hold vetoes on the United Nations Security Council, which is considering new sanctions against Kim Jong Un's regime after it conducted its sixth and most powerful nuclear test on Sunday.

"They'll eat grass, but they won't abandon their program unless they feel secure," Putin told reporters Tuesday at an emerging markets summit in Xiamen, China, which was hosted by his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping.

Stocks fell in most Asian markets on Wednesday as nations grapple with how to deal with North Korea's escalating provocations. The yen was near its strongest level for the year and U.S. Treasury yields were at their lowest since the aftermath of Trump's November election win.

North Korea has been seen readying another launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile that could come before it marks the anniversary of its founding on Sept. 9. Kim claimed on Sunday that he could fit a warhead onto an ICBM capable of striking the continental U.S.

President Donald Trump, who has warned North Korea of "fire and fury" if it

continues threatening the U.S., plans to speak Wednesday evening with Xi, the White House said in a statement. Trump has threatened to cut off trade with all countries that do business with North Korea, a group that includes China.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe also plans to visit Vladivostok for talks with Moon and Putin. He told reporters in Tokyo on Wednesday that he wants North Korea to understand it has “no bright future” if it continues on its current path.

China has been considering closing a customs post along the border with North Korea, according to the Daily NK, a Seoul-based website that says it gathers information from informants inside the isolated nation. The Quanhe customs house in Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture, near the Russian border, is the second biggest of nine posts between China and North Korea.

[Read here about the options for dealing with North Korea](#)

South Korea is watching closely for any radiation leaks after North Korea detonated its nuclear device, Unification Ministry spokesman Baik Tae-hyun said in a briefing Wednesday. The nation’s nuclear safety commission said it hadn’t detected any so far.

Additional launchers for the U.S. missile shield known as Thaad will be installed in South Korea on Thursday afternoon, Yonhap News reported, citing activists at the site. Moon had previously sought to delay its deployment.

Commercial satellite imagery, obtained the day after the test, appears to show numerous landslides throughout the nuclear test site and beyond, according to an analyst report on the 38 North website. The report said there doesn’t appear to be any evidence of a collapse crater.

Japan Nukes

Meanwhile in Tokyo, ruling party heavyweight Shigeru Ishiba said Wednesday on a TV show that Japan should review its policy of not allowing the U.S. to bring atomic weapons into its territory, according to Kyodo News. This would strengthen the deterrence provided by the alliance with the U.S. in the face of the North Korean threat, the lawmaker said.

Top government spokesman Yoshihide Suga said that Japan was gathering information on North Korea’s electromagnetic pulse attack development.

Hours after detonating the device, North Korea's state-run news agency called it a "thermonuclear nuke with great destructive power which can be detonated even at high altitudes for super-powerful EMP attack according to strategic goals."

Japan's Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera said Wednesday that the explosion was 10 times more powerful than the bomb that devastated Hiroshima in the final days of World War II.

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