

North Korea vows to retaliate over U.S. WannaCry accusation

North Korea vowed to retaliate Thursday after the White House accused it of being behind the WannaCry ransomware attack that infected hundreds of thousands of computers around the world earlier this year.

Thomas P. Bossert, homeland security adviser to President Trump, wrote in *the Wall Street Journal* this week that “after careful investigation” the U.S. “publicly attributes the massive ‘WannaCry’ cyberattack to North Korea.”

Bossert said the allegation was based on evidence, and that other governments and private companies agreed.

In a statement carried by state media, North Korea’s Foreign Ministry said it had nothing to do with the attack and would never tolerate such “reckless” allegations. It did not say how it would respond.

“The Trump administration is inciting an extremely confrontational atmosphere by even concocting a plot against us at this delicate moment when the situation on the Korean Peninsula is at the crossroads of nuclear war or peace,” a ministry spokesman said.

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Tensions have been high between the U.S. and North Korea for months over Pyongyang’s nuclear and missile program.

The North has fired 23 missiles since February, sparking international condemnation and sanctions. On Nov. 29, Pyongyang launched a new intercontinental ballistic missile it said was capable of striking the U.S. mainland, claiming to have achieved its goal of becoming a nuclear state.

The cyberattack in mid-May affected more than 200,000 victims in 150 countries

and crippled more than 20% of hospitals in the United Kingdom.

South Korean soldiers fired a number of warning shots Thursday after a North Korean soldier fled across the demilitarized zone that divides North and South Korea, South Korean military officials said. The “low-ranking” soldier was the second North Korean service member to defect to the South in recent weeks.

Earlier this week, the Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* reported that North Korea has started trials to load anthrax onto intercontinental ballistic missiles, citing an unnamed source linked to South Korean intelligence.

The report came shortly after the White House said the North is “pursuing chemical and biological weapons which could also be delivered by missile” in its National Security Strategy.

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