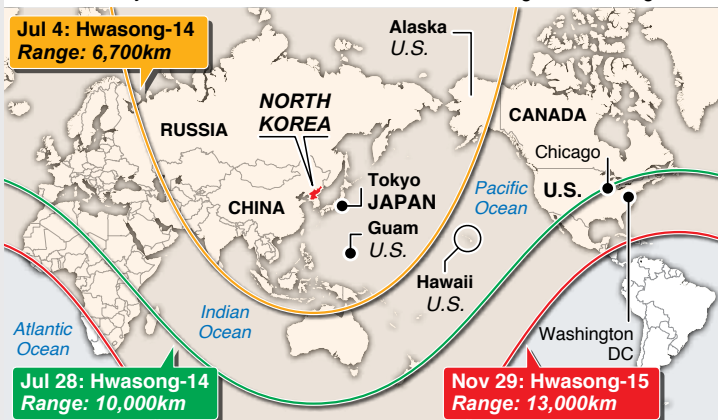
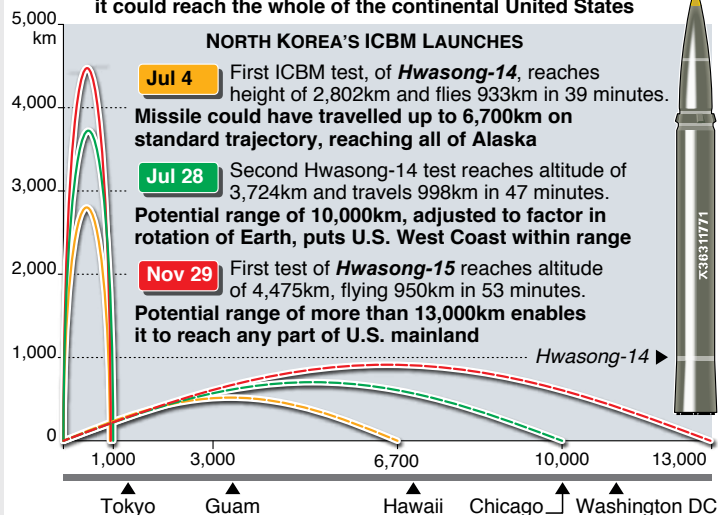


Latest ICBM "can reach all of U.S."

North Korea says it has successfully tested its newly developed Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), claiming it could reach the whole of the continental United States



Sources: Union of Concerned Scientists, 38north, Center for Nonproliferation Studies © GRAPHIC NEWS

US believes it can defend against North Korean missiles for now

Washington

The US military remains confident it can -- at least for the moment -- protect against any North Korean missile threat, a US official said yesterday after Pyongyang tested a new rocket.

North Korea earlier launched a previously unseen intercontinental ballistic missile, which it called a Hwasong 15, that was capable of carrying a "super-large heavy warhead" to any target in the continental United States.

US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis has said the missile flew higher than any other from North Korea, and warned that Pyongyang could soon threaten "everywhere in the world."

The US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told AFP that America has not changed its assessment that its various missile

defense systems can stop a North Korean missile attack, though the guarantee cannot be ensured indefinitely.

"I don't think they could successfully nuke the US at this time," the official said. "There is a general sense we can stop whatever North Korea has right now. For the future, I don't know."

The United States has spent decades and billions of dollars developing technologies to stop an incoming ballistic missile, and Congress is throwing billions more dollars at the Pentagon to step up its efforts.

To protect against an ICBM, the military has the Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system, which is designed to fire an interceptor missile into space and use kinetic energy to destroy the incoming target. (Reuters)

Trump retweets violent videos



Trump hugs a US flag in Tampa Florida (File)

Beirut

Among the inflammatory videos retweeted by President Donald Trump yesterday was one released by the al-Qaida affiliate in Syria and another showing a radical Islamist in Egypt throwing a 9-year-old boy off a roof. Both are from 2013.

Trump retweeted the videos from the account of the deputy leader of the far-right Britain First, a small fringe group that opposes multiculturalism and what it calls the "Islamization" of Britain.

The video of a bearded man pushing a boy off the roof was filmed in Egypt days after the overthrow of Islamist President Mohammed Morsi by Egypt's military. In the video, a

supporter of Morsi is seen roaming the roof of a building in the coastal city of Alexandria, raising a black flag often used by militants.

The perpetrators of the roof violence were later sentenced to death for killing the boy and another man who were thrown off the roof.

Another video Trump retweeted Wednesday shows a man -- said to be a supporter of Syria's al-Qaida affiliate then known as the Nusra Front -- smashing a blue and white statue of the Virgin Mary.

The video appeared on the internet in October 2013, in the midst of a civil war in Syria, and was reported by the Middle East Media Research Institute, MEMRI, who identified the

man as Sheikk Omar Raghba. In the video, he declares that "idols" will no longer be worshipped in the Levant before he smashes the large statue in the Yakubiya village in northwestern Syria.

The third video shows two young men fighting near a river bank. It was originally posted to a Dutch viral video site in May 2017 and picked up by Dutch media the following day. Two 16-year-old boys were arrested, according to De Telegraaf, and police removed the video. The boy's religion was not included in any of the reports.

In her tweet, Jayda Fransen, the deputy leader of Britain First, wrote: "VIDEO: Muslim migrant beats up Dutch boy on crutches!" (AP)



It is wrong for the president to have done this," the spokesman for British Prime Minister Theresa May said. "Britain First seeks to divide communities through their use of hateful narratives which peddle lies and stoke tensions. They cause anxiety to law-abiding people."

Theresa May



"I'm delighted," Fransen, who has 53,000 Twitter followers, told Reuters, saying it showed the U.S. president shared her aim of raising awareness of "issues such as Islam"

Jayda Fransen



Look, I'm not talking about the nature of the video," White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders told reporters. "The threat is real and that's what the president is talking about is the need for national security, the need for military spending, and those are very real things. There's nothing fake about that."

Sarah Sanders

Mysterious N Korean ships full of skeletons wash up in Japan

Ships believed to have come from North Korea and filled with dead bodies and skeletons have been washing up on the west coast of Japan, as desperate fishermen are forced further and further out to sea in search of a catch.

Japanese authorities said Monday they uncovered the skeletons of eight individuals from the hull of one wooden boat that washed ashore on

Miyazawa beach in the northwest of Japan's main island of Honshu.

According to CNN the unidentified "ghost ship" was spotted by the Akita Coast Guard drifting offshore Friday but it wasn't until it came into land that the grisly discovery was made.

It is not entirely clear the boat came from North Korea but the discovery of the wooden vessel fits a pattern of debris and other boats being washed

up from the waters of the hermit nation on the Japanese coast, officials said.

A wooden boat, which according to a police official carried eight men who said they were from North Korea and appear to be fishermen whose vessel ran into trouble, is seen near a breakwater in Yurihonjo, Akita Prefecture, Japan November 24, 2017. (Kyodo/via REUTERS)

