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North Korea carries out two back-to-back Musudan missile tests, South Korea says

Updated 19 minutes ago

North Korea has conducted two back-to-back tests of a powerful new medium-range missile, with at least one launch ending in failure, South Korea's Defence Ministry said.

The first test shortly before 6:00am (local time) was deemed to have failed, but the ministry said it was unable to confirm the status of a second launch detected two hours later from the same location on the east coast.

Both test were believed to be of a much-hyped, intermediate-range Musudan missile capable of reaching US bases as far away as Guam.

UN resolutions ban North Korea from any use of ballistic missile technology and, just hours before the latest launch effort, [the Pentagon warned](#)



PHOTO: North Korea has made multiple failed attempts this year to test the missiles. (AFP: Ed Jones)

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Pyongyang against pressing ahead with any missile test.

In a statement, the South Korean defence ministry stressed that any such test was "a clear violation of UN resolutions", while Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said it could not be tolerated.

The North has made [four previous failed attempts this year to test fly the Musudan](#), which has an estimated range of anywhere between 2,500 and 4,000 kilometres.

The lower range covers the whole of South Korea and Japan, while the upper range would include US military bases on Guam.

First unveiled as an indigenous missile at a military parade in Pyongyang in October 2010, the Musudan has never been successfully flight-tested.

Three [failures in April were seen as an embarrassment](#) for North Korea's leadership, coming ahead of a rare ruling party congress that was meant to celebrate the country's achievements.

Another [attempt in May](#) was also deemed to have failed.

Wednesday's effort came with military tensions still running high following Pyongyang's fourth nuclear test in January and a long-range rocket launch a month later that saw the UN Security Council impose its toughest sanctions to date on the North.

AFP

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