

N. Korea vows harsh retaliation against new sanctions

By **HYUNG-JIN KIM**
Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea vowed Monday to bolster its nuclear arsenal and gain revenge of a “thousand-fold” against the United States in response to tough U.N. sanctions imposed following its recent intercontinental ballistic missile tests.

The warning came two days after the U.N. Security Council unanimously approved new sanctions to punish North Korea, including a ban on coal and other exports worth over \$1 billion. The U.S. ambassador to the U.N., Nikki Haley, called the U.S.-drafted resolution “the single largest economic sanctions package ever leveled against” North Korea.

In a statement carried by the North’s state-run Korean Central News Agency, North Korea’s government said the sanctions were a “violent infringement of its sovereignty” that was caused by a “heinous U.S. plot to isolate and stifle” the country.

“We will make the U.S. pay by a thousand-fold for all the heinous crimes it commits against the state and people of this country,” the statement said.

The North said it would take an unspecified “resolute action of justice” and would never place its nuclear program on the negotiating table or “flinch an inch” from its push to strengthen its nuclear deterrence as long as



Korean Central News Agency/Korea News Service via AP, File

This July 28, 2017, file photo distributed by the North Korean government on July 29 shows what was said to be the launch of a Hwasong-14 intercontinental ballistic missile at an undisclosed location in North Korea.

U.S. hostility against North Korea persists.

North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho made similar comments during an annual regional security conference in Manila on Monday.

South Korea’s government said the North would face stronger sanctions if it doesn’t stop its nuclear and missile provocation.

Lim Eul Chul, a North Korea expert at South Korea’s Kyungnam University, said the comments by the North demonstrate how angry it is over the U.N. sanctions, but that the country is not likely

to launch a pre-emptive strike against the United States. He said the North could still carry out further missile tests or a sixth atomic bomb test in the coming months under its broader weapons development timetable.

North Korea test-launched two ICBMs last month as part of its efforts to possess a long-range missile capable of striking anywhere in the mainland U.S. Both missiles were fired at highly lofted angles, and analysts say the weapons could reach parts of the United States such as Alaska, Los Angeles or Chicago if fired at a normal,

flattened trajectory.

The centerpiece of the U.N. sanctions is a ban on North Korean exports of coal, iron, lead and seafood products — and a ban on all countries importing those products, estimated to be worth over \$1 billion a year in hard currency. The resolution also bans countries from giving any additional permits to North Korean laborers, another source of foreign currency for the North, and prohibits all new joint ventures with North Korean companies.

Analysts say that North Korea, already under numerous U.N. and other

Sanctions may not halt nuclear program

WASHINGTON (AP) — The strongest sanctions yet against North Korea could still prove no match for the communist country’s relentless nuclear weapons ambitions.

While the United States hails a new package of U.N. penalties that could cut a third of North Korea’s exports, the sanctions themselves aren’t the American objective. They’re only a tactic for getting Kim Jong Un’s totalitarian government to end its missile advances and atomic weapons tests, and there is little evidence to suggest this newest round of economic pressure will be more successful than previous efforts.

Whatever the economic pain on Pyongyang, Kim’s government has expressed no interest in negotiating away its fast-growing arsenal of perhaps 20 nuclear bombs and the ballistic missiles needed to deliver them. For the young North Korean leader, the weapons are fundamental to the survival of his authoritarian regime, even if they deepen diplomatic isolation and bring even more extreme poverty for his long-suffering people.

And the sanctions may not prove effective. The North has learned through decades of U.S. efforts at isolation how to circumvent commercial and financial restrictions, and reluctant powers like China and Russia have often proven half-hearted partners when it comes to policing their ally.

“On paper, this is a pretty strict containment of North Korea economically,” said Scott Snyder, an expert on Korea at the Council on Foreign Relations. “But North Korea has been able to evade sanctions in the past and it’s not clear to me things are going to be much different this time.”

international sanctions, will feel some pain from the new sanctions but is not likely to return to disarmament negotiations anytime soon because of them.

Lim, the North Korea expert, said the North will probably squeeze its ordinary citizens to help finance its nuclear and missile programs. Shin Beomchul of the Seoul-

based Korea National Diplomatic Academy said sanctions that can force a change from North Korea would include a ban on China’s annual, mostly free shipment of 500,000 tons of crude oil to North Korea and the deporting by U.N. member states of the tens of thousands of North Korean workers currently dispatched abroad.

Hackers demand millions in ransom for stolen HBO data

NEW YORK (AP) — Hackers using the name “Mr. Smith” posted a fresh cache of stolen HBO files online Monday, and demanded that HBO pay a ransom of several million dollars to prevent further such releases.

The data dump included what appear to be scripts from five “Game of Thrones” episodes, including one upcoming episode, and a month’s worth of email from the account of Leslie Cohen, HBO’s vice president for film programming. There were also internal documents, including a report of legal claims against the network and job offer letters to top executives.

HBO, which previously acknowledged the theft of “proprietary information,” said it’s continuing to investigate and is working with police and cybersecurity experts. The network said Monday that it still doesn’t believe that its email system as a whole has been compromised.

This is the second data dump from the purported hacker. So far the HBO leaks have been limited, falling well short of the chaos inflicted on Sony in 2014. In that attack, hackers



Macall B. Polay/HBO via AP

This image released by HBO shows Nikolaj Coster-Waldau as Jaime Lannister in an episode of “Game of Thrones,” which aired Sunday, Aug. 7.

BRIEFLY

unearthed thousands of embarrassing emails and released personal information, including salaries and social security numbers, of nearly 50,000 current and former Sony employees.

Those behind the HBO hack claim to have more data, including scripts, upcoming episodes of HBO shows and movies, and information damaging to HBO.

Trump looks to loyal voters as support slips, agenda stalls

WASHINGTON (AP) — After six months of infighting, investigations and legislative failures, President Donald Trump is trying to combat new signs of weakness in his Republican base and re-energize his staunchest supporters.

White House officials have been urging the president to refocus on immigration and other issues that resonate with the conservatives, evangelicals and working-class whites who propelled him to the Oval Office. The president has ramped up his media-bashing via Tweet, long a successful tactic for Trump, and staged rallies hoping to marshal his base to his defense.

The effort underscores Trump’s shaky political positioning not yet seven months into his presidency. Trump has remained deeply unpopular among Democrats, and there are signs that his support among Republicans may be softening. His advisers are aware that a serious slip in support among his core voters could jeopardize hopes for a major, early legislative accomplishment and would certainly increase Republicans’ worries about his re-election prospects.

White House counselor Kellyanne Conway acknowledged the concerns Sunday on ABC, saying the president’s approval rating “among Republicans and conservatives and Trump voters is down slightly.”

MSNBC surges in cable ratings

NEW YORK (AP) — For the first month since CNN’s Larry King owned cable news in October 2001, the most popular personality in prime-time doesn’t work for Fox News Channel. Rachel Maddow of MSNBC is the new champ.

Her network achieved other milestones in July, including its closest finish to Fox since 2000 and largest margin of victory over CNN ever. The numbers illustrate a surge in popularity at MSNBC, where politics has become prime-time entertainment. Like late-night comic Stephen Colbert can attest, having President Donald Trump as a regular punching bag is great for business.

“I thought there would be a lot of interest in news,” said MSNBC President Phil Griffin. “I had no idea this would happen.”

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