

N. Korea sends Russia artillery rounds for satellite advice: Seoul

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Online Desk: North Korea has provided Russia with over one million artillery rounds to use in its war with Ukraine with Pyongyang appearing to receive advice on satellite technology in return, a South Korean lawmaker said Wednesday, citing Seoul's spy agency.

Russia and North Korea, who are historic allies, are both under a raft of global sanctions — Moscow for its invasion of Ukraine, and Pyongyang for its testing of nuclear weapons.

The countries' leaders, Kim Jong Un and Vladimir Putin, held a summit in September in Russia's far east, with the United States subsequently claiming Pyongyang had begun providing Moscow with weapons.

The South's National Intelligence Service (NIS) told lawmakers at a closed-door parliamentary audit on Wednesday that North Korea had made at least 10 arms transfers to Russia since August.

"The NIS has learned that more than one million artillery rounds have been transferred," lawmaker Yoo Sang-bum told reporters after the audit.

"It's analysed to be sufficient for around two months in the Russia-Ukraine war," Yoo added.

In return, North Korea appeared to have received technical advice from Moscow on its bid to launch a military reconnaissance satellite, he said.

After a failed second attempt in August, Pyongyang said it would carry out a third satellite launch in October — but this has not materialised.

The lawmaker added that "while the October launch date has been postponed, final preparations such as inspections of the engine and launch device are in full swing."

"It appears that North Korea received that technical advice from Russia, so we are expecting a higher rate of success."

The United States said last month that arms shipments from Pyongyang to Moscow were underway, with North Korea delivering more than 1,000 containers of military equipment and munitions to Russia in recent weeks.

Seoul, Tokyo and Washington issued a joint statement last week saying they "strongly condemn" North Korea supplying arms to Moscow.

During his visit to Russia in September, Kim declared bilateral ties with Moscow were his country's "number one priority", with Pyongyang becoming an ardent supporter of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Washington and experts have said Pyongyang was seeking a range of military assistance in return, such as satellite technology and upgrading its Soviet-era military equipment.