

South Korea Responds to North Korea's Drone Invasion

written by Maheen Tanveer | January 12, 2023



Drones were sent into North Korea's air space by South Korea on December 26, 2022. After the leadership, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un sent five unmanned aerial vehicles into its airspace. This led to an unprecedented tit-for-tat military action by South Korea. Drones were exchanged as Kim Jong Un kicked off a significant political meeting to decide on security, economic, and political policy for the upcoming year.

The first drone crossed the border at 10:25 in the morning and returned after traveling for roughly three hours, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff. Four more were seen, but they later disappeared off radar. In addition, fighter jets and military helicopters were dispatched by South Korea's military in response.

In this regard, the Joint Chiefs of Staff of South Korea reported that South Korea afterwards sent manned and unmanned reconnaissance assets into North Korea and border regions to perform reconnaissance and take pictures of military installations.

Furthermore, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said the incursion showed the need for South Korea to bolster its defenses. At a cabinet meeting, Yoon underlined, "We were planning to establish a drone unit for surveillance on North Korea's major military facilities. But with South Korea's response to North Korea, we will expedite the establishment of the drone unit as much as possible".



(Lee Jung-hoon/Yonhap via AP, File)

South Korea Military Budget

According to the country's Defense Ministry, South Korea would spend 560 billion won (\$441 million) on improving its drone defenses. According to the country's recently released budget, until 2027, South Korea plans to spend 331.4 trillion won (\$261 billion) on defense, with an average yearly growth of 6.8 percent. Moreover, President Yoon declared that regardless of North Korea's nuclear arsenal, any provocation by the country must be addressed with immediate action.

However, these actions raise the likelihood of the first significant violent conflict in years. In 2010, Yeonpyeong, a South Korean border island, was heavily bombarded by North Korea.

In 2022, Kim Jong Un launched a record-breaking 70 ballistic missiles, updating his arsenal to make the weapons more easier to hide, quicker to deploy, and harder to knock down. South Korea, on the other hand, has stated that it anticipates Kim will conduct a nuclear bomb test soon.