

U.S. General warns of missile threat

by UPI

SEOUL - The commander of U.S. forces in Korea Monday said North Korea has successfully tested a new generation of powerful missiles.

Gen. B.B. Bell, who leads the 29,500 U.S. troops in the region, told journalists in Seoul that North Korea's technologically advanced missiles pose a serious threat to regional security, Yonhap news agency reported Monday.

He said the new missiles are believed to have been designed to replace its older short-range Frog missiles.

"These were not failure missile tests. These were successful tests," Bell said.

He was referring to the test firing of a series of short-range missiles into the East Sea and the Yellow Sea in May and June. Yonhap reported that South Korean defense officials have played down the tests as part of routine military exercises.

The missile testing comes at a time when United Nations nuclear watchdog experts prepare to discuss North Korea's implementation of its promise to shut down its main nuclear facilities in Yongbyon.

"One of the biggest threats to peace and stability is the potential capability of North Korea to couple its missile technology with its demonstrated nuclear ability," Bell said.

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