# Rising North Korean Tensions in DMZ and Vladimir Putin's Visit to Pyongyang Spark Concerns



### North Korean Land Mine Incidents and Rising Tensions on the Korean Peninsula

**Seoul, South Korea** – In recent months, North Korean troops have experienced "multiple casualties" due to land mine explosions while planting explosives along the heavily fortified Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) bordering South Korea. The incidents were reported by South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).

Since January, North Korean soldiers have been installing landmines and structures resembling anti-tank barriers at various locations within the DMZ. This has resulted in several injuries and fatalities among the North Korean troops. The JCS did not specify the exact number of casualties but indicated the South Korean military is closely monitoring the activities.

These developments come amidst increasing tensions on the Korean Peninsula. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has intensified his adversarial rhetoric and abandoned policies aimed at peaceful reunification with South Korea. Recently, numerous balloons filled with trash have been launched from North Korea into South Korea, while Seoul has resumed loudspeaker broadcasts of anti-North Korean propaganda.

Kim Yo Jong, the sister of Kim Jong Un, warned last week that these broadcasts could lead to a "very dangerous situation," hinting at unspecified retaliatory actions if they continue.

In a separate incident, South Korean troops recently fired warning shots at North Korean soldiers who accidentally crossed the Military Demarcation Line (MDL) within the DMZ.

The 160-mile-long DMZ, established at the end of the Korean War in 1953, remains one of the world's most heavily militarized borders, despite neither side signing a formal peace treaty.

### Vladimir Putin's Visit to North Korea

**Pyongyang, North Korea** – Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in North Korea on June 18, 2024, for his first visit in 24 years. Putin's trip underscores a deepening alliance between Russia and North Korea amid their respective confrontations with the West, primarily over Ukraine.

Ahead of his visit, Putin expressed his appreciation for North Korea's support of Russia's actions in Ukraine. He emphasized plans to develop trade and payment systems independent of Western control and to oppose what he termed "unilateral and illegal restrictive measures."

Putin's visit has raised concerns about an arms arrangement where North Korea might supply munitions to Russia in exchange for economic and technological assistance. Intelligence reports from the United States and South Korea suggest North Korea has been providing Russia with artillery and missiles for use in Ukraine, although both countries deny such transactions.

This visit follows heightened military, economic, and other exchanges between the two nations since Kim Jong Un's visit to Russia in September 2023. As tensions remain high on the Korean Peninsula, Western powers continue to monitor the strengthening ties between Moscow and Pyongyang.

— *Report compiled on June 18, 2024.*