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North Korea fires ballistic missile, Pentagon claims it's an ICBM

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North Korea has fired a ballistic missile, which splashed down in the Sea of Japan, according to the South Korean, Japanese and US militaries. The Pentagon says an initial assessment indicates it was an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff was the first to report on the launch. "*North Korea launched an unidentified ballistic missile eastward from the vicinity of Pyongsong, South Pyongan Province, at dawn today,*" it said, as cited by Yonhap news agency. Seoul and Washington were analysing the missile's trajectory, it added.

The Pentagon later said it detected and tracked a North Korean missile launch.

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Pentagon spokesman Colonel Robert Manning described the projectile as an intercontinental ballistic missile, adding that it traveled some 1,000 km before splashing down into the Sea of Japan.

The White House said that the US President Donald Trump had been already briefed on the new Pyongyang's launch when the missile was still in the air.

the Japanese prime minister's office also said that the North Korean missile apparently landed in waters off Japan within the country's exclusive economic zone.

Japanese PM ordered an emergency meeting of cabinet ministers, according to Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga. Tokyo has also expressed a "*strong protest*" over the launch.

Following the North Korean launch, South Korean military staged a "*presision strike*" missile exercise, Yonhap news agency reported, citing South Korea's military.

The launch, if confirmed, would be the first test conducted by Pyongyang since September, when the North fired a ballistic missile over Japan.