



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on April 24, 2017

As N. Korea Celebrates Anniversary of Military, S. Korea Is on Alert

As we observed in [our April 21 article](#), citing a Reuters report that same day, South Korea is on heightened alert in anticipation of an important anniversary in North Korea — the 85th anniversary of the foundation of its Korean People's Army on April 25. The report cited South Korea's Unification Ministry spokesman, Lee Duk-haeng, who pointed out that North Korea will conclude its winter military drills at the same time as joint U.S. and South Korean military exercises, running until the end of April.



"It is a situation where a lot of exercise equipment is amassed in North Korea and also a lot of strategic assets are situated on the Korean peninsula because of the South Korea-U.S. military drills," Lee said in a briefing.

"We are closely watching the situation," Lee said, adding that South Korea would not let its guard down.

An AP report in the *Chicago Tribune* for April 24 observed that, in view of North Korea's anniversary celebration on April 25, South Korea and its allies are bracing for the possibility that the Pyongyang regime could conduct another nuclear test or launch an intercontinental ballistic missile for the first time.

The report noted that North Korea often marks significant dates by displaying its military capability and has carried out five nuclear tests so far.

AP quoted statements from South Korea's Defense Ministry saying that North Korea appears ready to conduct what it called "strategic provocations" at any time. South Korean Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn, the country's acting leader (serving in place of the impeached President Park Geun-hye) has instructed his military to strengthen its "immediate response posture" in case North Korea does something significant on the April 25 anniversary.

As [we reported recently](#), tensions between communist North Korea and the United States and its allies in the region have escalated since North Korea's state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported on March 7 that the nation's launch of four missiles the previous day was part of a practice test to hone its ability to strike U.S. military bases in Japan.

Photo of South Korean marines: [U.S. Navy](#)

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