

North Korea fires short-range projectiles into sea: Report

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Seoul: North Korea fired several short-range projectiles into the sea off its east coast Thursday, just hours after the United Nations slapped sanctions on Pyongyang for its recent nuclear test and long-range rocket launch, South Korea's Defense Ministry said.

The North's launches also come shortly after Seoul approved its first legislation on human rights in North Korea

Defense spokesman Moon Sang Gyun said the projectiles were fired from the eastern coastal town of Wonsan, adding authorities were trying to determine what exactly North Korea fired. The projectiles could be missiles, artillery or rockets, according to the Defense Ministry.

North Korea has a history of firing weapons from its prodigious arsenal when angered at international condemnation.

Pyongyang conducted its fourth nuclear test in January, making the widely disputed claim that it successfully detonated a hydrogen bomb. Last month it put a satellite into orbit on a long-range rocket that the United Nations and others see as a cover for a test of banned ballistic missile technology.

The South Korean legislature passed the human rights bill shortly before the U.N. Security Council unanimously approved its toughest sanctions against North Korea in 20 years over the nuclear and rocket moves.

A total of 212 South Korean lawmakers voted for the bill and 24 others abstained in the floor vote. It becomes law when it is endorsed by the Cabinet Council, considered a formality.

North Korea's state media has warned that enactment of the law would result in "miserable ruin."

- AP