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## 12 Devastating train crash

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KOREAN AIR

## Seoul imposes sanctions on NK hacking group for role in space launch

*'Kimsuky uses tailored methods to target gov't officials, journalists'*

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Seoul announced fresh sanctions against Kimsuky, a North Korean hacking group, Friday, for its role in developing technology the regime used in its latest satellite launch.

South Korea also issued a joint security advisory with the U.S. to warn other countries of the serious dangers North Korean hackers pose. It was the second joint action of that type taken by the two allies since their first one in February.

The group under the North Korean military intelligence agency has

provided the regime with the latest space technology and information illegally collected from around the world and used in an attempted satellite launch into space, which ended in failure on Wednesday. Given that the test involved ballistic missile technology, the North has been denounced and faces possible — although unlikely — sanctions from the U.N. Security Council.

With the group now on the government sanctions list, those who wish to engage in financial transactions (cryptocurrency included) must receive approval from the governor of the Bank of Korea or the Financial Services Commission in advance. Violators could face prosecution.

Speaking to The Korea Times, officials said one of the main goals of the measures is to send North

Korea a message that violations of South Korean laws will not go unpunished — even if immediate prosecution is not possible.

"We also aim to raise awareness of the dangers of the group across the world. Some nations may follow their lead to impose their own sanctions, which would create a web of sanctions that makes its illegal activities more difficult," a ministry official said.

According to a police officer, one of the key officials behind the sanctions initiative, said the chief targets of Kimsuky have been the email accounts of government officials, scholars and journalists in science and security fields.

"Their emails contain plenty of information not just about up-to-date technologies, but also about the details of what the government is up

to and where it is headed," the police officer said.

He warned that anyone could fall into the trap of North Korean hackers, saying that they use highly sophisticated and tailored methods of deception.

"Kimsuky hackers, for example, impersonate officials of government agencies or news outlets using similar-looking email addresses," he said. "It's difficult not to be deceived if they know a lot about you."

His warnings are also reflected in an advisory issued jointly by Seoul, Washington and their security agencies, including South Korea's National Intelligence Service and the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation.

"DPRK (North Korean) cyber actors commonly take on the identities of real people to gain trust

and establish rapport in their digital communications. Kimsuky actors may have previously compromised the email accounts of the person whom they are impersonating. This allows the actors to search for targets while scanning through compromised emails, with a particular focus on work-related files and personal information pertaining to retirees, social clubs and contact lists," they said in a statement released Thursday (U.S. time).

"In other cases, a Kimsuky actor will use multiple personas to engage a target; one persona to conduct initial outreach and a second persona to follow up on the first engagement to distract a potential victim from discerning the identity of the original persona. Another tactic is to 'resend' or 'forward' an email from a source trusted by a target."

## NK leader's sister slams UNSC meeting

The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un on Sunday lambasted last week's meeting of the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) on the country's recent failed space rocket launch as "the most unfair and biased act of interfering in internal affairs."

In a statement carried by the North's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), Kim Yo-jong expressed displeasure over Friday's open UNSC briefing, stressing the North will continue to exercise "all the lawful rights" as a sovereign state, including one to launch satellites.

The North launched what it claimed to be a satellite-carrying rocket Wednesday, but it fell into the Yellow Sea following an abnormal flight, according to the South Korean military. The U.S. and other nations called the launch a breach of multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions. North Korea is banned from any use of ballistic missile technology under U.N. resolutions.

"I am very displeased that the UNSC so often calls to account the DPRK's exercise of its rights as a sovereign state at the request of the U.S., and bitterly condemn and reject it as the most unfair and biased act of interfering in its internal affairs and violating its sovereignty," Kim said, referring to her country by its official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. (Yonhap)