

world

# A FRESH SHOW OF FORCE *The U.S. flies nuclear-capable bombers to Korean Peninsula*

**Hyung-Jin Kim**  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEOUL, South Korea — The United States flew nuclear-capable bombers to the Korean Peninsula on Friday in its latest show of force against North Korea, days after the North staged massive anti-U.S. rallies in its capital.

The long-range B-52 bombers took part in joint aerial drills with other U.S. and South Korean fighter jets over the peninsula, South Korea's Defense Ministry said in a statement. The bombers' flyover is the latest in a series of temporary U.S. deployments of strategic assets in South Korea in response to North Korea's push to expand its nuclear arsenal.

Two weeks ago, the U.S. deployed a nuclear-powered submarine capable of carrying about 150 Tomahawk missiles to South Korean waters for the first time in six years. The USS Michigan's arrival came a day after



SOUTH KOREA DEFENSE MINISTRY VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

**U.S. B-52H bombers, center, and F-16 fighter jets and South Korean Air Force F-35A fighter jets, right bottom, fly over the Korean Peninsula during a joint air drill in South Korea on April 14, 2023.**

North Korea resumed missile tests to protest previous U.S.-South Korean drills that it views as an invasion rehearsal.

The South Korean Defense Ministry said the B-52 bombers' deployment boosted the visibility of U.S. strategic assets to the peninsula. It said

the allies have been demonstrating their firm resolve to strengthen combined defense postures and will continue joint drills involving

U.S. strategic bombers.

On Sunday, more than 120,000 North Koreans participated in mass rallies in Pyongyang to mark the 73rd anniversary of the start of the Korean War. During the rallies, officials and residents delivered speeches vowing "merciless revenge" against the United States over the war while accusing the U.S. of plotting an invasion on North Korea.

The Korean War ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty, leaving the peninsula in a technical state of war. The U.S. stations about 28,000 troops in South Korea as deterrence against potential aggression by North Korea.

Since its June 15 launches of two short-range ballistic missiles, North Korea hasn't performed any further public weapons tests. But the U.S. bombers' deployment could prompt it to launch weapons again in protest.

Enhancing "regular visibility of U.S. strategic assets" to the Korean Peninsula was

part of agreements reached between U.S. President Joe Biden and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol during their summit in Washington in April. Biden stated at the time that any North Korean nuclear attack on the U.S. or its allies would "result in the end of whatever regime" took such action.

Since the start of 2022, North Korea has carried out more than 100 missile tests in a bid to enlarge its arsenal of nuclear-capable missiles targeting the U.S. mainland and South Korea. The allies have responded by expanding their military exercises.

In late May, a North Korean launch of a rocket carrying its first spy satellite ended in failure, with the rocket plunging into waters soon after liftoff. North Korea has since repeatedly said it would attempt a second launch, saying it's crucial to build space-based surveillance system to cope with what it calls U.S. hostility.

## Newly formed Hurricane Beatriz spins along Mexico's southwest Pacific coast

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MEXICO CITY — Newly formed Hurricane Beatriz spun along Mexico's southwestern Pacific coast Friday evening, threatening heavy rain for several southern states.

The storm was centered about 70 miles southeast of Manzanillo and had maximum sustained winds of 85 mph, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said. Beatriz was moving northwest at 13 mph and was forecast to generally keep to that course and slow down through Saturday night.

Beatriz's center was very close to shore and expected to move over parts of the coast in the coming

hours before beginning to weaken while moving away back over open waters Sunday and Monday.

The storm could dump three to five inches of rain, with up to eight inches in some locations, from Guerrero state north to Sinaloa state, forecasters said.

A hurricane warning was in effect from Zihuatanejo to Cabo Corrientes.

Meanwhile, Hurricane Adrian continued to move deeper into the Pacific. The storm had maximum sustained winds of 105 mph and was about 410 miles south-southwest of the southern tip of Baja California. It was moving northwest at 7 mph and did not pose a threat to land.

## Strong earthquake shakes Indonesia's main island, killing 1, damaging homes

ASSOCIATED PRESS

YOGYAKARTA, Indonesia — A strong undersea earthquake shook parts of Indonesia's densely populated main island of Java, causing panic Friday as it killed at least one person, injured two others and damaged dozens of houses.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the magnitude 5.8 quake was centered 52 miles southwest of Bambangpuro, a village in Bantul regency of the special province of Yogyakarta. It occurred at a depth of 86 kilometers.

Abdul Muhari, spokesperson for Indonesia's National Disaster Management Agency, said a 67-year-old woman in Bantul died when she fell while fleeing in panic and at least two other residents were injured.

The quake damaged at least 93 houses as well as other buildings, such as schools, health centers, houses of worship and government facilities, in Yogyakarta and its neighboring

provinces of Central Java and East Java, Muhari said.

Television reports showed local residents in Yogyakarta and Central Java provinces panicking as houses and buildings swayed for several seconds. Some places ordered evacuations, sending streams of people into the streets.

Indonesia's Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysical Agency said there was no danger of a tsunami but warned of possible aftershocks. The agency measured a preliminary magnitude of 6.4 for the quake. Variations in early measurements of quakes are common.

The country of more than 270 million people is frequently struck by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis because of its location on the arc of volcanoes and fault lines in the Pacific Basin known as the "Ring of Fire."

In 2004, an extremely powerful Indian Ocean quake set off a tsunami that killed more than 230,000 people.

## Pro-democracy Hong Kong radio station goes off the air

ASSOCIATED PRESS

HONG KONG — An unlicensed pro-democracy radio station in Hong Kong is going off the air after 18 years of service.

Citizens' Radio was bidding farewell to its audience on Friday, on the eve of the 26th anniversary of Hong Kong's handover to China's rule.

The station hosted various prominent democrats

in its shows over the years. But its founder Bull Tsang said it was getting increasingly difficult for the station to invite guests following the enactment of a Beijing-imposed law that jailed or silenced many activists.

The closure reflects the collapse of the city's pro-democracy movement under the national security law following massive protests in 2019.

## Elian Gonzalez becomes a lawmaker

*Cuban boy castaway steps into Cuban politics*

**Andrea Rodriguez**  
ASSOCIATED PRESS



Gonzalez

HAVANA — Elian Gonzalez has the same big, expressive eyes he did 23 years ago when an international custody battle transformed him into the face of the long-strained relations between Cuba and the United States.

Now 29, Gonzalez is stepping into Cuban politics. He recently entered his country's congress with hopes of helping his people at a time of record emigration and heightened tension between the two seaside neighbors.

"From Cuba, we can do a lot so that we have a more solid country, and I owe it to Cubans," he said during an exclusive interview with The Associated Press. "That is what I'm going to try to do from my position, from this place in congress — to contribute to making Cuba a better country."

Gonzalez has given only a handful of interviews since he was unwittingly thrust into the geopolitical spotlight as a boy. In 1999, at just 5 years old, he and his mother were aboard a boat of Cuban migrants headed toward Florida when the boat capsized in the Florida Straits. His mother and 10 others died while Gonzalez, tied to an inner tube, drifted in open water until his rescue.

Granted asylum under U.S. refugee rules at the time, Gonzalez went to live with his great uncle, a member of

the Cuban exile community in Miami that is often a center of fierce criticism of Cuba's government. In Cuba, his father begged then-President Fidel Castro for help. Castro led protests with hundreds of thousands of people demanding little Elian's return. Anti-Castro groups in Miami pressed for him to stay in the U.S.

The tug-of-war quickly gained the world's attention and became emblematic for the testy feelings between the two neighboring nations. Then-U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno ruled the boy should be returned to his father, but Gonzalez's relatives refused. AP photojournalist Alan Diaz captured the moment when armed immigration agents seized Gonzalez in a Miami home, and the photo later won a Pulitzer Prize.

"Not having my mom has been difficult, it has been a burden, but it has not been an obstacle when I have had a father who has stood up for me and been by my side," Gonzalez told AP.

He is a father himself now, of a 2-year-old daughter. He works for a state company that facilitates tourism to the island nation his mother left, underscoring the alternate track his life has followed since his homecoming.

What's more, he recently became a lawmaker.

In April, Gonzalez was sworn in as

a member of Cuba's National Assembly of People's Power, effectively Cuba's congress. He represents Cardenas, a town in Matanzas province about 80 miles east of Havana where he lived until his mother took him to sea. He still lives in the province.

Dressed in black pants and T-shirt, with a discreet braided bracelet on his right hand and his wedding ring on his left, Gonzalez was interviewed in Havana's Capitol, the renovated seat of congress.

"I think the most important thing is that I have grown up like other young people. I have grown up in Cuba," he said.

For years, his father made it nearly impossible to get close to the child. From afar, the boy could sometimes be seen playing with other children or accompanying his father to political events. Castro would visit him on his birthday.

Over the years, Gonzalez was a military cadet and later became an industrial engineer. Because Cuba's congressional positions are unpaid, he will continue to work his tourism job.

The legislative body has faced criticism for lacking opposition voices and for carrying out the agenda set by the country's leadership.

Gonzalez's legislative term comes amid historic emigration from the crisis-stricken Caribbean island, as many young Cubans seek a new life in the U.S. — just as his mother did.

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