

**North Korea Tasks Team To Kill South's Defence Minister – Reports
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South Korea's Defence Minister Kim Kwan-jin speaks during an event in Singapore June 4, 2011. REUTERS/Tim Chong/FilesSEOUL, Aug 10 (Reuters) - A team of North Korean agents have been assigned to kill South Korea's defence minister after he said Seoul would retaliate militarily if Pyongyang repeats attacks against the South, local media reported on Wednesday.

North Korea, which has previously sent agents to try to assassinate key South Korean officials and high-profile defectors, succeeding in killing a nephew of Kim Jong-il near Seoul in 1997.

The South Korean government has put Defence Minister Kim Kwan-jin under tight security protection, with four armed military police officers surrounding him when he is at outside events, the JoongAng Ilbo newspaper quoted a senior government official as saying.

The defence ministry did not comment immediately on the report.

The South's Yonhap news agency quoted a government source as saying intelligence officials are trying to determine the number of would-be assassins, and whether they are North Korean agents sent by Pyongyang or foreign nationals who entered the South from a third country under a North Korean order.

The source also said the assassins could be North Korean agents already stationed in the South.

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