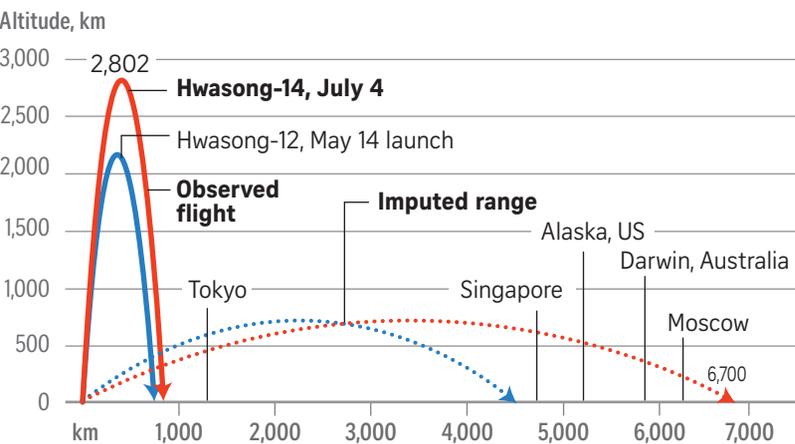


North Korea's latest launch

North Korea said it had successfully tested an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) on Tuesday



"The successful launch of the ICBM... is a major breakthrough..."
Announcement on state Korean Central Television

Hwasong-14

- Reached an altitude of more than 2,500km, according to Japan
- Analysts say the missile has an imputed range of 6,700km



NOTE: *Based on Japan coast guard map

BALLISTIC MISSILE

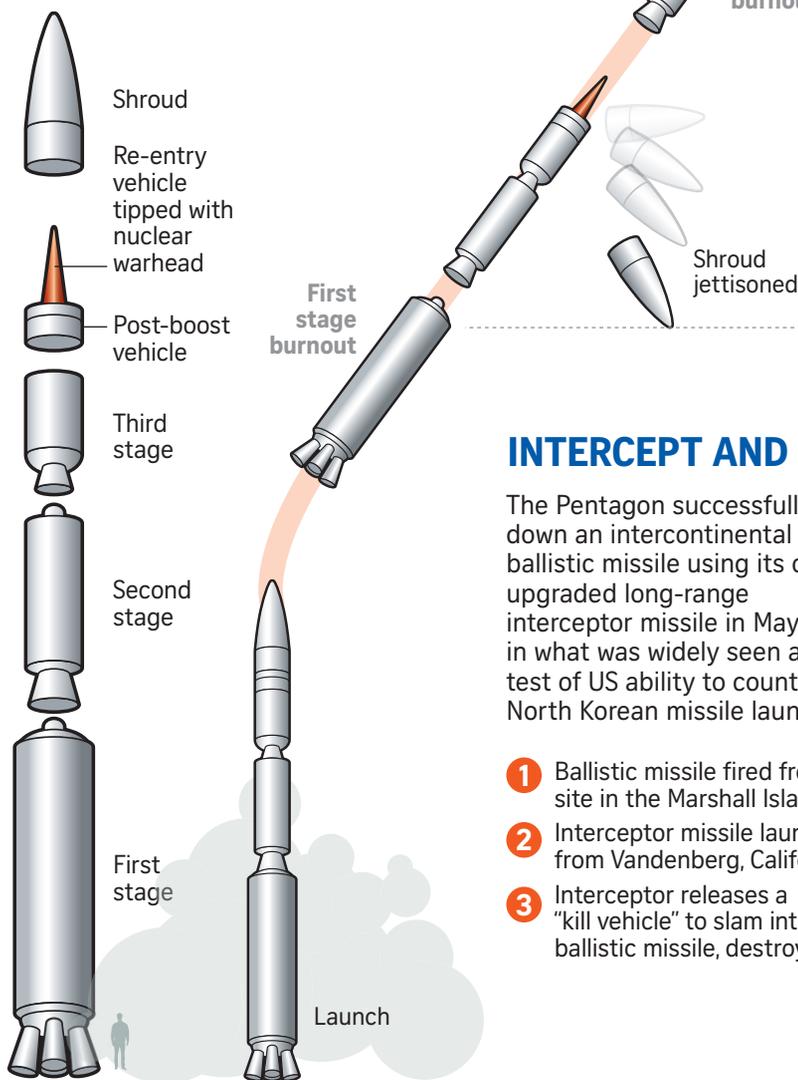
What is it?

- Ballistic missiles fly in a parabolic route, exiting and re-entering the Earth's atmosphere. Cruise missiles, on the other hand, fly in a straight line within the atmosphere.
- Intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) are land-based, nuclear-armed and have a range of more than 5,600km.
- These multi-stage rockets are powered by solid or liquid fuel.

Missile tests

- Almost all previous missiles tested by North Korea are liquid-fuelled, which have to be filled with propellant before launch, a time-consuming process.
- One of the latest intermediate-range ballistic missiles tested on May 21, used solid fuel that allows for immediate firing, said the state-run Korean Central News Agency.
- A preliminary US intelligence analysis indicated successful re-entry into the atmosphere, a notable progress in Pyongyang's missile programme.
- It will be more difficult to prevent a solid fuel-propelled missile launch as it can be fired much more rapidly.

Key parts of an ICBM and how it works



Highest point reached: 800km to 1,600km from surface

Some ICBMs have a "multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle" that has multiple warheads and decoys to strike multiple targets and confuse missile defence systems.

INTERCEPT AND DESTROY

The Pentagon successfully shot down an intercontinental ballistic missile using its own upgraded long-range interceptor missile in May, in what was widely seen as a test of US ability to counter a North Korean missile launch.

- Ballistic missile fired from site in the Marshall Islands.
- Interceptor missile launched from Vandenberg, California.
- Interceptor releases a "kill vehicle" to slam into the ballistic missile, destroying it.



Sources: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, BBC, CNN, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS