

The Korea Times

★★★ CITY EDITION

Established 1950, NO. 22396

www.koreatimes.co.kr

THURSDAY, JULY 6, 2023

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S. Korea retrieves N. Korean spy satellite wreckage

South Korea has retrieved a North Korean spy satellite wreckage and concluded it has "no military utility," Seoul's military said Wednesday, ending a 36-day operation to salvage the sunken debris from a failed North Korean space rocket launch in late May.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said that the military raised key parts of the rocket and the satellite through the search and salvage operation in the West Sea from May 31 through Wednesday, and it

worked in tandem with the United States to examine and analyze them.

"As a result of the exhaustive analysis by South Korean and U.S. experts, we have assessed it has no military utility as a reconnaissance satellite," the JCS said in a press release.

The allies' joint analysis drew keen attention as it could shed light on the progress of the North's long-range rocket development and space programs, as well as which

countries have wittingly or unwittingly aided its weapons development efforts.

The JCS did not detail the findings through the allies' analysis of the wreckage nor did it disclose any photos of the retrieved part of the satellite.

Last month, a Seoul official struck a cautious note, insinuating that disclosing all information the military gleaned from the salvage operation would rather benefit the North Korean military. (Yonhap)