

The Korea Times

*** CITY EDITION

Established 1950, NO. 22271

www.koreatimes.co.kr

TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2023

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'No debris from US satellite fell over Korean Peninsula'

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No debris from Earth Radiation Budget Satellite's (ERBS) — a U.S. observation satellite that reentered the planet's atmosphere today — fell over the Korean Peninsula, Monday, according to the Ministry of Science and ICT, which had sent a series of text messages warning residents not to go outside.

"So far, no special damage has been reported," an official at the science ministry said. "The exact point and time of the impact will be officially announced by the U.S. Air Force. The situation is deemed as a crash when U.S. officials observe the fall of a satellite or when it cannot be observed for 90 minutes to two hours."

Many Koreans expressed concerns after the science ministry warned that a retired U.S. satellite could possibly hit the Korean peninsula, early Monday.

"I warned my friends via Kakao talk to beware of the satellite this morning," a man surnamed Kim in his mid-30s said.

ERBS was launched on Oct. 5, 1984, from the Space Shuttle Chal-



Earth Radiation Budget Satellite's predicted trajectory to pass across the Korean Peninsula, Monday.

Courtesy of Ministry of Science and ICT

lenger and carried out a mission to observe and analyze the distribution of Earth's heat radiation.

Earlier, the Ministry of Science and ICT said the ERBS had been forecast to impact the Earth around 12:20-1:20 p.m. Monday. The Korean Peninsula was included in the regions that the satellite could fall toward.

"The satellite is expected to break

up and combust due to frictional heat upon entering the atmosphere. However, some debris can fall over a wide area range," an official from the Korea Astronomical Research Institute said.

Local airports, including Incheon International Airport, temporarily suspended flights due to safety concerns aware of the possibility the U.S. Earth observation satellite

could pass through airspace above the Korean Peninsula.

According to the Jeju regional headquarters of the Korea Airports Corp., aircraft were prohibited from taking off for 44 minutes from 12:10 pm to 12:54 pm, Monday. As a result, a total of 29 flights were delayed in the region, including 18 departures and 11 arrivals.