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N. Korea's Military Might Is 'Beyond West's Imagination'

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(Newser) – For anyone [encouraged by North Korea's slight softening](#) toward the South, Chun In-bum essentially dumps a bucket of cold water on it. The retired South Korean general, who the [Financial Times](#) reports led his country's special forces, spoke to a London-based think tank Wednesday and outlined exactly what American forces would encounter should we decide to [bloody the country's nose](#)—or something more significant. He doesn't mince words: "I try to explain to the Americans—if we have to go into North Korea, ... it's not going to be like toppling [Saddam] Hussein]. This would be more like trying to get rid of Allah." He describes the country as "one huge barracks" and the population as militarized far beyond the [West's] imagination.

"A 14-year-old child in North Korea probably gets more than 100 hours of military training a year," the [Times](#) of London quotes Chun as saying. "By age 14, a child knows how to fire an AK47, fire an RPG, throw a grenade, pitch a tent and march 24 hours." And even things that may seem promising on their face—the

North's estimated 1,000 fighter jets are aged—aren't, per Chun, who says those planes would be used kamikaze-style, [USA Today](#) reports. And there's not just the physical battlefield to contend with, per the [Brisbane Times](#): "North Korean cyber capability is right below nuclear capability in terms of threat," says Chun. He also describes an extreme system designed to root out any dissent, whereby the country's families are grouped in units, and if one person "misbehaves, the entire five or 10 families go to the gulag or are executed. So everybody spies on everybody else."