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Situation calm despite threat

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Despite the alleged threats by the Indonesian Fishermen's Association to "storm" and "occupy" the Malaysian Embassy in Jakarta, the situation is calm and peaceful at the moment.

A Wisma Putra spokesman said they had not heard anything from the embassy regarding the alleged threat by the Himpunan Nelayan Seluruh Indonesia (Indonesian Fishermen's Association).

"At the moment, we are waiting for clarification from the embassy on the matter. We have not received any information from our staff in Jakarta yet.

"So far, they have not requested for any additional security measures from the Indonesian Government regarding the alleged threat," the spokesman said.

The Malaysian Embassy in Jakarta told the New Straits Times that no untoward incident had taken place so far.

"We have our in-house security at the moment to protect the embassy. But everything is peaceful and no incident has taken place thus far," said an embassy spokesman.

Asked if additional security had been deployed by the Indonesian Government at the embassy, the spokesman said there was no such deployment so far.

Yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad declined to comment on the matter when asked about it.

On Friday, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the Indonesian Government was responsible for providing security to the embassy.

Abdullah, who is Home Minister, said the host nation was responsible for the security of embassies in its borders, just as Malaysia was responsible for the security of foreign embassies in the country.

It had been reported that the Indonesian Fishermen's Association had threatened to storm the Malaysian Embassy in Jakarta if the Malaysian Government did not apologise for the shooting of an Indonesian fisherman in the Malaysian Exclusive Economic Zone on Feb 2.

In that incident, a Royal Malaysian Navy patrol vessel was forced to fire at the Indonesian trawler after it tried to ram the vessel.