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Zainuddin-Korea

NORTH KOREA RECOGNISES MALAYSIA AS AN INDEPENDENT NATION

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 23 (Bernama) -- Malaysians should be proud of a North Korean delegation's acknowledgement of Malaysia as an independent nation because it comes from a leader of a country that still practises communist rule, Deputy Information Minister Datuk Zainuddin Maidin said today.

"Such recognition is hard to come by. In fact some citizens of our own country regard our nation as being still not independent," he said.

He said the acknowledgement was made by Deputy Chairman of the North Korean Information Committee Kim Pyong Ho at a meeting with him in Angkrapuri in conjunction with the joint committee meeting on information of the two countries.

Kim is leading a three-member delegation on a official visit to Malaysia from Dec 22 to 25. The other delegation members are Information Committee Secretariat Deputy Director Choe Chol Su and secretariat officer Jon Min Dok.

Kim, who constantly kept tabs on developments in Malaysia, was proud of the achievements of Malaysia which he described as an independent and free country, Zainuddin told a media conference after the meeting.

He said Kim made the comment based on his observation of the country.

Zainuddin said the delegation also viewed Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as being successful in maintaining the country's independence, especially during the attacks by certain parties on its economy in 1997.

He said the bi-annual meeting also discussed the implementation of cooperation in broadcasting, news exchange and filming, which was agreed upon in a memorandum of understanding signed by the two countries in 1992.

The meeting also discussed the exchange of news between the Malaysian National News Agency (Bernama) and the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

"They are serious about implementing the programme. Only problems like ideological differences and language have still to be discussed," he said.

-- BERNAMA

SHI AHH JK