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# 'It's diplomatically rude'

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> PM slams North Korean envoy's comments, says Malaysia will stand by its principles

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak said comments by North Korean ambassador Kang Chol, that cast doubt over investigations into the killing of Kim Jong-Nam, were "diplomatically rude".

"The statement by the ambassador was totally uncalled for. It was diplomatically rude. But Malaysia will stand firm," Najib told a press conference after attending the iMalaysia Training Scheme (SLiM) open interview programme here yesterday.

Kang Chol had said the investigations could not be trusted, that Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi had made false remarks and Malaysia was colluding with South Korea.

Najib said Malaysia will not be pressured into making any decision deemed to be wrong in relation to the death of Jong-Nam.

He said the government would stand firm by its principles as a sovereign state, and will be guided by the principle of the rule of law to find out the truth.

"The crime was committed in Malaysia. They (North Korea) should help us find out the truth. That is more important than sweeping us with baseless statements.

"Malaysia is not a pawn to any country, and will never be one. We stand firm by our principles, we are a sovereign



Najib takes a selfie with participants of the iMalaysia Training Scheme at the Putra World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

country," he said.

When asked if Malaysia would maintain ties with North Korea following such criticism, Najib said: "We will take it one step at a time."

He reiterated that Malaysia had no reason to paint a negative image of North Korea, adding that the two nations have had a pleasant relationship all this while.

On another matter, Najib warned that public-listed companies risk losing out on government contracts if they do not participate in the SLiM programme.

"I want private companies, especially public-listed ones, to take part in SLiM. If they don't, then don't dream about getting government contracts in future.

"I will ask the treasury to ensure that this

be made a prerequisite to obtain contracts. Our job is to give back to society, and I want them to do that."

Najib also said SLiM had opened doors to over 99,000 graduates to obtain jobs since its inception in 2011.

Yesterday's event was attended by some 40,000 visitors, with about 25,000 jobs being offered by over 100 companies.