

**Safety Measures Taken Before Aid Mission To Somalia - Anifah
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PETALING JAYA, Sept 4 (Bernama) -- Wisma Putra had sent a team of officials to look into safety measures in Somalia before the Kelab Putera 1Malaysia humanitarian aid mission went there, said Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman.

He said Malaysian Ambassador to Libya, Datuk Zulkifli Yaacob, had also gone to Somalia and made the necessary arrangements for the mission.

"We needed to be very certain that the country we were going to, provided ample and satisfactory protection, which they did, but this is one of those unexpected things," he told reporters after joining the family of slain BernamaTV cameraman Noramfaizul Mohd Nor for the arrival of the journalist's remains from Mogadishu at the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) base in Subang near here Sunday.

Noramfaizul, 39, was killed on Friday after he was hit by a stray bullet while travelling in a four-wheel-drive vehicle with other Malaysian media personnel covering the humanitarian aid mission to Somalia.

Anifah said Wisma Putra normally assisted local humanitarian aid missions in conducting ground and safety assessments of the country which they headed to.

Although it was not compulsory for Malaysian missions abroad to submit reports to the ministry, they however, would normally submit detailed assessments to the ministry, he said.

"After obtaining the information, we will help in getting assistance from the host country of the mission. We will assist them in the best way we can," he said.

Anifah said however, the decision to proceed with any mission depended on the organisers as they were well aware of the high risks involved.

In a warring zone, anything could happen, no matter how much protection one took, he added.

Anifah also hoped the Somali Government, which had promised to come up with a thorough investigation into the fatal incident, would furnish him the report as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, RMAF operations chief Lieutenant-Colonel Zahani Zainal Abidin, who piloted the C-103 to fly the humanitarian mission team back to Malaysia, said due to the unstable situation in Somalia, there was a need to expedite the process of sending and flying back members of the mission.

He said, bringing back the team and Noramfaizul's remains took just 30 minutes as the aircraft engines were not shut off to enable quick departure.

"Within 30 minutes, we were able to load a temporary coffin containing the remains inside the aircraft, in the flight to the Seychelles," he told reporters.

Zahani said that earlier, they were in the Seychelles when they were informed about

Noramfaizul's death. They quickly made preparations to bring home his remains by renting a temporary coffin to be taken to Mogadishu.

In Seychelles, Noramfaizul's body was put in another coffin for the trip home, he added.

Zahani said the RMAF flight operation team comprised two sets of flight crew, a set of maintenance crew and security team, totalling 25 personnel.

Based on the fact that they were flying and landing in a conflict zone, he said they could not take a similar risk as in other disaster areas which they had visited.

The preliminary planning they had made, based on intelligence information, was to deliver the mission's team members in Mogadishu, and then retreat to a safer location.

"And, in this mission, we stayed in Seychelles because maintenance support was available.

"We minimised our time on land in Mogadishu. When we landed, we just opened the ramp door and off-loaded everyone," said Zahani, adding that they would not enter Somalian air space at night because of navigational problems.

On the atmosphere in the aircraft, he said: "They were quite cheerful when they flew out. The mood was a bit low, coming back, as we had Noramfaizul's remains on board.

"Nevertheless, morale was still high."

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