

Malaysians In North Korea Safe - Reezal Merican

KUALA LUMPUR, March 13 (Bernama) -- All the nine Malaysians in North Korea are safe and free to move about within that country, said Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Reezal Merican Naina Merican.

He said they were reachable and that the Malaysian government had been in touch with them.

"They (the Malaysians in North Korea) are not in any state of fear. Do not worry, there is no reason to be afraid, what is important is that they are in a very safe situation," he said to reporters at the Parliament lobby today.

Reezal Merican was asked on the latest developments pertaining to the nine Malaysians remaining in Pyongyang and unable to leave that country under a temporary ban imposed by North Korea.

Last Tuesday, North Korea barred Malaysians from leaving the country, which led to Malaysia reciprocating and disallowing North Korean citizens in Malaysia from leaving the country.

The diplomatic row erupted between Malaysia and North Korea following disagreement on several matters in the wake of the murder of Kim Jong-nam, the estranged half-brother of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, at KL International Airport 2 on Feb 13.

Asked about the two Malaysians serving under the United Nation's World Food Programme who were allowed to leave Pyongyang for Beijing last Thursday, Reezal Merican said they would stay in Beijing for the time being.

"They are still in Beijing. They are serving under a UN programme," he said, adding that there were no plans for their return to Malaysia yet.

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