

'Kim Chol' Died Of A Heart Attack, Not Poisoned Says North Korea

KUALA LUMPUR, March 2 (Bernama) -- In a new twist of events, North Korea maintained its stand that its citizen, Kim Chol, had died of a heart attack and not poisoned as claimed.

The North Korean Embassy's official spokesperson Ri Tong-il rejected claims that the deceased died of a chemical substance called the VX Nerve Agent, saying the victim did not take precaution despite his health problems.

"He has a record of myocardial infection disease and from time to time he had treatment while being hospitalised. He cannot have travelled without the medicine to cure the heart disease. "While a post mortem was being conducted on the victim to determine the cause of death, medicine related to heart disease were found in the belongings of the victim.

"Therefore this is the strong indication that he suffered a heart attack," he said during a press conference held at the embassy, here today.

He also identified the deceased as Kim Chol and not Kim Jong-nam, the estranged half-brother of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un.

However, on Feb 21, Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah had said there was no evidence of a heart attack.

Meanwhile, Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar ruled that Kim Chol was killed using the highly toxic liquid nerve agent VX following a preliminary analysis of swabs taken from the face and eyes of the victim.

Due to the North Korean government's claim that the victim died of a heart attack, they now demand the samples of chemicals used in the murder to be handed over to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

The demand was made as the North Korean government wants the OPCW to verify the substance of the chemical used in the killing of the victim.

According to him if it is proved by the international laboratory that the substance was indeed VX Nerve Agent, then the organisation should identify the country responsible for producing the chemical.

The VX (S2 ethyl diisopropylamino methylphosphonothioate) is a toxic substance that has no known uses except in chemical warfare.

It was reported that Kim Chol was at klia2 on Feb 13 to board a flight to Macau when two women allegedly wiped his face with toxic liquid which was later identified as 'VX' nerve agent.

Kim Chol, reportedly sought help at a customer service counter in the airport and was rushed to the Putrajaya Hospital but died on the way.

He had arrived in Malaysia on Feb 6.

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Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/newsindex.php?id=1334360>