

Malaysia Recalls Ambassador To North Korea, Summons Pyongyang's Envoy Over Jong-nam's Death

PUTRAJAYA, Feb 20 (Bernama) -- Malaysia Monday recalled its ambassador to North Korea for consultations and summoned Pyongyang's envoy to Kuala Lumpur over remarks the latter had made on the killing of Kim Jong-nam, elder half-brother of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, in Malaysia.

The Foreign Ministry disclosed this in a statement released today.

It said North Korean Ambassador to Malaysia Kang Chol was summoned to Wisma Putra for an explanation over his allegations against Malaysia pertaining to the death of Jong-nam.

Wisma Putra said in the statement that Kang Chol met with the ministry's deputy secretary-general (bilateral affairs) Raja Nushirwan Zainal Abidin for about 30 minutes over the allegations he had made at a press conference last Friday.

Kang Chol had reportedly portrayed that the Malaysian government had a hidden agenda and that it had colluded with external powers in handling the death of Jong-nam on Feb 13.

Jong-nam was at KL International Airport 2 (klia2) at 8am on Feb 13 to board a flight to Macau an hour later when a woman suddenly covered his face with a cloth laced with what is believed to be poison.

Jong-nam sought help at a customer service counter at klia2 and was rushed to the Putrajaya Hospital but died on the way. He had come to Malaysia on Feb 6 and carried a passport with the name of Kim Chol.

Police have so far arrested four people - two women, one bearing an Indonesian passport and the other a Vietnamese passport; a Malaysian and a North Korean - over the killing.

The Wisma Putra statement said: "The Malaysian Government regards as unfounded the criticisms made by the North Korean ambassador.

"The Malaysian Government takes a serious view of all the accusations made aimed at tarnishing the country's reputation."

Wisma Putra said that as the death occurred in Malaysia under suspicious circumstances, it is the responsibility of the Malaysian Government to conduct an investigation to determine the cause of death.

It said the investigation was conducted in accordance with procedures laid down under the laws of Malaysia.

The Embassy of North Korea was also informed that the death was classified as sudden death and that an autopsy had to be conducted," it said.

"The Malaysian Government is carrying out a transparent investigation. The embassy will also be informed of developments related to the investigation and the process involved under the laws of Malaysia," it added.

Wisma Putra said the embassy had been informed that as soon as the investigation had been completed, Jong-nam's body would be handed over to the next-of-kin in accordance with Malaysian laws and procedure.

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