

'Let us complete probe first'

Zahid: We'll talk to N. Korea after investigation into murder is over

The Star - 1/3/17 (pgs. 4)

BANGI: Malaysia will look at North Korea's demand for Kim Jong-nam's body only after police have completed their investigation and the courts have completed their proceedings, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

"Our legal system should be respected and we can only look at their demands if all procedures are completed conclusively," said Dr Ahmad Zahid, who is also Home Minister.

He said Malaysia was willing to share information, including information on the deadly VX chemical detected in Kim Jong-nam with international intelligence bodies and the United Nations but only after the court proceedings.



Information on the DNA, forensic, chemistry and high definition CCTV reports could be shared through mutual legal agreement if international intelligence bodies make a request.

"We will share the information with international intelligence bodies and it can be used by the United Nations after the procedures are completed," Dr Ahmad Zahid told a press conference after the closing

ceremony of the Islamic Negotiation Council Meeting here yesterday.

On Monday, British Permanent Representative to the UN Matthew Rycroft said information on the Feb 13 attack at KLIA 2 should be sent to the Hague-based Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Malaysia is a signatory to the Chemical Weapons Convention, which seeks to eliminate the use of toxic agents.

Dr Ahmad Zahid said the police also suspected that the North Koreans had planned the operation two months before the actual killing.

Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar said police were more than willing to share

evidence of the lethal VX nerve agent if Wisma Putra gives the go-ahead.

"Our investigation into the murder is transparent and thorough, so there is no reason for us not to share information on the VX nerve agent," said Khalid when contacted yesterday.

On another matter, the IGP said the North Korean embassy second secretary Hyon Kwang-song, 44, Air Koryo employee Kim Uk-il, 37, and Ri Ji-u, 30, also known as James have yet to come forward to assist their investigations.



No sign of illness in two suspects:

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Explaining the situation: Ri (left) addressing the media at the North Korean Embassy in Jalan Batai, Damansara. — RAYMOND OOI/The Star



Pyongyang delegation here on a mission

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KUALA LUMPUR: A high-level North Korean delegation has arrived with three objectives – retrieve the body of Kim Jong-nam, secure the release of a citizen from police custody, and develop friendly relations with Malaysia.

The approach taken by the delegation is a far cry from the harsh stand of North Korean ambassador to Malaysia Kang Chol two weeks ago.

Kang Chol had claimed that the police investigation into the murder of “a North Korean citizen” at KLIA2 could not be trusted and alleged that Malaysia was colluding with Pyongyang’s enemies. North Korea has refused to acknowledge the identity of the victim.

A spokesman for the delegation, former North Korean ambassador to the United Nations Ri Tong-il, said it was seeking the release of the body from Malaysian authorities.

“We will also be discussing the release of a citizen who was arrested by Malaysian police in connection with the incident.

“The development of friendly relations between North Korea and the Malaysian Government will also be discussed,” he said, reading out a statement at the North Korean Embassy yesterday.

When asked by the media whether the embassy’s second secretary, Hyon Kwang-song, 44, has been interviewed by police, Ri did not

answer and walked away.

Jong-nam, the estranged half-brother of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, was killed at KLIA2 on Feb 13.

Police arrested four suspects – Vietnamese Doan Thi Huong, Indonesian Siti Aishah, North Korean Ri Jong-chol, 47, and Malaysian Muhammad Farid Jalaluddin. The local man has been released on police bail.

Three others are being sought to assist in the investigation. They are Hyon, Air Koryo employee Kim Uk-il, 37, and Ri Ji-u, 30, who is also known as James.

Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohamad Apandi Ali confirmed

yesterday that the two female suspects – Thi Huong and Siti Aisyah – will be charged at the Sepang Sessions Court today.

The women are alleged to have administered the VX nerve agent that killed Jong-nam.

Thi Huong was arrested on Feb 15 as she tried to catch a flight to Vietnam while Siti Aisyah was nabbed the next day. Their remand expires today.

Apandi said police were still investigating Jong-chol.

Watch the video
thestartv.com

