



Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Akademi Al-Quran-Medic Malaysia chairman, Prof Dr Razali Nawawi (left), at the Malaysian Institute of Islamic Training in Bangi yesterday. PIC BY ROSELA ISMAIL

PYONGYANG'S DEMANDS

NGT - 1/3/2017 (pg. 10).

**RESPECT OUR
LEGAL SYSTEM,
N. KOREA TOLD**

Pyongyang's requests will be entertained once probe is over, says Zahid

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THE government yesterday shot down Pyongyang's requests to surrender the remains of Kim Jong-nam and release a North Korean man in police custody.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said North Korea should respect Malaysia's legal system.

"As what the prime minister said before, our country's legal system must be respected.

"We can entertain their requests only when all investigation procedures that are being carried out now reach a conclusive ending," he said at the Malaysian Institute of Islamic Training, here, after launching a forum that discussed education and social issues.

Zahid was responding to statements from former North Korean deputy permanent representative to the United Nations, Ri Tong-il, who is leading a high-level delegation from Pyongyang to hold talks with Malaysia.

On the request from the United Kingdom that Malaysia share ev-

idence and findings of the murder of Jong-nam with the United Nations as it involved the use of the banned nerve agent VX, Zahid said this could be done only after the investigation and legal processes were concluded.

"We can share information from our findings in four aspects of investigations — DNA, forensics, Chemistry Department (tests) and evidence through CCTV. While we are open to sharing information, they also have to respect our legal system which requires all evidence to be kept until the court decides on the case."

Zahid added: "I am not worried about our country's image being affected, especially when the attempt to smear us was done by a country which might have been behind the murder through its agents."

He said the case of two Malaysian-registered companies which a foreign news wire report claimed were working with a North Korean company run by intelligence agents, would be dealt with by the Companies Commission of Malaysia and the Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Ministry.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam said the complete post-mortem examination and toxicology reports conducted on Jong-nam have been submitted to police.

"The only issue we are facing now is to (positively) identify the body. If North Korea brings us the next-of-kin, the process can be expedited," he said.