

KUALA LUMPUR – Malaysia will reopen its embassy in Pyongyang, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has said, suggesting an end to the diplomatic row over the assassination of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un’s half-brother in Kuala Lumpur last year.

“Yes, we will reopen the embassy,” Mahathir said in an interview with the Nikkei Asian Review published on Monday during his trip to Japan.



Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad attends a news conference at Japan National Press Club in Tokyo, Japan June 11, 2018. REUTERS/Issei Kato

Malaysia’s once-close ties with North Korea were severely downgraded after Kim Jong Nam was killed at a Kuala Lumpur airport in February 2017 when two women smeared his face with VX nerve agent, which the United Nations lists as a weapon of mass destruction.

During their trial which is ongoing, the women said they were tricked into believing they were part of a reality show and did not know they were handling poison.

The United States and South Korea have said the murder was orchestrated by Pyongyang.

After Kim Jong Nam’s death, North Korea’s ambassador to Malaysia questioned the credibility of the police probe and insisted he was an ordinary citizen who died of a heart attack.

Malaysia then recalled its ambassador to North Korea, banned its citizens from traveling to the North and canceled visa-free entry for North Koreans.

North Korea retaliated with a travel ban on all Malaysians in Pyongyang, trapping three diplomats and six family members.

They were able to fly out only after Malaysia agreed to hand over Kim Jong Nam’s corpse and send three North Koreans wanted for questioning back to North Korea.

Malaysia’s embassy in Pyongyang has not been staffed since April last year, and the government was considering permanently closing it and moving services to its Beijing

mission.

In the interview published a day before the Singapore summit between Kim Jong Un and U.S. President Donald Trump, Mahathir said he hoped both sides were ready to give ground.

“North Korea has a right to have some of its own interests (upheld), as much as the U.S. has its own interests to take care of in any negotiation,” Mahathir said.

“We shouldn’t be skeptical. When you (are suspicious), then you cannot work with people,” he added.

REUTERS

Jung Wook

The Kootneeti Team - Trump Kim Summit

Subscribe to the International Relations Updates by The Kootneeti

* indicates required

Full Name

Email Address *

Subscribe

made with  mailchimp

**CERTIFICATE COURSE IN
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

SIX-WEEK ONLINE COURSE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
BY THE KOOTNEETI

JOIN TODAY!

team@thekootneeti.com
courses.thekootneeti.in
(+91) 120 4565994

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Kootneeti Team

Facebook Comments