



# Media urged to respect families' privacy

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The constant media attention has forced some of the next of kin of Malaysians stranded in North Korea to move to rented houses to protect their privacy.

At a meeting with Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman at the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR), 11 family members of the nine Malaysians barred from leaving North Korea had conveyed their wish for the media to respect

their privacy to Anifah, who then relayed the message to the press.

"Please, the family members have asked not to be disturbed. I'd appreciate it very much.

"Even if you'd asked them, they wouldn't have much information. You can ask us if you want to know the latest updates.

"So, please if you can, leave the family members alone. Let them move on with their lives," he urged media representatives.

Pyongyang reportedly said last week that all Malaysians in North Korea would be barred from leaving the country until the "the incident that happened in Malaysia is properly solved".

The move, seen by many as effectively holding the Malaysians hostage, comes amid an increasingly heated diplomatic row over the killing of Kim Jong-nam on Feb 13.

Two Malaysians — staffers at the United Nations — were able to

fly out of Pyongyang earlier this week using UN passports, leaving nine behind, including three children.

Since then, their family members have come under constant attention from local and foreign media.

The family members at the IDFR did not make any statements to the press. Seated next to Anifah, they nodded gently as the minister told the press to respect their privacy.