



EXPLOSIVES FOUND IN WONSAN AIRPORT AHEAD OF KIM'S INSPECTION

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Explosives found at North Korea's refurbished Kalma International Airport at Wonsan in October caused the cancellation of leader Kim Jong-un's planned inspection of the site, according to a U.S.-based nonprofit international broadcaster, Friday.

Citing a source in Pyongyang, Radio Free Asia (RFA) reported that 100 devices, each weighing 200 grams, were found in the ceiling of an interior counter of the airport on Oct. 6 by security staff, one day ahead of Kim's visit. The explosives are normally used to create tunnels.

At the time, Kim was conducting a series of inspections of buildings and sites constructed to mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of the North's ruling Workers' Party that fell on Oct. 10.

Citing another source, the report said that security staff are still investigating the case.

The source added that the airport is not yet operating normally because the security department has demanded that the site be preserved; not ruling out the possibility that the case may remain active for some time.

The report added that a resident of Wonsan, who only wore underwear, took to the streets and shouted, "Overthrow the Workers' Party," cursing and swearing at Kim, also in early October.

Kalma had been used only for military purposes in the past. Since Kim took power in December 2011, the reclusive state expanded and modernized the airport to make it capable of operating international flights as part of efforts to invigorate tourism in the area.

However, Rep. Joo Ho-young of the ruling Saenuri Party who chairs the National Assembly Intelligence Committee noted that there was a great possibility that the RFA report was untrue, saying "Nothing significant such as the shutdown of the airport was detected around that time."

He added that a number of people visited the airport on Oct. 12, and a relevant video clip was even reported on in the South.

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SOURCE: THE KOREA TIMES

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