

## **A North Korean defector in Hong Kong**

HRWF (28.07.2016) - A North Korean defector has sought refuge at the South Korean consulate in Hong Kong, a local newspaper reported on Thursday (July 28), citing government sources in the city.

The North Korean is understood to be a member of a delegation that attended an - academic competition at a Hong Kong university two weeks ago, the South China Morning Post said, citing government sources in the Chinese-ruled city.

A student who assisted at a maths olympiad held at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) told Reuters the organising committee of the competition asked for help on July 16 to track down an 18-year-old North Korean who had gone missing after the contest.

Security has been stepped up around the South Korean consulate and police have boosted patrols around the area in the city's central business district.

The Chinese government could not arrest or repatriate the asylum seeker because he had already entered the consulate. The defector will probably have to spend a few months at the South Korean consulate before being allowed to head to South Korea as he will need the permission of the Chinese government.

Under Hong Kong's Basic Law, the constitutional document of the territory, China has authority over diplomatic issues.

The South Korean Unification Ministry's website says more than 29,000 North Koreans have defected to the South since the end of the Korean War.