

December 13, 1979

Special Statement by the Minister of National Defense

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Summary:

A special statement issued by the Minister of National Defense of South Korea, regarding the investigation of Chief of Staff Jeong Seung-hwa following President Park Chung Hee's assassination.

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[Retyped Version]

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Dear fellow citizens,

The military, in the process of investigating Kim Jae-gyu - the main culprit in the assassination of the late President Park Chung Hee - and upon discovering a new fact that Kim Jae-gyu had been concealing, had dispatched a military investigative agency to the official residence of the Army Chief of Staff Jeong Seung-hwa at around 7 pm on December 12 to confirm if it was true or not. A minor collision with the security guard at the residence has occurred [during the arrest], but no physical harm has been done to Chief of Staff Jeong and his investigation is underway, with some other generals connected to the incident also undergoing custody investigation.

I myself regret that some generals, including Chief of Staff Jeong Seung-hwa, were included in are being investigated regarding the assassination of the late President Park Chung-hee.

In addition, the gunshot fired at the Ministry of National Defense building at 02:00 on December 13 occurred from a misunderstanding between pre-deployed sentry and martial law army undergoing increased deployment. No casualties have occurred [from the incident].

Although there are some places in the city with increased deployment of the martial law army, rest assured since it is a measure to reinforce the security posture in the metropolitan area.

On December 13, 1979, the government has appointed Army General Lee Hee-sung as the [new] Army Chief of Staff and Martial Law Commander. The military, currently having established a new command system, is making every effort to accomplish [its] mission without the slightest consent.

My fellow citizens,

I apologize for the fact that such an accident has occurred at an important moment when maintaining security and order is needed. However, the government and the military is making every effort to fulfill the expectations of the majority of the citizens hoping for a gradual improvement in political affairs, and request fellow citizens to trust the government and the military without the slightest distrust or unrest and to pay your undivided attention to each of your duties.

December 13, 1979

Minister of National Defense, Noh Jae-hyun