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Canada: We don't discriminate against native peoples

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - The Canadian High Commission here has denied that the Canadian Government had been discriminating against its native peoples.

It also denied refusing to return ancestral lands taken over by white settlers.

In a statement today, Canadian acting High Commissioner Otch von Finckenstein said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement yesterday on Canada appeared to be incomplete and somewhat dated.

"While it is true that in the past there was official discrimination against our native peoples, the Canadian Government eliminated this discrimination long ago.

"Furthermore, we have worked hard in the past few decades to address the broader concerns of our native peoples."

Since then, von Finckenstein said the Canadian Government had made considerable progress in settling many native land claims.

"The most prominent example of such a settlement was the creation this April of the new territory of Nunavut. This vast land, which accounts for one fifth of Canada's land area, is governed by the 25,000 Inuit who live there, as they see fit."

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