



Indigenous Court elders welcome Malaysian visitors

Indigenous Court elders from the Squamish Nation, joined by representatives of the BC Provincial Court and the Ministry of the Attorney General, welcomed Malaysian government officials and community elders on July 3, 2024. A delegation of 27 people from the Malaysian State of Sarawak and the Consulate General of Malaysia visited Vancouver with two goals: to learn about BC's Indigenous Courts and about the province's hydroelectric projects.

To assist with the first goal, the group met with Indigenous Court elders at the North Vancouver courthouse followed by meetings with Associate Chief Judge Susan Wishart and BC's Attorney General Niki Sharma. Court Services Branch staff then led the visitors on a brief tour of the Robson Square Courthouse and Vancouver Law Courts.

Sarawak's Native Courts are engaged in a process of restructuring that will include their organizational structure, staffing, operation and management. As set out in a Master Transformation Plan, the Native Courts will eventually become an independent and autonomous full-fledged judicial institution like Sarawak's Civil Court.

During the visit, Associate Chief Judge Wishart explained to the visitors how the BC Provincial Court's Indigenous courts are developed and how they operate. The Squamish Nation elders outlined some of the circumstances and history of Indigenous people in Canada and their role in the North Vancouver Indigenous Court.

Elder Christine Baker reported that the visitors found it challenging to understand the complex relationships of First Nations and other governments in Canada. She shared that she enjoyed learning about the Sarawak Native Courts and found them "way ahead of ours" in the extent to which they involve their culture, chiefs, and elders in every aspect of adjudication.

The visitors' comments revealed they were impressed with BC courts' open courts and access to justice principles, digital access to court records, innovative use of technology, and by BC's variety of public justice programs and services. They were also interested in our use of the term "healing court" for our Indigenous Courts.

The BC Provincial Court's specialized courts quite often host visitors interested in their work. For information on the Court's Indigenous criminal sentencing courts, Indigenous family court conference and other specialized courts, see the Court's website.

[Indigenous sentencing and specialized criminal courts](#)

Please check the date an article was posted. We do our best to keep our website up to date, but older articles may not reflect current information.

Source URL:

<https://main-bvxea6i-t74dtfugroaqq.ca-1.platformsh.site/news-notice-policies-and-practice-directions/indigenous-court-elders-welcome-malaysian-visitors>