

Yolngu support homelands: Laynhapuy

Traditional Owners from north-east Arnhem Land have spoken out in support of maintaining their homelands on Aboriginal land, following consultations in the Yirrkala community.

The Northern Territory Government is conducting a review over the development of a policy on Aboriginal homelands, also known as outstations.

A consultation process, led by Patrick Dodson, is ongoing, after which a policy will be drafted and further consultation will be carried out before the policy is implemented by the NT Government.

Director of Laynhapuy Homelands Association, Djambawa Marawilli, said Yolngu people wanted to develop their own future, living on their country.

"We want to develop our own future through eco-tourism, job opportunities, busi-

ness opportunities, and education and training in our homelands," Mr Marawilli said.

"Government should recognise us – Traditional Owners living on country."

Mr Marawilli said the identity of Yolngu people comes from the land.

"Our Homelands have stories – you might see this on bark paintings, in our song lines, danced in our dances," he said.

"Our language comes from this land – the history of our land has been handed down generation after generation.

"In our Homeland communities we make sure our children and women are safe, and we don't have the problems of bigger Aboriginal communities."

Mr Marawilli said development of a policy must include provision of housing and support for economic development 'on country'.

BOARDING SCHOOL BOOST FOR INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

The Federal member for Lingiari, Warren Snowdon announced that three Territory boarding schools will receive more than \$900,000 in Federal Government assistance to upgrade their grounds and facilities.

"Yirara College and St Philip's College in Alice Springs will receive \$682,000 and \$165,000 respectively, while Nyangatjara College in Yulara will get \$82,500," said Mr Snowdon.

"This is a terrific boost for

these schools. All three have a strong track record in providing high-quality education to their Indigenous students."

Mr Snowdon said Yirara College will use the funds to refurbish the male and female dormitories and resurface basketball courts.

St Philip's College will construct a reception area for each of the dormitories and Nyangatjara College will construct perimeter fencing and gates to the complex.

Traditional owners decide not to mine Koongarra

Traditional owners in Kakadu have decided to continue a ban on mining at the Koongarra uranium deposit.

The French company Areva wants to mine 14,000 tonnes of uranium at the site that is surrounded by Kakadu National Park.

The deposit sits three kilometres from Nourlangie Rock – a sacred site and major tourist attraction.

At a meeting of stakehold-

ers in Jabiru and Cooida to discuss the future of the deposit, traditional owners decided mining should not go ahead at the site.

Traditional owner Jeffrey Lee is determined for the site to be included into Kakadu National Park.

TOURISM VENTURE UP AND RUNNING



Above: McCormack family members catering at the Youth Media workshop recently. Below: Gloria McCormack

After a year of development and training, the McCormack family at Thakaperte, 45 kms north-west of Alice Springs, have developed partnerships with Discovery Ecotours and Trek Larapinta.

Lucky Miles, a local business specialising in community-based tourism, developed the concept that's led to the deals. The Central Land Council and Tourism NT have provided support to help build relationships between the parties.

"We wanted something for the next generations to do," Stephen McCormack said.

"We want to become independent."

Gloria McCormack said the family wanted to be part of the decision

of what happened on their land.

"It's good for us to be part of the process," she said, "This is our country and we've got to look after it, but we also want to show it to people."

Shane Fewtrell from Trek Larapinta said his arrangement with the McCormacks is more than just a business agreement.

"As a locally-owned business we are endeavouring to provide a greater connection between people and this place," Mr Fewtrell said. "Supporting the McCormacks is a part of this process."

"We are just a modest part of the McCormack's vision for sustainability, but we are an extremely proud participant."

