

LAND RIGHTS NEWS

FREE

July 2020 VOLUME 10. NUMBER 2. CENTRAL AUSTRALIA



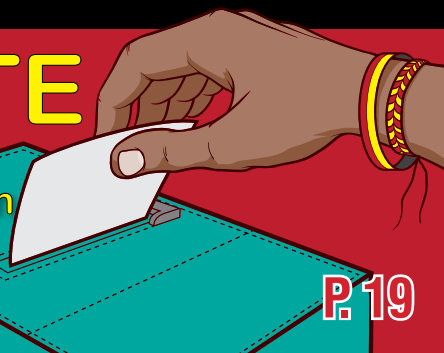
WHAT IS 'CONTAIN AND TEST'?



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Coronavirus: did anything good

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Land Rights News Central Australia is published by the Central Land Council three times a year.

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27 Stuart Hwy
Alice Springs
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tel: 89516211
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Contributions are welcome

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Land Rights News Central Australia subscriptions are \$22 per year.

It is distributed free of charge to Aboriginal organisations and communities in Central Australia.

To subscribe email
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Next publication date:
October 2020

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COVER



Jason King, from Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa) with the health message he painted on a car bonnet. For more messages from the community see p. 7. Photos: Liz Weimers.

CLC MEETINGS

18-20 August 2020
Council
Tennant Creek

27-29 October 2020
Council (TBC)

6-7 August 2020
Executive
Alice Springs

23-24 September 2020
Executive
Alice Springs

EVERYONE has stories about the coronavirus pandemic, most of them not so good.

It separated families, emptied community store shelves, confronted people with sky-high food bills, landed new mums and people with mental health issues in quarantine and revived memories of being locked down in missions and jails.

But what about the positives?

Land Rights News is looking at some of the good things that have also happened and that we may want to keep going.

Now more than ever: Test, test, test!



Quick joint action built trust in Aboriginal organisations

LOCAL and regional Aboriginal organisations led the way in the crisis, working closely with each other and governments to help people to stay safe in their communities and outstations.

In Alice Springs and Tennant Creek, the Julalikari and Tangentyere councils collaborated to transport hundreds of stranded people back home.

Similar efforts were repeated by Aboriginal medical services and peak bodies across the nation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner June Oscar thanked them for their quick action.

"This has been a huge peacetime coordination effort, and we have mobilised quietly and efficiently to move thousands of people out of harm's way," Dr Oscar said.

Many other examples of Aboriginal leadership drove

home the importance of grass-roots decision-making.

The Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yangkuntjatjara Council in South Australia and the Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa) and Atitjere (Harts

Range) communities in Central Australia put up signs to keep out visitors.

Ntaria (Hermannsburg) limited fuel sales at bowsers to ensure community members would not be tempted to travel too far.

Kimberley communities locked their gates, only allowing essential services to enter, and in far north Queensland residents set up roadblocks to keep outsiders

out of their communities. The Central Land Council suspended all non-essential travel to remote communities and cancelled all mineral exploration permits between 16 March and 5 June.

"Australia will view these campaigns as the gold star standard for public health messaging."

It also worked with local service providers to keep people out bush healthy, warm and safe during lockdown, thanks to a \$4 million grant from the Aboriginals Benefit Account.

Nearly a quarter of the grant was spent on winter clothes, bedding, blankets, sleeping bags and mattresses.

The grant also paid for cleaning products that were in short supply in community

stores and for COVID-19 messaging through Aboriginal media.

More than 50 outstations received assistance with urgent electrical and bathroom repairs, new generators and water tanks, so they could cope with additional residents sheltering there.

Engawala, Wunara and Laramba are among the communities that had public WiFi hotspots installed.

The NPY Women's Council used a share of the money to fund weaving workshops to keep up an income for Tjanpi artists in Mutitjulu, Imanpa and Kaltukatjara (Docker River).

The Central Australian Youth Link-up Service delivered recreational programs, family support and food to 25 remote communities, keeping young people busy during lockdown.

Continued p. 3



The CEOs of the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress and the Central Land Council, Donna Ah Chee and Joe Martin-Jard, gave a physically distant press conference about food security on behalf of 40 Aboriginal organisations. Photo: Emma Murray.

come out of the pandemic?



Continued from p. 2

The CLC executive received regular updates from the health experts of the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress and the NT's health department and kept their members informed through social and Aboriginal media. Tangentyere and Central Australian Affordable Housing developed a COVID-19 protection and

management resource for tenancy and housing workers that is being promoted by the Northern Territory's housing department.

Across the country, Aboriginal media and health services, land councils and many other organisations mobilised to get out messages about staying safe in as many ways as possible.

Dr Oscar said they "have

done an incredible job of getting COVID-19 related messages to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in multiple locations and different community languages".

"In years ahead, I am certain that Australia will view these campaigns as the gold star standard for public health messaging. This crisis has once again shown our

resilience and adaptability, the effectiveness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-run organisations and the ability of our communities to come together in times of crisis to achieve great things. We should be rightly proud," she said.

Writing in *The Conversation*, Flinders University researchers concluded that the pandemic response

showed how essential trusted Aboriginal leadership is for successful outcomes for Aboriginal communities.

"This crisis presents a unique opportunity to learn what success looks like in Aboriginal remote community health," Professor Claire Smith and Professor Amanda Kearney wrote.



Ruth Stewart received a bag of warm clothes from Yuendumu's old people's program, courtesy of the CLC's \$4 million ABA grant.

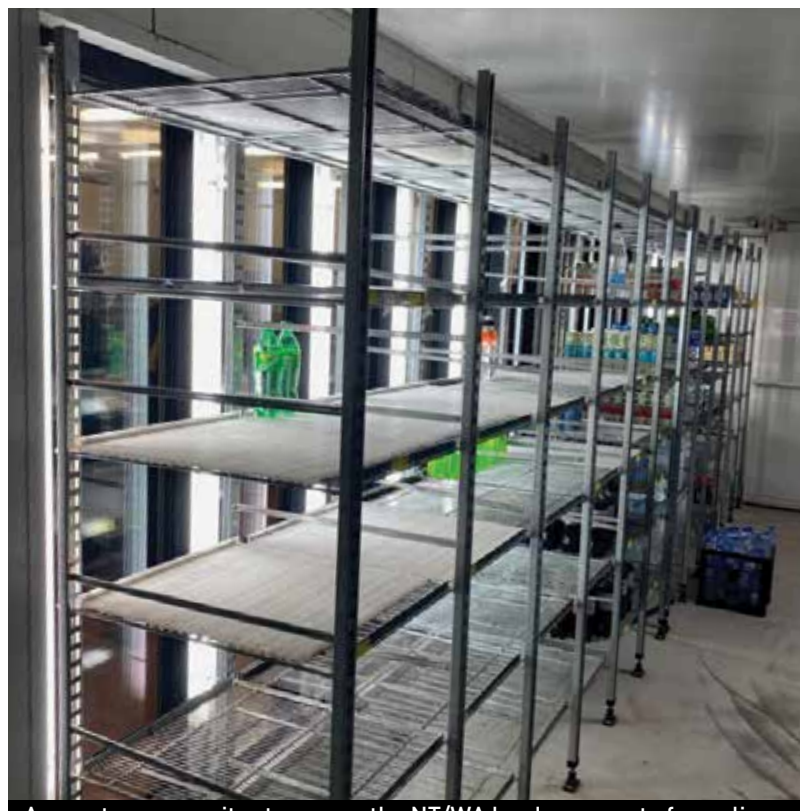


Julalikari's Jennifer Camphoo and Janine Lane and Anyinginyi's Patricia Frank and Melissa Rankin discuss COVID-19 health messages with Tennant Creek resident Melonie Brodie and Norman Frank.



Shirley Turner and Pat Murphy from Nguraminyi outstation near Tennant Creek received some of the 2,300 sleeping bags CLC staff distributed thanks to an ABA grant.

Decision makers pay attention to remote food security



A remote community store near the NT/WA border ran out of supplies.

FRESH FOOD shortages and sky-high prices in remote stores are nothing new but, thanks to intense lobbying by Aboriginal organisations, food security finally became impossible to ignore during the pandemic.

A media campaign by NT Aboriginal organisations that captured international and national attention was followed by media reports that some West Australian families spent more than 93 per cent of their weekly income on food.

Food parcels from charities and companies were welcome, but it quickly became clear that such emergency measures could not replace a lasting solution to a long standing problem.

In May, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced two separate inquiries into remote

community food security.

The Indigenous Affairs Committee's inquiry is now looking into how the government can make remote store prices affordable and ensure food doesn't run out.

Committee chair Julian Leaser said the inquiry will consult with communities and examine "the effect of supply chains and local businesses on the cost of food ... and the role of regulators in dealing with the situation".

The CLC is putting a submission to the inquiry and is pushing for a hearing in Alice Springs.

"We want to see lasting changes that strengthen the viability of community stores and the regional economies that depend on them," the CLC's Josie Douglas told a National Rural Health Alliance

conference in June.

"People need more affordable and better quality food."

Labor Senator Pat Dodson wants the inquiry to not just look into food prices but also the licenses given to Outback Stores, which is owned by the federal government.

"The accountability to the community has to be transparent, beyond a store committee," Senator Dodson said.

Meanwhile, Indigenous Australians Minister Ken Wyatt asked the National Indigenous Australians Agency to collect evidence and report how much a basket of essential goods costs in a sample of remote communities.

The inquiry is due to present its final report at the end of October.

Coronavirus: did anything good

Border closures have kept us safe – until now

ABORIGINAL leaders want the NT borders kept shut until community transmission of COVID-19 has been stopped outside the Territory.

In June, the Central Land Council's executive and Northern Land Council chair Samuel Bush-Blanas called on the NT government to keep the borders with all other jurisdictions closed until this has been achieved, and to reinstate mandatory supervised quarantine. "Chief Minister Michael Gunner should really be talking to the land councils about reopening the border at a later date because of the hotspots in Melbourne and elsewhere," Mr Bush-Blanas said.

"I'm not at all for the borders to open on July 17."

"The safety of Territorians is the main thing," CLC chair Sammy Wilson said.

The two land council chairs told the ABC that the government did not consult them on its border opening plans.

When NT Aboriginal leaders first called for the borders to close, however, the government listened.

The combined Aboriginal Organisations of Alice Springs asked it on March 19 to declare the entire Northern Territory a 'special control area' with closed borders.

A media conference by the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Tangentyere Council, Centre for Appropriate Technology, the Central Land Council and other local organisations headed the nightly news.

"Unlike the rest of the country, the Territory is ahead of the curve," CLC chief executive Joe Martin-Jard said. "We need urgent and drastic action now to keep it that way."

"If we don't act now we will sooner or later end up with



The combined Aboriginal organisations of Alice Springs held a press conference on March 19 to call for the immediate closure of the Northern Territory borders.

the same level of infection as Sydney and Melbourne, only with far fewer hospital beds and other basic health resources to treat our sick."

On March 20, as Darwin recorded the Territory's first two imported corona cases, the Aboriginal Peak Organisations of the NT stepped in.

APO NT wrote to NT Chief Minister Gunner, asking him to declare the Territory a

'special control area'.

"If this virus gets into our communities it will wipe out an entire generation of elders and many, many younger people as well," Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the NT CEO John Paterson said.

"The only way to prevent this is to accept the reality that it is simply not possible to stop remote community residents

from travelling between communities and regional centres and that here in the Territory we are all in this together."

Mr Gunner promptly closed the Territory borders and the federal government declared biosecurity areas over most of the remote regions of northern Australia.

The declaration singled out NT Aboriginal land.

This was a departure from APO NT's "all in this together" approach.

People in the biosecurity areas were told that if they came to the regional towns they depend on for affordable food, groceries and other essentials, they would have to quarantine themselves there for two weeks before they could return home.

The decision effectively shut remote community residents out of the towns while leaving other bush residents, for example station folk, free to move around.

"We were surprised and dismayed about the decision to exempt pastoral leases from the biosecurity areas at the 11th hour," CLC chief executive Joe Martin-Jard said.

"Governments have assured our constituents that they will have everything they need in their communities to stay safe and well during this difficult time. We are holding them to this promise," he said.

"They must monitor the price of key food items in remote community stores and come down hard on any price gouging."

During the first weeks of the lockdowns, before the NT government had organised quarantine in motels and hotels, CLC staff worked long hours to process hundreds of permission letters for remote

community residents.

These letters allowed people to return to their communities after they had shopped or seen the doctor in Alice Springs or Tennant Creek.

Working in shifts, staff also processed permit applications for more than 2,300 essential workers such as remote community nurses, doctors and food delivery drivers.

The declaration of biosecurity areas also meant that people living on outstations close to Alice Springs, such as the Iwupataka Aboriginal Land Trust, could not go to work, buy essentials or seek medical treatment in town without being turned around at police road blocks when they tried to go back home.

The land councils successfully advocated with governments to exclude those outstations, which didn't have their own stores and clinics, from the biosecurity areas.

Those who remained inside the areas longed to escape the empty shelves and high prices in remote community stores.

This prompted the CLC to warn governments on April 2 that many residents would ignore the restrictions and come to town in search of affordable food and warm clothing.

Ten days later, Mr Martin-Jard and Congress' Donna Ah Chee held a media conference on behalf of a coalition of 13 NT Aboriginal organisations during which they called on governments to guarantee affordable food and other essentials out bush.

Daily reports about empty shelves and unaffordable food in remote communities were one of the reasons why many people agreed with the federal government lifting the restrictions on June 5.



Geoffrey Taylor helped remote community residents to apply for permission letters at the CLC.

come out of the pandemic?



A boost for education

TWO-WAY education was an unexpected beneficiary as many families sheltered on outstations and homelands across central and northern Australia.

June Oscar worked remotely from her traditional country near Fitzroy Crossing from April. Dr Oscar fled virus hotspots down south to reduce her own risk but she also wanted to support her grandchildren.

"I needed to be here to help my family readjust to living out bush again," she said.

The Bunuba leader said the children were thriving, learning language and practising culture as they were hunting and fishing with their families.

"Families are doing some very positive activities across the country and communities," she told *The Australian*.

"It's so good for the kids to see their adult relatives in a safe environment."

Aboriginal educators in towns also swung into action to support bush students.

Yirara College in Alice Springs, a boarding school for secondary students from remote communities, made sure students out bush who could not attend school were able to keep learning.

Not all of them have access to reliable internet, computers and mobile devices back home.

"Our staff had to really put their thinking caps on to come up with a plan, and they had to work fast," Yirara College principal Chris England said. The solution was *Yirara2you*, a daily television show on Indigenous Community Television, YouTube and Facebook that first went to air on April 22.

Each episode aired came with a workbook for students to complete their school work remotely.

In addition to literacy and numeracy, the episodes covered vocational courses and work options, life skills and lessons, as well as health and mental wellbeing.

The Girls Academy and Clontarf made sure sport and physical health were also part of *Yirara2you*.

By the end of term two, staff had created 10 weeks' worth of workbooks and planned all of the episodes for the next term.

They mailed packs of workbooks to the students during the term break and made hundreds of phone calls to families and students.

"We also are working with



Daniel Myers and Shane McAuliffe mailed workbooks to Yirara College students. Photo: Paul Imms.



June Oscar felt safe out bush.

some remote schools, like Minyerri, who help with facilities and services and we thank them for that. We are thrilled with the result and very happy that we are able to keep our students engaged and learning during these difficult and uncertain times," Mr England said.

He said the college will continue to make *Yirara2u* episodes until their students are able to return and would use it during future community lockdowns "if it was the best way to reach out to affected communities".



Eli and Johan Oscar with a freshwater sawfish caught on a fishing trip. Photo: June Oscar.



Oscar family members on country near Fitzroy Crossing, where June Oscar is a native title holder. Photo: June Oscar.

A very quiet and healthy time on country

SOME of the most beautiful places in the CLC region were inside the biosecurity areas and the locals were able to visit them for the first time without seeing a single tourist.

Anangu enjoyed rare quiet time around Uluru.

"It's good to be going around to the rock when no-one is around there," Mutitjulu's Verna Wilson told the ABC.

During the April school holidays local organisations took small family groups

into the national park where they had picnics with roo tail and damper and gathered tjala (honey ants) and maku (witchetty grubs).

"I'm enjoying taking kids out and being happy all day, like all day and the next day," Ms Wilson said.

Gathering food and medicine plants made it easier for elders to pass on traditional survival skills.

Gloria Friday, from Borroloola, told *The Conversation*:

"Out bush, you don't have to worry about food in the shops, you can live off your land."

Anne Marie Lee, chair of the Sunrise Health Service board in Barunga, reported seeing more people camping and fishing on country for days at a time.

"It's a real good thing, eating that bush tucker again. People are looking more healthy," she said.



Tristan Cooley, Janelle Taylor, Rosalinda Taylor and Zachariah Cooley at a Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park lookout. Photo: Jess Matteson.

Continues p. 7

Coronavirus: did anything good

'Contain and test': a plan to stop future outbreaks

HEALTH experts warn that as the NT opens its borders the COVID-19 risk will go up because the coronavirus is still spreading in Australia.

Many infections are transmitted by people who don't feel sick, or don't show any symptoms of the virus.

The executive of the

Central Land Council asked the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress what to do if someone who has been in a remote community

for a while catches the coronavirus.

The answer involves the people of a small hilltop town in Northern Italy that stopped the virus.

The NT Public Health Committee and the two big NT land councils have endorsed a strategy based on this successful model, as adapted by Congress.

What happened in Vo?

After recording the first COVID-19 death in Italy, the people of Vo blocked the few roads in and out of their town. Everyone quarantined themselves at home for 14 days and got tested regularly.

At first, more than 80 residents tested positive. Two weeks later there were only eight new people with the virus.

There were no further deaths in Vo even though thousands died in the surrounding areas. The people of Vo were much safer because they stayed in their homes rather than moved out into other surrounding areas.

Nearly half of those who tested positive did not look or feel sick. If those people had left the town they would have spread the virus without even knowing they had it. By staying at home they were diagnosed early and got the treatment they needed in hospital.

Congress and the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the NT have adapted this model for remote communities in the NT and

called it 'contain and test'.

Congress chief executive Donna Ah Chee and chief medical officer Dr John Boffa are confident the plan will also work here.

Ms Ah Chee said it's all about stopping the spread of this highly infectious virus by limiting movement into and out of, as well as inside, a community if there is an outbreak.

"The reason for restricting the movement of people is so we don't spread the virus, because if someone was to move elsewhere, and we don't know whether they have or haven't got it, if they have got it they're going to spread it in another community," she said.

'Contain and test' involves doing lots of tests to find out early if someone has the virus because if there's one case in the community, there are likely to be more undetected cases.

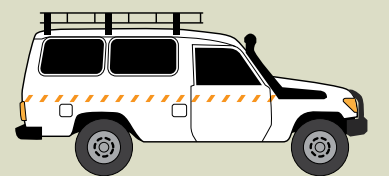
Testing has become much easier with the rollout of rapid 'point-of-care' testing that lets remote clinics find out in under an hour whether someone has the virus.

The four steps of 'contain and test'

1 As soon as someone has tested positive the health workers track all the family members and friends who have been in close contact with the patient. These close contacts are all tested immediately.



2 The patient and any close contacts who test positive travel to the nearest hospital. Close contacts who test negative go to a regional quarantine facility, for example the Ross facility in Alice Springs or a facility closer to the remote community. Old or sick people can choose to go to a facility outside their community for their protection or quarantine with their household.



3 The rest of the community goes into quarantine in their yards and houses. Nobody leaves the community or has contact with people in another yard or house for at least 14 days. Workers will deliver food, fire wood, medicines and other essential items to them while they are in quarantine.



4 Everybody in the community, including all essential workers, is tested every three to five days.

What are people saying about the model?

Remote residents told Congress how hard it is to quarantine safely for 14 days in an overcrowded house, even if there is a yard.

"One of the communities we consulted with suggested that well-designed all-weather tents could also be provided to be set up in people's yards," said Ms Ah Chee.

The problems with the supply of food and other essentials that communities experienced during the lockdown period between late March and early June also need to be solved urgently.

Governments need to

guarantee that people have all the support they need so they don't have any reason to leave their household and community while they are fighting a virus outbreak.

"You can't do this in a half-hearted way," Dr Boffa said.

"It's better for people in the community to stay put because if they do they'll be tested, diagnosed early and they'll get all the support they need."

"Whereas if they leave they may keep going, not knowing they've even got the sickness, and spread it around other communities."

Collaboration with local leaders is the key

Most importantly, Aboriginal and mainstream health services, Aboriginal organisations and governments will need to work effectively with each other, led by local communities.

"It is also a state responsibility to protect its citizens, but it requires local leadership to be involved, to go around and talk to people," said Ms Ah Chee.

"We have buy-in locally, but both governments have to be

on board with this strategy for it to work."

Congress says everyone would need to work together to make this work, including the NT health department, police officers and even the army.

All will be needed to help communities if there is a future virus outbreak.

"We've still got time. It's a decision of governments and the chief health officer," Ms Ah Chee said.



come out of the pandemic?



Continued from p. 5

The border closures, physical distancing and hygiene measures have also been good for people's health.

"People aren't getting colds and flu rates have never been lower," chief health officer at Congress Dr John Boffa said. "People are keeping healthier."

Flu, colds and pneumonia all dropped to historically low levels during the pandemic.

"May and June are usually our health services' busiest time of year, usually they'd be flooded. There's been a huge drop in acute respiratory illnesses," he said.

This means people will not have been weakened by these infectious diseases if COVID-19 does make its way into remote communities.

Health experts are encouraging people to keep up their new habits such as lots of soapy hand washing and sneezing and coughing into tissues or elbows.

That's because the more restrictions are lifted, the greater the risk of catching the virus.



Verna Wilson cooked damper for a picnic in the deserted Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park. Photo: Jowel Hyne.

Good habits such as not touching the face, not sharing drinks and cigarettes and

It's been good," Gloria Friday, from Borroloola, told *The Conversation* news service.

The NT closed pubs and imposed emergency controls on the sale of takeaway alcohol in late March, in a bid to stop people in towns from gathering in groups to drink, ignoring physical distancing rules.

The restrictions allowed bottle shops to refuse to sell grog to people from out of town.

The changes caused the number of people drunkenly injuring themselves and others to fall significantly.

The number of people with alcohol-related injuries at the Alice Springs and Tennant Creek hospital emergency departments dropped by more than 10 per cent in March alone, according to the NT health department.

"You would expect to see another reduction in harm," Dr Boffa said.

The pub closures did not go far enough for the Julalikari

Aboriginal Corporation in Tennant Creek.

"As soon as the pubs were closed, but the bottle shops, they still get alcohol and go and drink in a group," Julalikari chair Linda Turner told the ABC.

takeaway alcohol to prevent excessive drinking during lockdown.

The measure limited each Kimberley resident to no more than one carton of beer or three bottles of wine per day.

Alcohol-related family

"Everyone's just been going out fishing and hunting. It's been good."

"With relaxing of any NT border controls there's more opportunity for the virus to enter NT now and it is deadly, Congress chief executive Donna Ah Chee said.

"It can have a devastating impact on Aboriginal people

staying two big steps apart will also help to keep other nasty bugs away.

Being away from grog and other problems in town may be another reason why many people feel healthier.

"It was good because every-

"Some of us in leadership wish that the bottle shops would have closed as well."

who are much sicker than non-Aboriginal people. We can't let our guard down."

If the virus does enter communities, people will have to remember quickly how to protect each other.

one was abiding by the rules and because they limited the grog sale to six cans a day, everything was quiet and there's been no problems in the town, everyone's just been going out fishing and hunting.

What's your COVID-19 story?

MANY PEOPLE haven't had their voices heard yet.

Learning from those who have been most directly affected is very important.

We need to better understand what worked and why because it is likely that there will be more virus

outbreaks in the future.

That's why the CLC has asked researcher Alyson Wright (right) to prepare a report for the council.

We'd love to hear from you.

Call us on 8951 6210 or 8951 6205.



Coronavirus and Black Lives Matter a wake-up call for Close the Gap

THE CORONAVIRUS pandemic and the Black Lives Matter protests have not only reminded everyone why it is so important to 'close the gap' between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, but also how it can be achieved.

"This crisis has been a wake-up call," Closing the Gap Campaign co-chair and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Commissioner June Oscar said.

"We must now use it as an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to emerge from this crisis with new systems for everything from health, to



CLC deputy chair Barbara Shaw with Pat Turner (right).

housing and the economy."

The pandemic has demonstrated why housing tops the list of reforms.

Where do you isolate yourself when you think you may have COVID-19, but share a house with lots of family members?

Do you "stay at home in your own room", as an NT government flyer advised remote community residents?

"People in our communities have no spare room where they can stay if they are infected," the Central Land

"The Northern Land Council and the Central Land Council, in particular, provided outstanding co-ordinated leadership in the fight against COVID-19."

Council's executive manager of policy and governance, Josie Douglas, said.

"You can't isolate yourself in an overcrowded house."

Pat Turner, chief executive of the Coalition of Peaks and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, said the virus has made solving the remote housing crisis a "highest priority" issue for the Closing the Gap 'refresh'.

"We are determined to fix up housing and reduce the number of our people in jail," she said.

The coalition is negotiating with governments to ensure a new national agreement on remote housing delivers what



people have wanted for years.

Following nationwide Black Lives Matter protests in June, Indigenous Australians Minister Ken Wyatt promised to fast-track targets to reduce the number of Aboriginal people in jail.

Ms Turner told the CLC executive that targets on their own won't change things.

"Targets are just a measure of how well we're doing. They don't change the fundamental relationship so our people have an equal decision making role at every level.

"They need to drive change

"The Northern Land Council and the Central Land Council, in particular, provided outstanding co-ordinated leadership in the fight against COVID-19."

in the culture of government and the way governments work with us."

While COVID-19 and the renewed focus on the incarceration crisis have shone a spotlight on inequality, the

"We are determined to fix up housing and reduce the number of our people in jail."

pandemic has also shown that good collaboration can save lives.

When the NT's land councils campaigned with other Aboriginal community-controlled organisations for

border closures, infection prevention and food security, governments listened.

"The Northern Land Council and the Central Land Council, in particular, provided outstanding co-ordinated leadership in the fight against COVID-19," Flinders University's Professor Claire Smith and Professor Amanda Kearney said.

Writing for *The Conversation* news website, the researchers concluded: "There is a lesson for Australia's efforts to close the gap: trusted Aboriginal leadership is essential for successful outcomes for Aboriginal communities."

However, Dr Oscar said the government's support for the 'return to country' campaign during the pandemic was ironic.

"The belief among policy makers was that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are 'better off' in urban centres. Now we're being told it's easier to keep us safe on country."

She said people returning to country have also felt the effects of "decades of systematic underinvestment

in critical infrastructure".

"We are returning to communities that have not been adequately supported for many years.

"We may be safer from the virus, but in some instances

people have moved back to communities where water and electricity has been cut off," she said.

When "visiting health workers brought COVID-19 into the community" of Halls Creek we saw how replacing investment in local health and social support services with fly-in-fly-out workers can have disastrous consequences.

"We have proven through this crisis that our communities and organisations are capable and able."

Luckily, the community quickly contained the outbreak.

Where local community organisations have used their relationships with governments to protect their people the spread of the virus has been controlled.

Ms Turner said those successes need to be replicated at a national level.

"The absence of a national policy platform for governments to work with us - to address the inequities that too many of our people face - is stark," she told NITV.

Dr Oscar said the mistakes of the past must not be allowed to continue.

"We cannot emerge from this crisis still living under these failed systems that do not take our needs into account. Returning to a norm that was never acceptable to begin with is not an option".

She argued for a rethink in how governments invest in the "health, social and cultural

infrastructure that enables us to thrive wherever we choose to live".

This was overdue because "we cannot continue indefinitely to create solutions inside a system that has not been designed for our needs".

"We need to involve our communities and organisations in co-designing new systems and infrastructure

that work for us," she said.

"We have proven through this crisis that our communities and organisations are capable and able.

"If we get this right, we can create systems that enable us to close the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples once and for all, so we are never at risk like this again."

Ms Turner said the new national agreement on closing the gap "is not perfect".

"It's been a battle. We still have some issues with it".

One disappointment is that governments are refusing to back it with new funding.

Despite this, Ms Turner hopes the agreement will be signed before the end of July "so we can influence [governments] in the long term".

It remains to be seen whether governments will change how they work with Aboriginal organisations and give communities more power to manage their own affairs.



Pandemic response has lessons for Uluru Statement

FOR ABORIGINAL leaders, the third anniversary of the Uluru Statement from the Heart is the right time to heed the lessons of the coronavirus pandemic.

“This virus is helping us all to think about what’s really important and now, more than ever, is the time to connect with and to understand and trust each other,” Central

telling and a constitutionally enshrined voice to parliament

In January this year, Prime Minister Scott Morrison promised to address the form of the voice and a referendum following a design phase.

Then the virus hit and the rock and its owners found themselves in a biosecurity area for more than three months.

“Anangu piranpa munu maru tjungu ringama, tjungu ngarama (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people come together and stand united).”

Land Council chair Sammy Wilson said.

“The Uluru Statement is for us all. Anangu piranpa munu maru tjungu ringama, tjungu ngarama (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people come together and stand united).”

Mr Wilson was one of the representatives of the Anangu traditional owners of Uluru who signed off on the statement’s three demands in May 2017: treaty, truth

During this time the nation demonstrated “what we can achieve when governments listen to and work in partnership with each other and Aboriginal leaders”, CLC chief executive Joe Martin-Jard suggested.

“When protecting remote residents from the virus the CLC and local communities have demonstrated that a grassroots voice works,” he said.



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“Now is the time to move forward on this and let Australians have their say.”

For Mr Wilson, the statement had been a long time coming.

“To me it’s 250 years that

we’ve been trying to come together in this nation,” he said.

“For three years now the statement has been travelling around to tell the story and join other Australian voices

together,” he said.

“If we have a voice to parliament you will see we’re not trying to take over, but work together to protect this country for a better future for everyone.”

‘Recognition’ referendum delayed

CORONAVIRUS has highlighted the need for a First Nations voice to parliament at the same time as the virus is being blamed for the lack of progress on constitutional change.

Indigenous Australians Minister Ken Wyatt said the crisis is the reason a referendum will be delayed.

“COVID-19 has presented many challenges, unfortunately a referendum is unlikely during this term of government,” Mr Wyatt told *The Guardian* in May.

Days later he said he was optimistic about a referendum before the 2022 federal election before telling *The Australian* that this was “unlikely”.

with this issue because there have been so many mixed messages,” Linda Burney told the ABC.

Last year, Mr Wyatt asked a handpicked group to develop a consensus model of the voice entity, ahead of a referendum by mid-2021.

In June he told *The Australian* that he was “confident that options for an indigenous voice will be presented to the government by November”.

Labor leader Anthony Albanese said the government had already been behind schedule before the back-to-back crises of bushfires and coronavirus.

“They had said we could expect something by the

speech to parliament in January, Mr Morrison indicated that the referendum will come after the voice entity has been designed.

“Unfortunately, the referendum is unlikely during this term of government.”

“The design of this voice does not foreclose on constitutional enshrinement,” constitutional lawyer, and one of the Uluru Statement’s signatories, Megan Davis, said.

Professor Davis and fellow signatories Pat Anderson and Noel Pearson have warned that many Aboriginal people will oppose any constitutional change that does not include a voice to parliament.

“Anything other than a constitutionally enshrined voice will not be supported,” the group told *The Australian*.

The group said “symbolic change to the constitution is not supported by Australians and will fail at a referendum.

“Mere symbolism has been rejected by our communities time and time again,” Professor Davis told *The Conversation*.

She said coronavirus has shown that a constitutionally enshrined voice is more

important than ever.

With the power of Aboriginal leaders to achieve positive outcomes on full display during the pandemic,

Professor Davis has called the advocacy of the land

system in Australia limits this self-determination.

“Adjustments to the current structures such as the partnership agreement between the Commonwealth and indigenous peak bodies ... will only get us so far in closing the gap,” she said.

“The real power lies in structural change.”

“The Uluru process decided that a voice to parliament was the best way to embody that structural power so

“Symbolic change to the constitution is not supported by Australians and will fail at a referendum.”

councils and community-controlled health services “self-determination in action”.

However, the crisis has also shown how the political

the grassroots voices of the First Nations entity can be directly represented to the lawmakers and policymakers in Canberra.”

“I am totally confused on where the government is at with this issue because there have been so many mixed messages.”

His Labor counterpart has asked the prime minister to clarify “whether or not there’s going to be a referendum and what it’s going to be about” and the government’s position on the voice.

“I am totally confused on where the government is at

end of last year in terms of a proposal,” he said during Reconciliation Week.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison has made progress on a referendum dependent on agreement on the model for the voice.














In his Closing the Gap

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NT ELECTIONS - Who will get your vote?

Land Rights News asked the candidates of the NT's main parties about their policies for the August election					
<div>★ At the time of printing some parties were yet to nominate candidates</div> <div>YOUTH JUSTICE</div> <div>Will you raise the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 14 years?</div>	<div><div>Chansey Paech</div><div>Gwoja</div></div> <div><div>Sheralee Taylor</div><div>Namatjira</div></div> <div><div>Sid Vashist</div><div>Barkly</div></div> <div>Australian Labor Party (ALP)</div>	<div><div>Matt Paterson</div><div>Namatjira</div></div> <div><div>Gwoja</div></div> <div><div>Barkly</div></div> <div>Territory Alliance</div>	<div><div>Phillip Alice</div><div>Gwoja</div></div> <div><div>Japanangka</div><div>Gwoja</div></div> <div><div>Bill Yann</div><div>Namatjira</div></div> <div><div>Steven Edgington</div><div>Barkly</div></div> <div>Country Liberal Party (CLP)</div>	<div><div>Gwoja</div></div> <div><div>Namatjira</div></div> <div><div>Barkly</div></div> <div>The Greens</div>	<div>GLOBAL HEATING</div> <div>Will you make a law to stop climate change so that Aboriginal people can survive in the bush – a law that cuts carbon emissions to zero by 2050, with 5 year targets?</div>

<p><u>WATER</u></p> <p>What will you do to guarantee enough safe water for people out bush?</p>	<p>Water for people, families and communities must come first.</p> <p>Labor has a strong record of protecting our water resources so communities get reliable drinking water.</p> <p>We are investing more money to make sure bush communities have access to safe and clean water.</p> <p>There is more to do and we have plans in place. We will continue to invest more on water, and also work with communities to make sure we don't waste water.</p> <p>We are also investing in water services as part of the Remote Housing Investment Package which is delivering new and improved houses right across the Territory.</p>	<p>Territory Alliance hold the view that access to clean safe drinking water are foundations of a civilised society. We will work hard to deliver World Health Organisation quality of drinking water to make it safe for people to drink.</p>	<p>Every community is different but every community needs safe, secure and reliable drinking water. The CLP will utilise technology to ensure access to clean drinking water where it is not easily available. There are machines that can turn salty water into drinking water and others that can turn humid air into water that need to be explored.</p>	<p>NT Greens will legislate a right to drinking water in the NT.</p> <p>Essential services will be available to all communities, outstations and town camps, driven by investment in renewable energy solutions.</p>
<p><u>EDUCATION</u></p> <p>What will you do to fix education out bush?</p>	<p>We have put extra funding and extra teachers back into bush schools across the Territory.</p> <p>We are establishing Local Engagement and Decision-making Committees (LEaD Committees) and Community Led Schools to decide how education should be delivered in your communities.</p> <p>We will continue to establish more Families as First Teachers (FaFT) programs and language and culture programs in schools.</p> <p>A good house means a good education for kids. The Territory Labor Government's biggest-ever project - a \$2.1 billion investment in remote housing and land servicing – has so far seen the construction and upgrade of around 1800 homes in remote areas across the NT.</p>	<p>Territory Alliance believes we need more support for First Nations languages and to provide support for Aboriginal staff to become teachers, as well as providing further in-classroom support and to improve school buildings.</p>	<p>The CLP knows young people are our future and those who live in regional and remote areas of the Northern Territory should have the opportunity for a first class education. We will focus on improving student wellbeing, increasing attendance and engagement, and attracting and training quality teachers and assistant teachers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinstate the multilingual programs that were in place in the NT from 1973-2008, ensure the growth of further multilingual school programs where English is not a first language for the majority of students. Implement further multilingual opportunities for all Indigenous students in all government schools. Establish a dedicated Multilingual Education Work Unit in the NT Department of Education, to coordinate the development of resources for multilingual programs and support schools in the implementation of their programs. Support independent schools to develop and implement multilingual programs, while ensuring that the control of their implementation remains with the communities.
<p><u>BUDGET</u></p> <p>How will you ensure every dollar Canberra gives you for our mob is spent on the bush, not Darwin, and how will you prove it to us?</p>	<p>Since coming to Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have rolled out a \$1.1 billion remote housing program We have delivered over \$332 million of better bush roads We have invested in better schools and health clinics, and more police We have tackled itinerancy and anti-social behaviour We have delivered the Territory's first coordinated alcohol plan We are restoring local decision making in housing, health and education. <p>Territory Government expenditure on Aboriginal Territorians is, per capita, more than double that for non-Aboriginal Territorians.</p> <p>Our expenditure on Aboriginal Territorians exceeds 52% each year despite being one-third of the population.</p>	<p>Territory Alliance will work with Canberra to bring more money to the bush to meet the big needs to improve housing, health, roads, education and jobs.</p>	<p>The CLP believes the Northern Territory Government, the Commonwealth and service providers should work together to make sure that funding for Aboriginal communities is actually spent for the benefit of Aboriginal people.</p>	<p>Successive governments have diverted federal funding allocated on the basis of remote need to pork-barrel major population centres.</p> <p>In this way, mainstream suburban electorates have gorged on the deficit of unmet need in remote communities.</p> <p>All federal funding based on the needs of remote communities must be spent in those communities.</p> <p>The NT Greens will pursue empowerment of local Community Government Councils to rebuild community capacity to resume control of local service provision and replace the failed shires model. Reviving the status of local decision-making power and governance must be tailored to each community's vision, ambitions, capacity and needs.</p>

Young women switch off screens to reconnect with grandmothers' law

GETTING younger women away from their screens and into the bush where they can reconnect with their grandmothers' law has long been close to Barbara Petrick's heart.

It's why the Altarlpilta Ineleye ranger is glad she got to treat the young women of Atitjere to their annual 'cultural knowledge camp' before the coronavirus pandemic put a stop to organised bush trips.

"We're teaching them in two cultures how to look after themselves and their families," Ms Petrick said. "What bush medicines they can use for what sickness, which plant is good for what."

In October, the CLC ranger and traditional owner and local elders joined forces with Lily Alexander, from Children's Ground, to set up camp at Unpaeyekhen, a camp ground south of Atitjere at Spotted Tiger outstation.

"Everyone was so excited. The girls recorded everything on our cameras and helped prepare a veggie stir fry in the wok over the coals," Ms Petrick said. "The magical sunset that first night gave us a beautiful healing feeling."

The next morning they collected local gem stones while staying safe around lizards and snakes.

"You have to know the Dreamtime stories of these animals as well as the danger."

The girls learned how to recognise snake tracks and looked the local species up in reference books.

But there were no modern shortcuts when it came to making *ilpengkwe*, a rubbing medicine made from a local *eremophila* bush with white

blossoms that treats coughs, colds, sores and is used for massage.

"It doesn't grow anywhere else, just in one area," Ms Petrick explained.

She said that the medicine can only be harvested with traditional owner permission and that plant monitoring and sustainable harvesting are all part of the lesson.

"We teach them about over-harvesting. We don't want them to go back and harvest the same little plant all the time because it's not going to help it grow back."

First, they collected fresh *ilpengkwe* shoots in the surrounding hills, then they ground the leaves and tender stalks with traditional grinding stones before boiling them up in tin drums with dripping.

"While we were making the medicine we were telling the girls stories about keeping healthy, safe and strong," Ms Petrick added.

The girls filled about 100 takeaway containers with the medicine to give away.

"We decided not to sell them. We are teaching the girls that sharing and caring is in our culture because a lot of the kids are forgetting about it," Ms Petrick said. "Caring for the elders and our young ones."

She said the activity also taught them to look after the precious water in the desert and to instil a love for "our land, our culture and our children. They are the next generation to carry on our work with pride. We are so proud of our young leaders".

The next camp will be organised when the federal government lifts the biosecurity area restrictions.



Lariza Bird, Jacina Webb, Barbara Petrick and Latanni White used grindstones to prepare *ilpengkwe*.



Sophina Mill, Sally Perkins and Richelle Webb filled around 100 containers with the bush medicine.



"Sharing and caring is in our culture." Elders and girls from Atitjere decided to give away the bush medicine.

A job bigger than the classroom

YUENDUMU'S newest assistant principal, Yamurna Oldfield, has many reasons to celebrate.

Not only has she been teaching in Warlpiri and English for 30 years, her job has always been bigger than her classroom.

Yamurna's tireless advocacy for bicultural education has paid off, with the relaunch of a successful remote Aboriginal teacher training program planned for April 2021.

"I'm happy and proud to be an assistant principal,"

"We really want our people to keep working in our schools, we don't want to be the last ones," she said.

"I want to see our young people take over from me when I retire."

Earlier this year the Northern Territory government finally came good on its 2016 election promise to re-establish RATE.

It's one of the reasons Ms Oldfield is no longer fearful for the next generation of Yapa. In fact, she reckons they will have it a lot easier.

"I tell them what books to read and what to do. They have it easier than we did, we didn't have anyone before us to look to."

Ms Oldfield said about her new role, which puts her in charge of Warlpiri language and cultural activities.

"I talk to students in Warlpiri and explain why they come to school. They come here to learn, not to bully other kids."

"School is a really good place, a safe place. I take them hunting and tell them stories, what country we go to, I tell them (the right) story."

Ms Oldfield started her career producing bilingual resources for the school.

She went on to work as an assistant teacher and gained her Diploma of Education in 1997 through the Remote Aboriginal Teacher Education (RATE) program.

The program provided pathways for remote community residents to pursue jobs in early childhood and primary education, and take the next steps into high school teaching.

Before RATE, remote schools were full of non-Aboriginal teachers from interstate on short-term stints.

Aboriginal women made up the majority of teaching assistants and had no clear professional development opportunities.

The benefits of having bilingual teaching staff for young Warlpiri students was obvious.

"We wanted to make it more comfortable for the kids," Ms Oldfield said.

Despite its success at producing qualified Aboriginal teachers, RATE was axed in the late 90s, leaving her and her colleagues with a broken legacy, but determined they would not be the last bilingual teachers.

"I've got my granddaughter, she's studying teaching online," she said.

"It will be easier for her than it was for me. She can stay here in Yuendumu with her two kids. We had to go for training for weeks far away", she said.

"I am mentoring, I tell them what books to read and what to do. They have it easier than we did, we didn't have anyone before us to look to."

Ms Oldfield is a founder of the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust, an initiative that kicked off the Central Land Council's community development program, and her dedication has attracted much praise.

"She has worked tirelessly alongside other Warlpiri educators since 2005 to set up the trust and oversee its investment of more than \$32 million of royalty income in projects in Yuendumu, Lajamanu, Nyirrpri and Willowra," senior community development officer at the CLC, Louise Stanley, said.

Diana Edgar, a teacher linguist at the Yuendumu school, said Ms Oldfield believes in education and cultural survival.

"She brings a balanced view to most situations that is helpful to all," Ms Edgar said.

Ms Oldfield said turning up to teach every day gave her the experience she needed to become assistant principal.

"I know everything about how kids feel."

She also knows the value of her work.

"I want to show that Yapa can do anything and that education is the key," she said.

"We want our kids to have a good education so they can get good jobs in the future."



Assistant principal Yamurna Oldfield has been lobbying for better remote Aboriginal teacher training.

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Working together on climate solutions

NORMAN FRANK got some laughs as he recalled staring at a large thermometer in the main drag of Tennant Creek that was “sitting at 49 degrees” one afternoon last December.

“We were waiting for it to tick over to 50,” he told a ‘climate solutions forum’ in Alice Springs three months later.

It was one of the lighter moments during an urgent discussion about our collective survival.

More than 100 elders, scientists and grass roots activists gathered in early March for talks about stopping the global heating that’s threatening Territory communities.

In Alice Springs the number of days of temperatures above 40 degrees could increase from 14 per year to up to 52 per year by 2030, forum participants heard from the Australia Institute’s Mark Ogge.

Mr Ogge said today’s residents could expect up to 129 such days per year if greenhouse gas emissions continue to climb.

It wasn’t what Mr Frank wanted to hear.

Weeks of temperatures of more than 45 degrees during the Christmas period saw kids roaming the streets in the relative cool of night and “no water for four years” had taken a toll on Warumungu country.

“Everything dried up, all my traditional waterholes, the main places we used to visit are all bone dry,” he said.

“Last two years we’ve been listening for the birds. Usually they wake you up. There’s nothing out there.”

“All the birds and animals were in town because there’s no water out bush.”

Further north, Frank

Shadforth, the owner of Seven Emu Station near Borroloola, has watched the climate change over half a century.

“We have a bird we call storm bird. He comes in over the river and tells you rain is coming, the first storm. When he goes back he takes the rain

don’t look after the country it goes *jewhwa* (sour) and gets bad,” Mr Shadforth said.

The chief medical officer of Congress, Dr John Boffa, told the seminar that global heating destroys animal habitats.

This is making it easier



Frank Shadforth believes a safe climate and good water are more important than fracking: “We want life, not money”.

with him. That bird don’t do that now,” Mr Shadforth said.

“We used to have rain for six weeks straight, no sun. And over the years it gradually changed. It’s getting hotter, the weather is more vicious and the cyclones are stronger.”

Mr Shadforth has watched the disappearance of native bees and some of the bush tucker he harvests.

“Everything is off-balance. My mum said to me that if you

for viruses to cross from animals to humans and start pandemics like the coronavirus.

Extreme heat in itself is also a massive cause of death, he added.

Mr Ogge said even worse global heating could be avoided if greenhouse gas emissions are reduced fast enough to keep warming below 1.5°C.

Connecting the dots between

rising emissions, fracking and “corporate greed” was Janet Gregory.

The elder lives in Elliot, where the NT government plans to allow companies to mine the vast Beetaloo Basin for fracked gas.

“My place is right in the middle where they are mining,” Ms Gregory said.

She said fracking will bring “harm to the country” and “people have to start listening to Aboriginal voices.”

Two of those voices are those of Garrwa man Gadrian Hoosan and Karrina Nolan from Aboriginal clean energy consultants Original Power.

In Mr Hoosan’s home town of Borroloola they are sick of overcrowded hot houses, of power cuts that make food go bad and high power bills.

After years of planning, they are setting up their own solar power company to build a microgrid and manage the town’s electricity themselves.

Microgrids can lower electricity bills even for those without solar panels on their roofs, creating local jobs along the way.

“We’ve already got five youngfellas to do training, boys and girls. Some to do the office work, some to work on the solar installation. Start off little and grow bigger,” Mr Hoosan said.

Karrina Nolan has helped the community to come up with a three-step plan.

“The first step is to help local people get jobs and traineeships on solar projects that are happening already, the shop for example”, before installing solar power at outstations.

The third step, following a government-funded feasibility study, is to “take the whole community off diesel,” Ms Nolan said.

“That’s where we’re partnering with other experts.”

Frank Shadforth reckons the project, which works with the Charles Darwin University and independent consultants, will also reduce fossil fuel use.

“It will be good for the environment. All the sun we have here, it can run all this town.”

“Maybe other communities in the NT will hear about this project and they will want it too,” Mr Hoosan said.

Norman Frank, who pays “25 to 30 bucks a day” for electricity, is interested.

“For people on disability pension like me it’s really too much. That’s why we’re talking about a solar system on every house in Tennant Creek” - installed by local workers of course.

He hopes a proposed giant



Tennant Creek, December 2019.

solar project that plans to deliver electricity from Tennant Creek to Singapore will “give something back to the community - not Toyotas, but something that can last”.

He was not the only forum participant who wants a clean energy revolution to sweep the Territory.

Said Mr Hoosan: “Clean energy gives us hope for the future of our community, and that’s worth fighting for.”



Gavin Hoosan and Karrina Nolan are working towards a fossil fuel-free future for Borroloola.



The forum called on the NT government to switch investment from gas to clean energy: Janet Gregory, Josie Douglas and Frank Shadforth.

Rangers keep their promise to protect important ngapa site

NORTH Tanami Rangers have made good on their promise to two late elders to protect an important spring in the Northern Tanami Indigenous Protected Area.

The rangers had promised to fence Kamira, a famous ngapa (water) site that feeds a creek and had been trashed by feral animals.

today, to hunt, camp and share stories.

In recent times, Kamira hasn't been a great place to gather. Following years of low rainfall, cattle, horses, camels and donkeys had turned the spring into a muddy wasteland.

"We will be the ones who made this site good again,"

"We will be the ones who made this site good again."

Working in small teams with one traditional owner and sticking to physical distancing rules because of coronavirus restrictions, the rangers fenced the site in the south-western corner of the IPA where fresh water emerges from a rocky hillside.

Reliable water made Kamira a significant gathering place when Yapa lived off the land. They still visit it regularly

lead ranger Dione Kelly said, as he was working on the fence.

Mr Kelly and his colleagues had promised the elders to protect the head of the spring with a fence that would allow animals to drink from the creek and native plants to regenerate and once again provide shade and shelter.

The new fence delivers on that promise.



Ranger Silas James tightened the cable of the fence around Kamira, an important water site in the Tanami.

Barbaric acts are perfectly legal

THE BLOWING up of a 46,000-year-old sacred site during Reconciliation Week has been compared to barbaric acts such as the detonation of much younger cultural monuments in the Middle East by terrorists.

The outcry about Rio Tinto's blasting of two ancient rock shelters in Juukan Gorge in the Pilbara brought attention to BHP's plans to destroy up to 86 significant and ancient Aboriginal sites in the same region to expand an iron ore mine.

As with the Juukan Gorge blast, the destructions are opposed by the traditional owners but have the permission of Western Australia's government.

The caves Rio Tinto blew up were the only inland site in Australia showing signs of continual human occupation through the last Ice Age.

The mining giant apologised to the Puutu Kuntj Kurrama Pinikura (PKKP) people for the "distress caused" but the traditional owners did not buy the apology.

That's because Rio Tinto tried to blame them for not making their concerns clear and later told its staff that it wasn't sorry about the blast.

An "outrageous statement", according to the PKKP Aboriginal Council, which had fought to stop the

archaeologically significant site from being destroyed.

It had even asked Indigenous Affairs Minister Ken Wyatt to stop the blast only days before it went ahead – perfectly legally - under Western Australia's laws from the 1970s.

The state's Aboriginal

Heritage Act has been up for review since 2012.

A draft bill to change the law that could have saved the site has been pushed back to 2021 due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Mr Wyatt said state laws had failed.

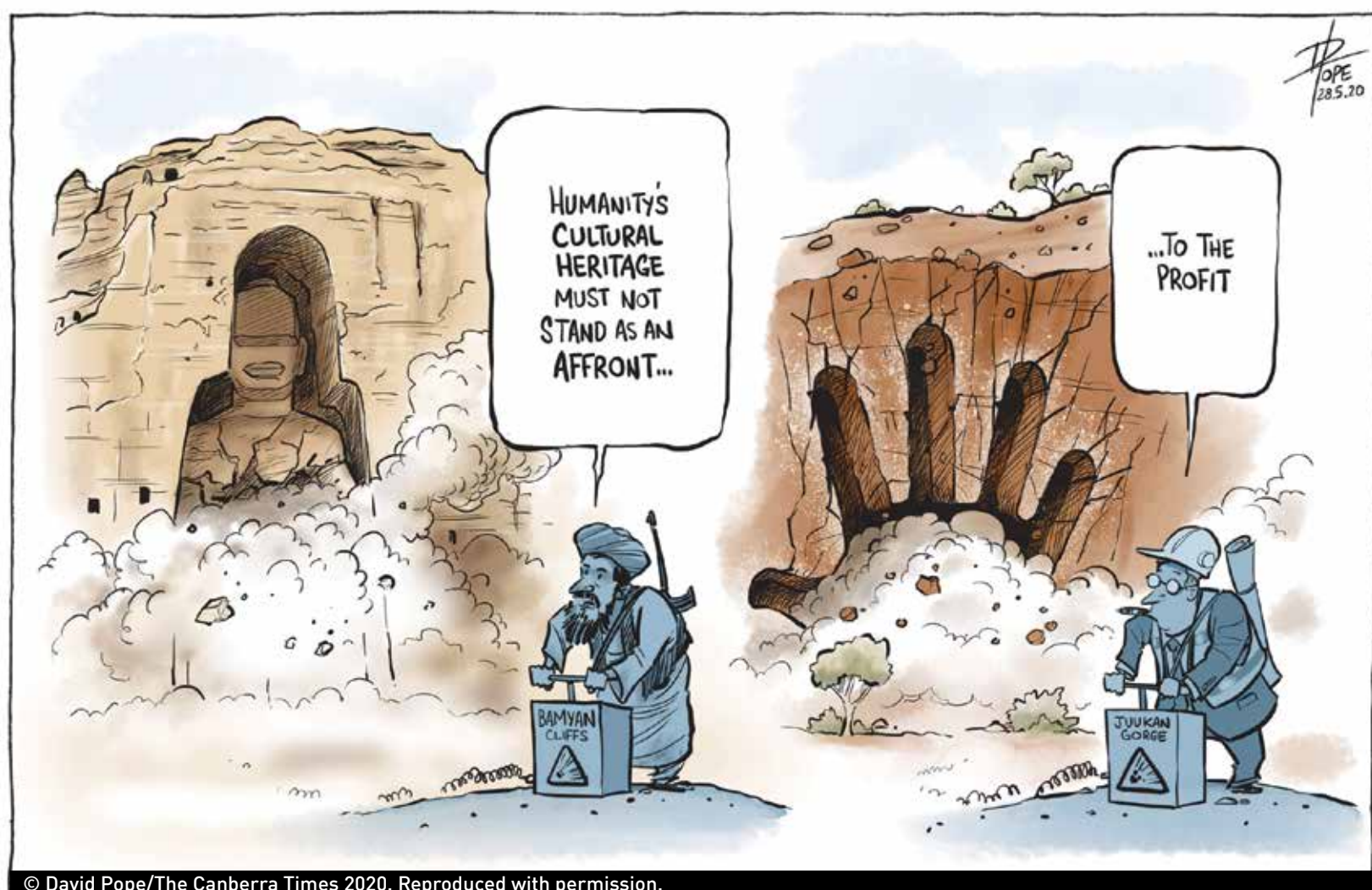
He joined his Labor

counterpart Linda Burney in calling for an urgent review into federal and state heritage protection laws.

Ms Burney told the ABC that Rio Tinto "didn't act illegally, so surely we need to be looking towards what the legislative response should be in terms of never allowing it to

happen again".

Labor senator Pat Dodson called for a moratorium until the WA law is changed and the Greens have asked mining companies that have approvals to destroy Aboriginal sites to abandon those plans.



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A cry for help to fight virus deaths in Brazil



AUSTRALIA has been successful so far in protecting its Aboriginal communities from COVID-19, but around the world it has been a different story.

In Brazil, one of the worst-affected countries in the world, the pandemic comes on top of existing threats.

Of the country's almost 800,000 indigenous people many are already under threat from illegal logging and mining.

The loggers and miners are now also spreading the deadly threat of COVID-19.

In the case of the Awa Guaja, a group of around 400 people in the Amazon rainforest, rights group Forest Guardians had even claimed the "uncontacted" tribe was facing a genocide from deforestation.

Brazil's far-right president Jair Bolsonaro has described the pandemic as a "little flu" and encouraged the exploitation of resources on indigenous lands, emboldening illegal operators.

Indigenous peoples are appealing for help to protect them from the multiple threats.

The Yanomami people want the government to expel illegal gold miners from their territory to protect communities from the coronavirus.

By June three Yanomami had died from COVID-19, but the disease's contagious nature gave rise to fears the pandemic could be devastating for the 27,000-strong tribe.

"The miners are entering the Yanomami indigenous land with COVID-19 contamination," Dario



Satere-mawe men seek medical advice from a doctor in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Photo: Ricardo Oliveira.

Kope-nawa, leader of the Hutukara Yanomami Association, said.

Illegal incursions by loggers, miners and fishermen are also being blamed for spreading the virus in the one of the biggest reserves in the world in Brazil's Xingu area.

Missionaries and health care agents have also been accused of helping it spread.

Also in June, Megaron, a leader of the area's Kayapo indigenous group, reported that it had lost two people to the virus, telling the Associated Press that the

disease is being used against his people.

"It is not us that are leaving and taking (the virus). There are people seizing this disease to invade indigenous land," Megaron said.

The Association of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil said the virus had already spread among 40 indigenous peoples, infecting 537 individuals and killing 102.

Manaus, the capital of Amazonas state, has been devastated by the pandemic, with the city burying its dead in mass graves.

Manaus Mayor Arthur Virgilio gave up on waiting for help from the Bolsonaro government and sent video messages and letters to 21 world leaders in May, including US President Donald Trump, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Emmanuel Macron and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, pleading for funds and medical equipment.

In June, Brazil's death toll exceeded 50,000, the second-highest of all countries, with more than 39,000 new cases

of COVID-19 recorded in a single day.

The government responded by halting reporting of its national death toll and wiping a government website clean of such information.

A lack of tests, intensive care units, protective equipment for medical workers and self-isolation facilities have all contributed to Brazil's high coronavirus death toll. President Bolsonaro also contributed by playing down the threat, opposing lockdowns and refusing to wear a mask in public.

Indigenous cultures threatened by COVID-19



BRAZIL isn't the only country where fears are held for the impact of COVID-19 on indigenous peoples.

In Canada's northwestern Saskatchewan province, the survival of the country's oldest cultures is at stake, with La Loche becoming the site of the country's first major COVID-19 outbreak in a First Nations community.

More than 200 residents had contracted the virus in early June, and two elderly care home residents died.

With high rates of chronic conditions such as hypertension and diabetes, it's the elders who are at the greatest risk from the disease.

Meanwhile, in the United States, in the Navajo reservation across parts of Arizona, Utah and New Mexico, 76 per cent of households lack affordable food and many don't even have clean water for basic

prevention such as hand-washing, according to *The Conversation* news website.

Overcrowded houses make social distancing impossible and a lack of services, equipment and testing kits have restricted the ability to respond to the crisis.

In some cases, state and federal governments have even stepped in to hamper control efforts with threats of legal action against blockades on reservation boundaries and declarations of "essential" activities like mineral extraction and fishing potentially bringing in infected workers.

Maori in New Zealand have fared better than most other indigenous groups around the world.

Maori make up 15 per cent of the total population but only nine percent of COVID-19 cases.

In a nation that at the

time of writing has no active cases anymore and one of the lowest death tolls in the world, attention has already

turned to economic recovery.

Coronavirus is not the first time indigenous cultures around the world have faced a

pandemic with many suffering huge losses when European conquerors brought diseases previously unknown to them.



A Navajo family from the south east of the US wore masks to protect themselves during Covid19. Photo: grandriver.



Indigenous chiefs among rising number of COVID-19 deaths

ONE of Brazil's most famous defenders of the Amazon rainforest has died from COVID-19.

Paulinho Payakan, chief of the Kayapo tribe, died on June 17 in the hospital of Redencao in southern Para state. He was 66 years old.

"He worked all his life to build worldwide alliances around indigenous peoples to save the Amazon," Gert-Peter Bruch, founder of environmental group Planet Amazon, told Agence France Presse.

"He was far ahead of his time. We've lost an extremely valuable guide."

Bep Karti Xikrin, the 64-year-old chief of another Amazonian tribal village, also died in June.

told *The Guardian*: "He knew so much about things we haven't even experienced," she said. "Everyone loved him."

The virus has devastated Brazil's indigenous population, with fears that it is wiping out a generation of tribal elders, chiefs and healers, and with them decades of knowledge and leadership.

The online news service reported in June that indigenous organisation ABIP has logged at least 332 COVID-19 deaths, and 7,208 positive cases across 110 communities.

The numbers prompted its leader, Dinamam Tuxa, to warn: "We are facing extermination."

Brazil's Munduruku tribe

famous of the elders, who have died from the virus, inflicting irreparable damage on tribal history, culture and medicine.

Recognised for his colourful parrot head dresses, he rose to international fame in the 1980s as one of the lead

by American supporters, Payakan worked alongside British rock star Sting to draw international attention to his people's plight and the environmental cost of dams in the Amazon.

However, his reputation was damaged in 1998 when he

"He was far ahead of his time. We've lost an extremely valuable guide."

activists protesting against the Belo Monte dam, the world's third-largest hydroelectric project in the heart of the Brazilian Amazon.

The dam threatened to divert the flow of the Xingu River, a major tributary that would displace 20,000 people from their land and threaten their survival.

The river's basin is home to 40 ethnic groups and traditional riverbank populations. The Kayapo people's resistance resulted in Brazil's military dictatorship scrapping the plans after an historic gathering of indigenous people held in Altamira in July 1989.

Hailed as the "new Ghandi"

was sentenced to six years in prison for the rape of the 18-year-old Portuguese language tutor of his three children.

His wife was also convicted for helping him.

In initial media interviews, Mr Payakan admitted, then denied, having sex with the woman.

The case caused fears of a backlash against the Brazilian Rain Forest Foundation, a Kayapo support group founded by Sting.

Mr Payako resumed his activism in recent years, warning against right-wing Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro's call to open protected Amazon land to agriculture and mining.

BHP accused of polluting Colombian peoples' water

AUSTRALIAN mining companies are making international headlines during the COVID-19 pandemic, as their treatment of First Nations peoples at home and overseas comes under the spotlight.

In Colombia, the Wayuu people have asked the UN Human Rights Council to urgently intervene in what they say is a health emergency due to the lack of clean water during the coronavirus lockdown.

They say their drinking water is being contaminated by the Cerrejon mine on their ancestral land, which is jointly-owned by Australia's BHP and miners Anglo American and Glencore.

Cerrejon is one of the largest open-pit coal mines in the world.

The mine is surrounded by some of the poorest rural communities in Colombia.

A lawyer representing the Wayuu, Monica Feria-Tinta, told *The Age* that "the pollution that the company has caused is massive – it's contaminated the water, it affects the air".

The incident follows international outrage at the wilful destruction of Juukan Gorge in the Pilbara by Rio Tinto (see also p.15).

Photos of the Aboriginal rock site after it was blasted to expand the mine triggered global condemnation, as the 46,000-year-old caves contained evidence of human culture from before the last Ice Age, and were of major cultural significance to the Puutu Kunti Kurrama and Pinikura peoples.

The destruction was legal under the WA Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 and Rio Tinto has issued several apologies, but public pressure to change the outdated law to protect sites of known significance prompted a federal government inquiry into the blast.

Just five days after Rio Tinto's blast, state Aboriginal Affairs Minister Ben Wyatt gave BHP approval to blast as many as 82 Aboriginal sites under the same legislation.

The sites date back 15,000 years.

Banjima Native Title Aboriginal Corporation chair Maitland Parker told SBS the Banjima people "do not support the destruction of sites of cultural significance".

"We always say they are living libraries. It's been very painful."

Mr Xikrin suffered from headaches, fatigue and shortness of breath, but refused to go to hospital because he feared he might never return.

His daughter Raquel Bekuoi

has lost 10 *sabios* (wise ones).

"We always say they are living libraries. It's been very painful," tribal leader Alessandra Munduruku told *The Guardian*.

Mr Payakan is the most



Chief Paulinho Payakan was one of a growing number of indigenous Brazilians who died of COVID-19. Photo: Agence-France Presse.

Of blankets and oppression

PULANGKITA PITJANGU (When the Blanket Came), is a collaboration between artist Rene Kulitja and photographer Rhett Hammerton.

The photograph was selected from thousands of entries as a finalist in the National Photographic Portrait Prize 2020, and is currently touring Australia.

It is also part of the British exhibition "What it is to be here: Colonisation and resistance" at the Portico Library in Manchester.

The shoot took only 10 minutes to complete over two, brief sessions, according to Mr Hammerton.

"Rene knew exactly what she wanted. She's a very conceptual person", he said.

Underneath the portrait, Ms Kulitja wrote:

"Pulangkita pitjangu munu nganampa wangka tjutunu Nganana English wiya Kulinmalanya nganana panya Pitjantjatjara tjuta!" (this blanket came and covered over our language. But let us remember – we are not English. We are Pitjantjatjara!)

Ms Kulitja said the idea for *Pulangkita pitjangu* has been many years in the making.

"My older sister Janet Inyika used to say how these cultural changes felt like being covered by a big blanket that came from nowhere. I kept on thinking about this over time and developing it with the women of the Uti Kulintjaku Project," she said.

To her, the blanket story is much more than just a photograph, it represents all the changes to the Anangu way of life that she has witnessed.

Rene performed the blanket story at last year's Lowitja Institute Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference.

The blanket seemed to have a life of its own. It moved like water over the stage and covered the artist from head to toe.

Not even her face was visible, but her voice was loud and clear.

"This is English, pressing me down, and I can only see out of a tiny little hole."

In many ways, the blanket story starts when Ms Kulitja was born at Pukatja (Ernabella), then a Presbyterian mission.

The mission was founded in 1938 by Charles Duguid, who insisted that all his missionaries learn Pitjantjatjara and that children be taught in their first language.

Ms Kulitja's early life was rich in Anangu culture, law and language, and she wants the same for today's young people.

"It's our responsibility as the senior generation to pass it on and teach it properly to the younger generation."

"It's an important thing. This law, our law, the knowledge of culture of songs and stories about country, it's been going for so long and it's still alive now. We need to keep it that way."

Blankets feature in pre-colonial Aboriginal culture and the early interaction between Aboriginal people

kangaroo skin.

When settlers barred Aboriginal communities' access to land and country, their traditional practices suffered.

People relied on rations, including blankets given out by the authorities.

The blankets were branded "New South Wales Aborigines".

For some families, the "blanket lists" kept by the white workers are the earliest

"This is English, pressing me down, and I can only see out of a tiny little hole."

and colonial government in New South Wales.

Traditional blankets were made of possum, wallaby or

written records of family members and have been used as evidence to claim back land.

For Ms Kulitja, the blanket represents how colonisation and the English language have overwhelmed and trampled Aboriginal culture, language and life.

"It's like when you see a field of beautiful wildflowers, and then a camel comes and stomps all over it," she explained.

"That's what happened when Captain Cook arrived on Aboriginal Land and put the flag there."

The *Pulangkita pitjangu* journey has come full circle, as part of the British exhibition to mark 250 years of resistance since Lieutenant James Cook arrived uninvited to these shores.

"The blanket represents an important story with the significance of Captain Cook's story, it's on the same level. This is our side of the story,"

Ms Kulitja said.

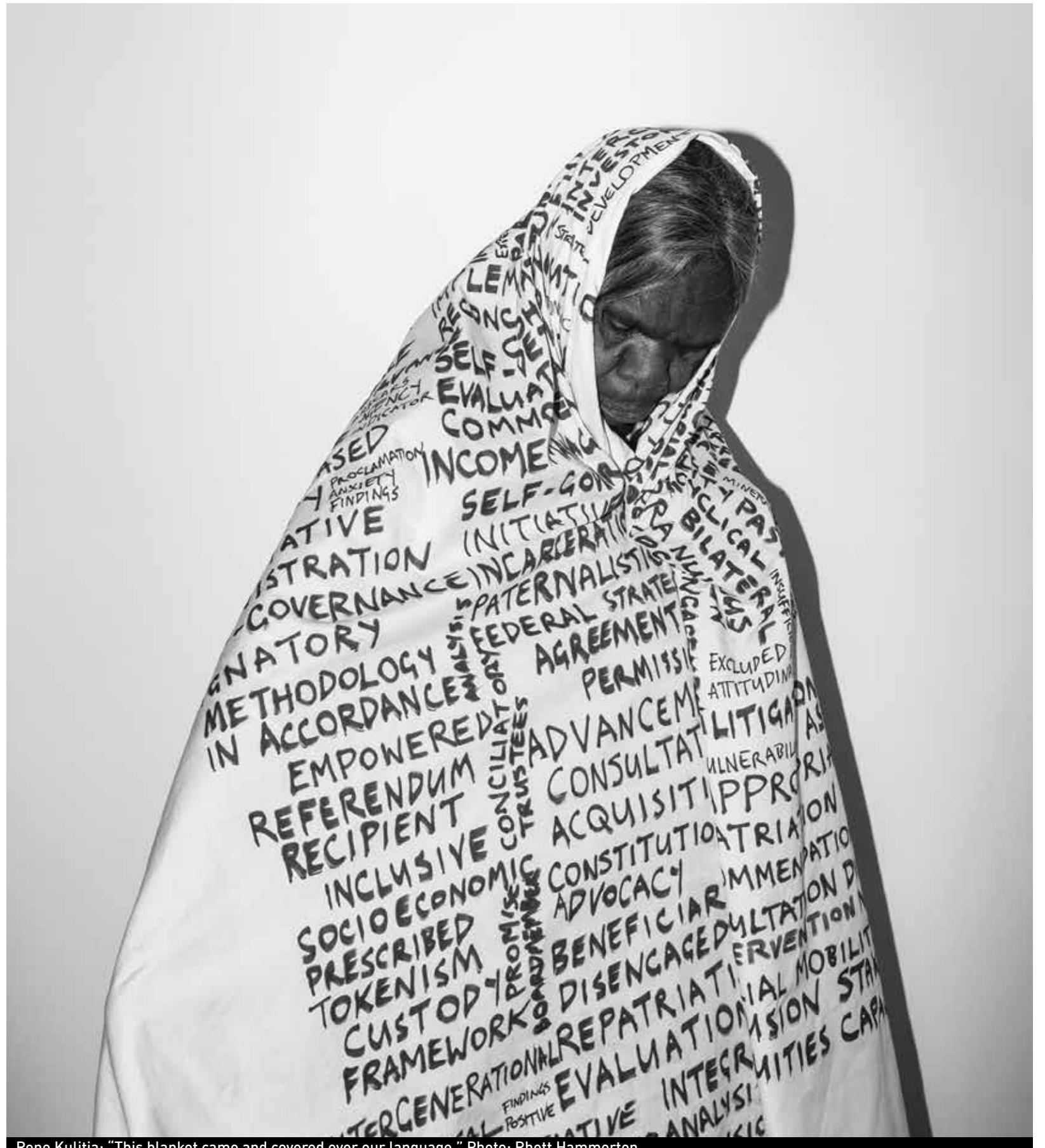
"It's crucial we make one story out of our shared history, to get the story straight. At the moment, it's too one-sided, the Cook side is bigger than the blanket story. Finding the balance is really important for the wellbeing of our children."

She has visited Cook's statue in London, and museums about the colonial period.

"I approached it with an open spirit. It was interesting to see the place where English people actually come from, their country, its history, and to try to understand what they did," she said.

The power of the blanket story is in the telling of it, interwoven with songs and stories from Rene's country.

"I want to light a fire in you... like how a bushfire takes off one place to another, I want this story to spread like fire".



Rene Kulitja: "This blanket came and covered over our language." Photo: Rhett Hammerton.



Freedom Day 2021 to make up for this year's cancellation

THE GURINDJI community is eagerly anticipating a big 55th Freedom Day anniversary in August 2021, following the cancellation of this year's event.

"We look forward to welcoming everybody to Gurindji country for the 55th next year, the biggest Freedom Day ever," the Gurindji Aboriginal Corporation's Rob Roy said.

The corporation that organises the Freedom Day Festival decided in May to cancel the 2020 festival "due to the uncertainty and risks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic."

Mr Roy said the community's decision to cancel the 54th Freedom Day celebrations was about keeping people safe and mitigating risk.

"So far we've managed to keep our community free from this disease," Mr Roy said.

"With this in mind, holding a big festival is just too much of a risk. A lot of mobs travel to Freedom Day and we feel cancelling this year is the right thing to do, and it helps other communities in their efforts to keep their people safe."

The Central Land Council had planned to hold its mid-year council meeting in Kalkaringi ahead of the festival weekend.

"Our August council meeting will now be in Tennant Creek, where we wanted to hold our cancelled April council meeting," CLC chair Sammy Wilson said.

"I can't wait to celebrate with everyone at Kalkaringi next August."

Freedom Day celebrates the 1966 Wave Hill Walk-off and birth of Aboriginal land rights.

The festival attracts visitors from across Australia.



CLC chair Sammy Wilson at the 50th Freedom Day in 2016.

No ID, not enrolled, but want to vote? Now you can!

PEOPLE out bush, who have missed the July 30 deadline for the electoral roll, will still be able to vote in the Territory election in August.

For the first time, unenrolled remote community residents will be able to simply turn up at the polling place and cast their vote.

They will be able to have their say even if they don't have identity papers.

Someone, who knows them and who is already on the roll, will be able to sign their enrolment form.

The change will make voting easier for first-time voters who could not get drivers

licenses or passports during the coronavirus lockdown.

It will help an estimated 25,000 unenrolled Territorians, most of them Aboriginal and young, to make their voices heard.

So remember: not on the roll, no ID – no problem!

Just see the team from the electoral commission on voting day and have your say about who will govern the Territory for the next four years.

If you have any questions or want to enrol before polling day please call 1800 698 683.

Don't be a quiet Australian!

VOTE

in the NT
election in
August



call NTEC 1800 698 683
or visit
www.ntec.nt.gov.au



	1. ALICE SPRINGS Aaron Kopp, 89 51 6264	Any questions about CLC business? Call your regional officers		6. TENNANT CREEK Darryl "Tiger" Fitz, 89 62 2343
	2. SOUTH WEST Wayne Clarke, 89 51 0577			7. EASTERN SANDOVER Jesy James Carr, 89 51 0606
	3. NORTH WEST Charlie Hodgson, 89 51 0627			8. EASTERN PENTY Richard Dodd, 89 51 0622
	4. TANAMI Amos Egan, 89 51 0581			9. CENTRAL Michael Turner, 89 51 6250
	5. WEST Dale Satour, 89 51 0591			



CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL

LOOKING FOR WORK?



The CLC's employment support team helps job seekers to write resumes and job applications and to prepare for interviews.

We support employers to develop strategies to find and keep Aboriginal workers.

We also talk to schools and community groups about job opportunities.

Contact the CLC on 8951 6211
or employmentunit@clc.org.au

Vale Kwementyaye A.N. Ross

KWEMENTYAYE ROSS was a dedicated teacher, researcher and translator of her Kaytetye language and a renowned family woman. Her sudden passing left a gap in the lives of many.

"She cared for, loved and looked after many children who will not forget her kindness," her funeral obituary stated.

Generations of people will also not forget the huge contribution she made to their education, language and homelands.

Kwementyaye was born at Neutral Junction Station on January 14, 1969 and went to primary school there. In 1993 the student would become a teacher at that same school, an assistant teacher, while also undertaking teacher training through the Batchelor Institute. As part of her studies she undertook a Kaytetye literacy course with Gavan Breen and by the end of the week was writing stories in Kaytetye.

In 1998 Kwementyaye taught at Apungalindam school at Utopia and began writing definitions for the Kaytetye dictionary. In the evenings she would sit down with her grandmother to write Kaytetye definitions with English translations. She wrote how a plant was prepared for medicine or food, and the proper way to prepare an animal for food.

There were no Kaytetye school books back then and Kwementyaye wanted teaching resources for her language. So, rather than just accept the situation, with the help of Myfany Turpin and the bilingual

resource development unit at Yuendumu, she set about producing 10 Kaytetye readers.

Pintupi Warlpiri Anmatyere Media recorded Kwementyaye reading them and her announcement in Kaytetye to 'turn the page at the sound of the clapsticks'.

Other language resources

for Aboriginal Development, transcribing and translating Kaytetye recordings.

Finally, in 2012, Kwementyaye finally got to see her Kaytetye dictionary in print and in five days recorded 3,000 Kaytetye words for the dictionary at the Queensland University.

completed an interpreter training course at the IAD and worked as a translator. This included interpreting on the Neutral Junction native title claim and the Barrow Creek land claim, and Central Land Council videos about indigenous ecological knowledge and the walk from

language, first as a teacher at Utopia and then at Neutral Junction when she returned in 2008.

She also worked with Myfany Turpin to document the songs of country, including *Awelye Akwelye* (2004) and *Antarrengeny Awelye: Alyawarr women's songs from Antarrengeny* (2013).

She was the first Aboriginal presenter at the Musicological Society of Australia, where she talked about her traditional songs in 2001.

Kwementyaye loved nature and knew much about animals, plants, bush foods and medicines.

She worked on the *Pocket Bushtucker Book* (Latz 1999), led a CLC land management project to document the sites and songs of her mother's country, and documented Kaytetye knowledge of the natural world with a bird poster and app (2009, 2011).

In 2015 she began documenting kayte, edible grubs, doing fieldtrips with the community and insect scientists.

That's led to the creation of a book on witchetty grubs, with a poster coming out soon. Before her death on March 27, she had plans for a book about Kaytetye plant and animal knowledge.

Kwementyaye loved to take the school children out on country. She worked to keep her language strong and honour the knowledge of her ancestors. She looked after many people and her work, love and kindness will always be remembered.

By Myfany Turpin & Margaret Carew.



Kwementyaye on a dictionary field trip in 1998. Photo: Jenny Green.

she worked on include *A Learner's Guide to Kaytetye* (2000); the Kaytetye video series *Arrkantele* (2000), *Growing Up Kaytetye* (2003) and the *Kaytetye Picture Dictionary* (2004), again with an audio CD from her.

Kwementyaye took study leave from her teaching job in 2001 to work at the Institute

She also helped to produce a website of the first Kaytetye language recordings, <http://kaytetye.com.au/>.

Kwementyaye went on to graduate with a Bachelor of Education, one of nine from Central Australia, with Linda Anderson, Mona Kantawara and Yamurna Oldfield.

Kwementyaye also

Bonney Well to Barrow Creek.

She translated for the Australian Society for Indigenous Languages, for *God's Story* (2018) and for ICTV's *Kaytetye Bedtime Stories*, due to be released this year.

Kwementyaye loved music. She worked with Music Outback to write songs in her



Visiting country with students from the Neutral Junction school. Photo: S Berry.



Persuasive, politically savvy and a master of intercultural communication

PASTOR PHILLIP WILYUKA was a long-standing Central Land Council delegate with a talent for communication and a passion for reconciliation, constitutional change and community development.

He was a great advocate for the CLC's cutting-edge community development program, both as CLC chair in 2012/13 and in the years since.

As recently as last year at Aputula, he encouraged traditional owners to invest funds from a mining and exploration agreement in community-driven projects designed to improve the lives of their families.

His failing health did not stop him from supporting the groups inside and outside his home community of Titjikala that plan and monitor projects funded through their collective income from land use agreements.

He helped one group to establish and develop their outstation using the rent they receive from a jointly-managed conservation reserve and backed another project supporting young Titjikala people with school excursions and sports facility upgrades.

He also made sure the team he coached and managed, the Titjikala Hawks, did not miss out.

Born on March 29, 1957 at Maryvale Station, to Paulus Wilyuka and Aldis Wari, Mr Wilyuka was raised by his mother's sisters Mavis and Dora (both deceased). They took good care of him after his mother died when he was only seven years old.

He attended primary school at Maryvale and secondary school at Kormilda College



Phillip Wilyuka and Pat Anderson front the national media at Uluru in May 2017.

in Darwin. He also boarded at St Phillip's College while attending Anzac High School in Alice Springs.

As a young man he turned his hand to lots of trades.

He did stock work, built houses and taught, but he is best known for his vocation - Titjikala's pastor.

It was a calling he inherited from his evangelist father.

In 1975, a few years after his father was ordained, Phillip Wilyuka attended his first Finke River Mission bush course at Ipolera near Ntaria (Hermannsburg).

In the early 80s he helped his father to translate the first Pitjantjatjara version of Luther's Small Catechism and Nyiri Inmatjara, the Pitjantjatjara hymnbook, which was first printed in 1995.

A good singer and guitar player, he organised countless

gospel concerts and singalongs across Central Australia.

These events, along with his leadership of the Titjikala town council, have been credited with helping to keep Titjikala united and strong over the past 50 years.

The federal government's Intervention in the Northern Territory and the NT government's abolition of the local government community councils in 2007 were a turning point in Mr Wilyuka's life.

The upheaval, which coincided with the death of Johnny Briscoe, Titjikala's resident evangelist, played a role in his decision to focus

more on his church.

A year later, he was ordained at Titjikala and served his church, and many other congregations in Central Australia, until his death in 2020.

Mr Wilyuka was persuasive, politically savvy and a master of intercultural communication.

He always found the right words at the right time, whether it was in Yankuntjatjara, Pitjantjatjara, Arrernte or English.

These qualities shone when things got a bit heated during the historic meeting about constitutional reform in May 2017 at Yulara, which he attended as a member of the Sacred Sites Authority.

"I woke early this morning and I rolled around in bed and I knew something new was going to happen," he said after hundreds of delegates from across

the nation had endorsed the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

At a critical moment during the debate he took the microphone and laid out his unique cultural perspective on the contested concept of sovereignty.

His well-chosen words settled the meeting down when it really counted and the resulting consensus owes much to his composed, authoritative and timely intervention.

After the unanimous vote, Mr Wilyuka wrapped up the meeting with a call for unity and a heartfelt 'thank you' to the delegates.

"You have come here and supported us in the NT with the declaration we've put up here for all of us," he said.

"We had some ups and downs at this forum, but as a Pitjantjatjara Yangkuntjatjara man, I feel so happy today that our brothers and sisters from all states and territories have come together as one."

Mr Wilyuka felt the joys and the burdens of leadership all his life, whether it was in the political, cultural or spiritual sphere.

His friend, Pastor Rob Borgas, said his favourite bible verse was Matthew 11:28 - "Come unto me, all you that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Rest in peace, Phillip Wilyuka, with your late wife Marcia Alice and brother Haines.

You will be lovingly remembered by your sons Darren and Roger, sisters Joan, Annette and Lisa, brother Andrew and your granddaughter Marcia.





Sylvia Purrurle Neale spoke up at the Alice Springs Black Lives Matter protest. Photo: Emma Murray.



2020 CLC CADETSHIPS

The Central Land Council is currently offering cadetships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who are studying at a university or are planning to do so. We're especially keen to hear from you if you study:

- Finance/ Accounting
- Engineering
- Anthropology
- Spatial Data Sciences
- Management/Business/Commerce
- Public Policy/Political and Social Sciences
- Environmental or Natural Resource Management
- Law
- Mining/Geology
- Community Development
- Media/Public Relations
- Information Technology
- Human Resources

WHO CAN APPLY FOR A CADETSHIP?

Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who:

- are enrolled to study fulltime on campus at a University in Australia
- have been accepted to study fulltime within a University in Australia
- must be enrolled for their first undergraduate degree course; and
- have already started or about to begin their higher education study in 2020

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Cadets will study full time during the academic year and attend 12 weeks of placement at the CLC. On successful completion of their studies every effort will be made to offer a permanent position.

GET PAID TO STUDY AND GET:

- a fortnightly salary for the whole year, including for study periods
- support with textbooks, laptop, equipment and travel costs; and
- mentoring and support from industry professionals.



Contact Leonie Jones on 08 8951 6377 or jobs@clc.org.au



Jody Kopp at the protest. Photo: Emma Murray.



Alison Furber had a strong message. Photo: Emma Murray.



Alekarenge kids showed off their new sleeping bags.



CLC Tennant Creek office manager Darryl Tiger Fitz (left) took out sleeping bags to the Imangara school.



Michaela Liddle, Lauren Michener and Sanchia Scott, from the community development team, packed hundreds of bags full of warm clothes for distribution through aged care services.



Mungkarta's Daisy Duggie got one of the ABA-funded sleeping bags.



Lilly Alexander, Cathy Turner, Jacinta Webb, Andrina Webb and Barbara Petrick taught Atitjere girls about bush medicines and animals.

Let's stay safe at CLC meetings!

A lot has changed since the coronavirus pandemic and so have Central Land Council meetings.

The meetings we postponed in March to keep you all safe from the virus can go ahead now.

But we won't be able to run them like we used to because the danger is far from over.

If we don't keep up physical distancing and good hygiene we'll risk spreading the virus.

We will have to stay two big steps away from the next person at our meetings.

And keep up good habits such as lots of hand washing and coughing into elbows or tissues.

We can't share drinks and cigarettes or shake hands.

If a meeting is indoors, we will need to limit the number of people in the room.

Remember, this virus is still around and it's sneaky and very dangerous.

Thanks for helping us to keep our communities safe and see you soon!



CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL

