

Garma 2012

Day One

Gartjambal House, Chief Minister Visits and Makes Commitment to consult with Yolngu Leaders, Resources Jobs

1/09/2012



The first day of Garma 2012 began with the inauguration and blessing ceremony of Gartjambal House. Visitors were in awe of the dancers who brought the strength and powers of the red kangaroo (gattjambal) to the new structure. The new main forum area is a brilliant building that has been built with the support of corrections inmates who have done a marvellous job in supporting the new constructions and also preparing the Garma festival area.

Witiyana Marika led the dancers in a brilliant display that included some of the corrections participants who had constructed Gattjambal House.

Garma 2012 also saw the visit of a Chief Minister for the first time in the history of the festival. Terry Mills held a meeting with the major Yolngu leaders and Chairman Galarrwuy Yunupingu as well as a public meeting within the Garma forum. It was a very welcome and well timed visit that met the Chief Minister's election commitment to work closely with Aboriginal people in remote and regional communities in the Northern Territory.

Galarrwuy Yunupingu described the chief minister's visit as wonderful. The Chief Minister promised to support homelands, he offered an open invitation to Yolngu leaders to visit him and his Cabinet and he highly praised the elders program within the Corrections Department which had led to 30 inmates being involved in the development of the Garma Institute.



Chief Minister Terry Mills

Drawing a strong round of applause Terry Mills said he supported Yirrkala school and had a strong view that young children's first language was vitally important to the mastery of English and other languages. The Chief Minister said he had an open mind on bi-lingual education, saying the important thing was what worked. If children needed to have education in their own language then that should be the method.

The rest of the sessions for the first day were fascinating and included discussions involving resources based jobs, developing more professionals in the mining industry. All of these sessions are available on line over the next few days.



Gartjambal Ceremony

For more information about Garma, and to make your booking for next year, go to www.yyf.com.au