

# GUNDJEIHMI

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



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**Media Statement July 26 2024**

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## **Jabiluka's priceless heritage permanently protected**

***"This day will go down in history."***

Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation, representing the Mirarr Traditional Owners of Jabiluka, has today welcomed the decision of Northern Territory Mines Minister Mark Monaghan, acting on advice from the Federal Government, to refuse mining company Energy Resources of Australia's application to extend the Jabiluka mining lease. This decision ensures that no mining will happen at Jabiluka, ending a decades-long fight by Mirarr and their supporters.

Mirarr Senior Traditional Owner Yvonne Margarula said:

"We have always said no to this mine, government and mining companies told us they would mine it but we stayed strong and said no. Today I feel very happy that Jabiluka will be safe forever. Protecting country is very important for my family and for me"

The Special Reservation (under the NT Mines Act) will protect Jabiluka from the threat of any mining and takes effect from August 11<sup>th</sup> when the current lease expires. The next steps for Government will be to seek inclusion in the World Heritage estate and to work with Mirarr to establish a new set of arrangements to incorporate the area into Kakadu National Park.

Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation CEO Thalia van den Boogaard said:

"This news has been a long time coming. It's a hugely significant day for the Mirarr and for all Australians. Jabiluka will never be mined and the internationally significant natural and cultural value of the site is finally being recognised and will now be protected. The Mirarr and their supporters have been steadfast in their opposition to this mining project for over four decades. Now the job starts of caring for Jabiluka as the heritage of all Australians.

"Mirarr are very concerned that ERA has been in serious financial decline for the past 18 months. Focus now needs to be put on the rehabilitation of the nearby former Ranger uranium mine. It is up to the mining company and the Commonwealth Government to ensure that site is fully rehabilitated so it can be safely returned to the Mirarr and included in the national park."

Mirarr Traditional Owner Corben Mudjandi welcomed the news:

"This day will go down in history as the day the Mirarr finally stopped Jabiluka, now my Aunties can rest easy knowing it is done. It is great day for the Mirarr people, for Kakadu, the Northern Territory and for Australia. This proves that people standing strong for Country can win. We thank the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments for doing the right thing. We look forward to welcoming all Australians to share our cultural heritage for decades to come."

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**For background, to arrange interviews or photos contact: Kirsten Blair 0412 853 641**