

MEDIA RELEASE

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Nitjpurru Store back in business

Nitjpurru's (Pigeon Hole) only store is fully stocked and ready to welcome repatriated residents, after the remote community was evacuated four months ago due to severe flooding.

Outback Stores was one of the first services to return to Pigeon Hole, setting up a temporary store to service tradespeople cleaning and restoring the community.

Last Friday the first busloads of residents returned home since the flood in March.

Store manager, Raghavendra 'Raghu' Bodanapati, was one of the last people out and one of the first to return. In March, Raghu helped residents evacuate before being airlifted out. He then returned to set up the temporary store.

"It's great to see everyone returning and they think the store looks good. Even though it's temporary it's well-arranged and well-stocked", said Raghu.

Returning residents were happy to see Raghu with plenty of stock to help them get back on track.

"It feels good to be home. Today we went shopping and bought clothes, sheets and blankets. The store looks good," said store director Mildred Hector.

The temporary store is located inside two shippings containers on the community basketball courts. A month's worth of stock is stored in another three shipping containers, and a full range of fresh food and groceries is on sale, with a special emphasis on kitchen items and appliances, such as plates, cutlery, toasters and kettles.

Opening hours are Monday to Friday, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm (closed for lunch 12:30-1:30 pm) and Saturday 9 to 12 pm.

Photos:

1. Raymond Hector, chair of Nitjpurru Store's board of directors inside the temporary store
2. Fully stocked shelves inside Nitjpurru temporary store

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About Us: Outback Stores provides retail store management and support services on a transparent fee for service basis to Indigenous owned community stores. We work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in a holistic way to improve health, nutrition, employment, training and economic outcomes in remote communities.

Over the past fifteen years Outback Stores has assisted 62 remote community stores in total. Of those it has halted the closure of 15 stores, managing 11 of these stores out of administration, 3 out of liquidation and a further 10 stores through significant financial challenges.