## Broadcasters hope Inuktitut coverage will grow

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

away from their family and loved ones for many weeks, so I think that's the moment where I've been able to kind of grasp what it takes to be an athlete at the Olympics," he said.

Ningeongan's favourite part of doing live commentary for hockey is when a player scores a goal, he

"That's where the excitement happens.... You want your audience to be excited alongside what you're saying, so that's the best part and what makes me enjoy what I do," he said. "We're trying to keep our audience entertained as we follow along on TV."

Kusugak, meanwhile, finds he loves helping unilingual Inuktitut speakers enjoy the "finer points" of a hockey game by working out the translations for terms such as interference, offside and icing.

Coincidentally, Ningeongan and Kusugak are calling Olympic hockey in the same month that Nunavut is marking Ugausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq, an annual "celebration of our language."

"Being able to use our language is so important for the preservation and strengthening of it," Kusugak said. He said opportunities to promote Inuktitut on this scale "don't come by very often" so he feels it's especially important to take advantage of them.

Both Ningeongan and Kusugak said they'd love to have more opportunities to advance Inuktitutlanguage commentating for sports, and encourage anyone interested in it to take a shot.

"For anybody that wants to try something like this, I absolutely encourage them to just give it a shot, do it for fun," Kusugak said. "Just try to enjoy it but also see it as an opportunity to showcase and strengthen our language."

Kusugak said he hopes their Inuktitut coverage during these Winter Games helps a wider audience enjoy the hockey matches, especially for family and friends back home in Rankin Inlet, a town he called "hockey-crazy."

"We have an amazing minor hockey support system for the kids that like to play, and parents and volunteers and family members like to get involved in hockey ... it's not just about the sport,"

Rankin Inlet runs a

and at the start of each season coaches "talk about the importance of healthy living, teamwork and being involved with the community, so hockey is almost like a rallying point and something common that the people of Rankin really do support," Kusugak said.

"I just really hope that we can see something like this again in the future, and not just for hockey but other sports or other events where it promotes our language and culture," Kusugak said.

On Thursday, CBC North will begin broadcasting the men's games the radio Ningeongan's and Kusugak's Inuktitut commentary. First up will be Canada vs. Germany.

Winter 2022 hockey camp every year Olympics will run until



David Ningeongan (left) and Pujjuut Kusugak (right) of Rankin Inlet are working together to provide Inuktitutlanguage commentary for CaBC's coverage of Olympic hockey games at Beijing 2022. (Photo courtesy of Pujjuut Kusugak)

Feb. 20 in Beijing (Feb. 19 men's gold-medal hockey in Canada), when the game will air.

**NEWS** OTTAWA づつぐ —

## 'Self-centred' protest not about freedom, students say

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Both Angalik and Pilgrim said they've been putting off going to the grocery store because of reports of unmasked people entering stores.

"I've been more afraid of contacting COVID than before," Angalik said. Pilgrim added she's worried for the people who work at grocery stores and any immunocompromised people who could be shopping there.

The pair said they are particularly concerned they'll be harassed if they go near the demonstra-

Several organizers of the demonstrations have ties to far-right, extremist organizations. Footage from the first weekend of protests showed some people waving Nazi and Confederate flags, and downtown residents have reported being targeted and harassed for wearing  $_{\mbox{\colored}}$  masks in public.

"I've been completely avoiding going near downtown from all the ই horror stories I've heard from people being harassed, having things thrown at them, their masks removed and the ⋾ racial slurs that have been thrown out and the violence that has ensued on people," Pilgrim said.

"Being a young Indigenous woman, I al-

ready have some sort of makes me really angry beinternal fear of these aggressive men," Angalik added. "Trying to go to Loblaws to go grocery shopping and seeing these huge, aggressive men without masks standing right in front of the doorway.... I'm afraid of going out."

Inuit organizations in Ottawa have denounced the protests, saying concerns about harassment and noise have impacted their ability to support urban Inuit.

A Feb. 3 statement Tungasuvvingat Inuit urged demonstrators to "go home" so vulnerable urban Indigenous communities could "feel safe again and regain access to cultural programming and essential services." The Inuuqatigiit Centre For Inuit Children, Youth and Families issued a statement the following day that the organization has experienced a "major disruption" in its ability to provide programming "in a safe setting" due to the ongoing demonstrations.

Angalik said the impact of the demonstrations on Ottawa's Indigenous communities worries her.

"It's surprising how the police and how the government have not really been taking control of the protests here, compared to how they treat Indigenous protesters. It cause it's so clearly so unfair," Angalik said. "If this were an Indigenous protest, it would not be handled like this."

"People don't have the freedom right now to be against this protest. If I were to go and scream at them today, it would be very dangerous, from the things I've heard from women in my life and people of colour," she added.

On Sunday, Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson declared a state of emergency in the capital.

Pilgrim and Angalik said they're hopeful that the demonstrations will end soon, but they're taking it one day at a time.

"I don't think it's right to silence people who want to protest for what they believe in, but when it has the impact that this has had on minorities and people just trying to live their lives, I think there needs to be some steps taken," Pilgrim said.

Angalik called the demonstrators "hypocritical and very self-centred."

"This freedom protest is impeding on other people's freedom of being able to walk safely down the streets," Angalik said.

"This is not about freedom anymore. It's freedom for a specific group of people."

## NuñatsiaQ

PUBLISHER ÞÝbĊLUCÞÝÞN Michael Roberts L∆d<sup>c</sup> Ġ><sup>c</sup>

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Managing Editor ⊲⊳ርና∩ኑ ፭ናቦ⁵ለ∆ኑ Corey Larocque d₁ ∟▷ʕ♭ coreyl@nunatsiaq.com

Web Editor <sup>ና</sup>bS\Dታ<sup>ь</sup>d<sup>c</sup> ሷ<sup>ና</sup>ρ<sup>ь</sup>ረΔት John Thompson <sup>'</sup>ታ<sup>°</sup> Ċ<sup>ι</sup>\<sup>°</sup> johnt@nunatsiaq.com

Web Editor 'bና\⊳ኑቴና ፭፡የኮረΔት Randi Beers ▷Ṣ<sup>a</sup>∩ ∧▷<sup>s</sup> randib@nunatsiaq.com

Reporter つちしゅうこうらん Madalyn Howitt LCC<sup>®</sup> H⊲⊳&<sup>c</sup> madalynh@nunatsiaq.com

Reporter つちしゃちゅう David Lochead CΔ&<sup>c</sup> ċHΔ˙<sup>c</sup> davidl@nunatsiag.com

Jeff Pelletier → □ へ △ △ △ △ jeffp@nunatsiaq.com Reporter つちしゅうこうらん

Reporter つちしゃちょうかい

Mélanie Ritchot Γασ Ραςίςς melanier@nunatsiaq.com Reporter ⊃հレゥհ⊂▷ˤゥႶ

David Venn C∆&<sup>c</sup> &<<sup>o</sup> davidv@nunatsiaq.com

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Taylor Roberts C△⊃ Ś><sup>C</sup>\ 1-800-263-1452 Ext. 131 Fax/ <a href="https://bchais.com/bc/bdc">bchbchbdc</a>: (867) 979-4763 ads@nunatsiag.com

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Andrea Gray 4° Dad Jà Krista Klassen da'C bàs

Translator コクc へんと Therese Kunuk ∩∴√ d൧♭ ▷dĹ⊃ీ

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P.O. Box 8, Iqaluit NU XOA 0H0 Tel/▷°b⊂▷Ċ: (867) 979-5357 Fax/~bdc: (867) 979-4763

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