

Telikom close to TV takeover

By GYNNIE KERO
TELIKOM PNG is looking at closing a deal this week for the acquisition of 100% shares in Niugini Media Ltd's EMTV, according to board chairman Mahesh Patel.
 In October, the state owned entity and NML's parent company – Fiji

Television Ltd signed a memorandum of undertaking (MOU) with regard to the acquisition.
 Under the terms of the agreement, Telikom would have exclusive rights to carry out a due diligence on MNL and make an assessment of value of the MNL.

Telikom was supposed to have made an offer to acquire the MNL business before Nov.
 Telikom CEO Michael Donnelly had said such investment was subject to the regulatory approvals.
 Patel said: "Telikom has put in a bid for 100% of EMTV; we are just

waiting on statutory approvals to come through, so there's a big process for approvals to come through. ICCA, NICTA (National Information and Communication Technology Authority), IPBC, Ministry for Finance so its well underway, we are trying to hopefully close the deal

this week but no promises." Donnelly said: "With the MNL acquisition, we will be able to extend our offering beyond voice and data services to include content along with FM100 business unit to the PNG market. Telikom recently acquired Datec PNG Ltd.

Road reopens, relieves rubber production

By SHIRLEY MAULUDU
POOR road access in outlying areas of Western has been a hindrance to rubber production in the province for many years, Tutuwe Ara Association chairman Kasi Gendanai says.
 However, he said rubber farmers within certain areas of the Ningerum LLG, North Fly district, were anticipating a revival of the cash crop in the area.
 Gendanai said locals had engaged in producing and selling the cash crop but the lack of access to proper roads had hindered production.
 The farmers earn about K300 per week from the sale of rubber.
 He said the most recent opening of Pampenai road – with the support from Ok Tedi Development Foundation has given the people hope to revive rubber production in the area.
 The Pampenai road connects six villages.



Men at Pampenai village with their piles of rubber ready to be sold to buyers at Kiunga, Western.

It was initially constructed under the government's rural road programme. However, it deteriorated over the years into a walking track.
 It has been a priority that the road be reconstructed to enable accessibility to existing rubber blocks and provides means for local landowners settling along the Tabubil to Kiunga highway to return home and tap their trees.
 Gendanai said: "We (people) have engaged in growing rubber and others like eagle wood, vegetables, vanilla, pineapple and have fish pond projects but there was no proper road links to bring all these to the markets and buyers in Kiunga and Tabubil," he said.
 "There are more than 100 farmers in the area who have been planting rubber for the past 11 years.
 "We were telling ourselves, once the road is opened, we will go back to growing the crops.
 "We want to plant more vanilla, rubber, have more fish ponds and grow more pineapples because we feel we can earn more from them.
 "People eventually gave up because they don't want to carry 30-40kg of rubber about 10 kilometres out to the main road."

Leader challenges women

A FEMALE leader in Western has urged the local community and women in the province to create business opportunities for their own sustainability.
 Tutuwe Ara Association Women's representative Cathleen Pusa encouraged women to be more involved in small scale activities given basic infrastructure like good roads.
 She advised against reselling of food or non-food items.
 On Monday, locals from Western, witnessed the opening of the Pampenai road in the Ningerum local level government in the North Fry district.

She said given the new road brings many benefits in terms of spin off activities.
 "I want to challenge the young women and young girls – don't go and buy Twisties, noodles, Big Boy at shops in Kiunga and come and sell again at Ningerum market.
 "Work on the land, get your hands dirty and you will see the fruits of your hard work," Pusa added.
 She then urged the men to make good use of the road instead of getting involved in illegal activities.
 Pusa thanked the Ok Tedi Development Foundation for taking the leading role in bringing infrastructure development (road) into the area.

Investment fair, reasonable

MELBOURNE: The Coca-Cola Company's planned US\$500 million (K1.28b) investment in the Indonesian operations of subsidiary Coca-Cola Amatil is fair and reasonable, an independent expert says.
 In return for the investment, Coke wants to take a 29.4 per cent stake in Coca-Cola Bottling Indonesia PT, a subsidiary of Coca-Cola Amatil (CCA). – AAP

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