



PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Post-Courier

Since 1969 No. 9730

Wednesday, July 25, 2007

Airfreight K1.70, Port Moresby edition K1.20

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- Independents already 'claimed'.

By ALEX RHEENEY

BEHIND-the-scene negotiations between pro and anti-National Alliance Party (NA) political parties on a possible government coalition have intensified.

While NA declarations continue to increase blazing a trail across the political landscape, its rivals were gathering in Port Moresby under a grouping put together by PNG Party leader and Moresby North-west MP Sir Mekere Morauta and Lae MP and New Generation Party leader Bart Philemon.

The Government executive aircraft Kumul is being used to fly newly declared pro-NA MPs to Wewak with another trip expected this morning out of Port Moresby.

Angoram MP and Public Enterprise, Information and Development Minister Arthur Somare was seen in East New Britain at the weekend, looking for hotels for NA and its coalition partners.

Peoples Progress Party (PPP) founder and former prime minister Sir Julius Chan's win yesterday, as the New Ireland provincial MP-elect, injects a new dimension in the political horse-trading as PPP joins Pangu Pati with three MPs declared.

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SEIZED: With vote counting almost over in the Enga Province, soldiers and police on election duties continue to discover and seize all sorts of weapons. Pictured are soldiers Sgt Vincent Wriken, holding an SLR weapon and Cpl Noel Orim and Pte Mathew Elliot showing the ammunition magazine and link seized during a dawn raid on a village on Monday. A Browning automatic pistol was also seized. REPORT ON PAGE 18.

Picture: PNG DEFENCE FORCE.

By MACKHENLY KAIOK

THE Papua New Guinea Radio-communications and Telecommunication Technical Authority (PANGTEL) has revoked Digicel's licence and has asked the company to immediately stop operations.

PANGTEL also sent back Digicel's two cheques for the payment of the licences totalling K918,437.42, just four days after the Caribbean-based company launched its retail services in Port Moresby.

Digicel chairman and founder Denis O'Brien retaliated yesterday afternoon and took out a court order restraining PANGTEL from revoking Digicel's licence.

PANGTEL director general Charles Punaha in his letter to Digicel said due to amendments to the Information, Communication and Technologies policy, Digicel's licence was null and void.

The formal revocation of Digicel's licence will spark a public outcry, especially from customers who are holding four-day-old Digicel mobile phones.

In the letter dated July 20, just one day before Digicel launched, Mr Punaha advised Digicel it's interim Spectrum licence had been withdrawn and warned it had to stop all operations.

Failure to do this could lead to PANGTEL pulling down Digicel's satellite towers.

Mr Punaha said the revocation of the licence followed a direction from Public Enterprise, Information and Development Minister Arthur Somare.

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