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Questions raised over missing coke

By ROSALIA TUI

AUTHORITIES have clammed up over why the public was told only on Wednesday that seven cocaine bars had disappeared from the High Court exhibit room in Suva, despite Chief Registrar Tomasi Bainivalu saying on Thursday that the drugs had been missing since earlier this year.

Who knew? Who was investigating? Who was checking the exhibits?

And who will ultimately answer for the months-long gap between the disappearance and its public disclosure?

Until those questions are answered, accountability remains as elusive as the missing cocaine.

■ Full report on **PAGE 5**



CARNIVAL HEAT ... Queen contestants Miss Vision Marketing Pte Ltd Adi Vika Tinai (left), Miss Haroons Hardware Bulou Lily Grace Vualeba, Miss Duadua Beach Resort Verenika Salusalu, Miss Waqatabu Handicraft Vasenai Tabu Talakuli and Miss Rakiraki Town Council Vasiti Suraki vie for the Miss Rakiraki title during the Vodafone Rakiraki Carnival at Davui Ground yesterday. Picture: REINAL CHAND

FCCC: Food costs may rise

By JAKE WISE

FOOD prices could rise in Fiji as developing El Nino conditions affect local food production and increase the cost of imported goods.

The Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission (FCCC) has warned consumers and businesses of drier conditions in the coming months that could place upward pressure on the cost and availability of food, freight and other essential goods.

Sugarcane has been identified as particularly vulnerable, while crops including rice, cassava and dalo could also be affected.

■ Full report on **PAGE 16**

UP TO \$1M IN FINES PROPOSED

Hands off State land

By ANISH CHAND

COMPANIES caught illegally occupying or exploiting State land could face fines of up to \$1million under sweeping proposed reforms to Fiji's 81-year-old State Lands Act.

Individuals could face fines of up to \$250,000 and up to five years' jail, while companies could face 10 years' imprisonment.

Illegal sand and gravel extraction, unauthorised construction and tree-cutting are also in the crosshairs, with the Director of Lands set to gain stronger enforcement powers.

■ Full report on **PAGE 3**



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