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BUSY PROGRAM FOR GAB TITUI CULTURAL CENTRE GRAND REOPENING

As builders near completion of Stage Two works in the \$4 million Gab Titui renovation project, staff at the Centre are preparing for its grand reopening on 23 July 2013.

The Centre has been closed since December 2012 to undergo extensive renovations to the building's exterior, interior gallery spaces and the surrounding grounds.

Torres Strait Regional Authority Chairman, Mr Joseph Elu, has described the works as a major step forward in developing Gab Titui's profile as the gateway to Torres Strait culture and art.

"The first stage of the renovations has created improved access to the building with a disability ramp, new public amenities, viewing platform and renovation of the main gallery's western wall to reduce heat and improve the display and storage environment.

"Stage Two works began in January 2013 and include renovations to the interior of the building, upgrading existing display areas to museum standards and refitting the Centre's shop."

An outdoor performance area is also being created, including the construction of an undercover stage, which Mr Elu said will be made available for culture based activities and performances.

"This outdoor area is an important space for community involvement in the Centre – for members of our communities to share knowledge and skills, stories and to encourage youth in culture and art."

The reopening event will take place over three days in July 2013 and include not only the reopening of the Centre, but also the opening of the 2013 Gab Titui Indigenous Art Award and the Centre's latest Cultural Maintenance exhibition, *Keriba Ad/Ngoelmun Gidhal: Our Stories*.

"*Keriba Ad/Ngoelmun Gidhal* is an exhibition of cultural objects chosen and generously loaned by the communities of the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area," Mr Elu said.

"It is an introduction to the region, narrated by the communities of the Torres Strait and NPA through their choice of artefact."

Celebrations and activities are also set to include traditional and contemporary art skills workshops, the launch of Seaman Dan's biography and Pat Mau's CD, as well as a film night, the official launch of Torres Strait documentary, *Ailan Kastom*, and performances by visiting dance teams.

“The reopening marks a new chapter for the Gab Titui Cultural Centre and the communities of the Torres Strait, which we’re eager to share with the public,” Mr Elu said.

“We encourage and hope for everyone to come along.”

Gab Titui reopening celebrations coincide with Thursday Island NAIDOC celebrations, presenting community and visitors with a week of activities to enjoy.

For more information on Gab Titui’s reopening celebrations or renovation work, contact the Gab Titui Cultural Centre on 07 4069 0888.

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