

NOTICE PLEASE READ ...

The news below is translated to English from all media in Dili including hard copy, radio and Television media.

Disclaimer

The contents of this service do not reflect the views of Guide Post (Magazine) and Guide Post does not vouch for the accuracy of these reports including the accuracy of the translations or the correctness of the original material or any loss or distortion of meaning caused by formatting the text provided, for the magazine. The reports have been provided by Timor-Leste Subscriber News Local and International Media Monitoring and any enquiries should be directed to that organization. The following statement is attached to every report we receive. Timor-Leste Subscriber News Local and International Media Monitoring. (The contents of this service do not reflect the views of FMDC. News and opinion is summarized; and headlines are edited in English to give the best possible sense of the original headline. For more detailed information about any story in this bulletin; or for tailored sector-specific monitoring contact: francisco@tlmdc.org; fernanda@tlmdc.org)

Local Daily News

February 15, 2019

ADB and Govt talk on development program for all sectors

GMN TV, February 14, 2019 language source: Tetun

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government, which consist of different ministries and stakeholders on Thursday (14/2) held a workshop, discussing about future national development program for all sectors. Head of the Organizing Committee from the ADB, Susan Roth said ADB's vision was to help support the country's national development; therefore it was important to work together with the Government of Timor-Leste by making a proper plan. "So, the objective of the workshop today is to explore if a country like Timor-Leste can actually lead pro and take the latest advantage of technology development, but also social innovation and move very quickly to watch a future that as prosperous and sustainable," she said. Representative of the Ministry of Education, Antoninho Pire said was good to strengthen the Government's plan to move the country's development forward.

WHO calls on Parliament to produce law for tobacco use

Televizaun Timor-Leste, February 14, 2019 language source: Tetun

The world Health Organization (WHO) has called on the National Parliament to produce a sanction law, in order to be used for reducing numbers of the use of alcohol and tobaccos in the country. Member of the Parliamentary Committee for Health Affairs, Maria Barreto said it was necessary for the Parliament to draft the law in order to resolve tobacco issue in Timor-Leste. "This workshop is good as it could provide information to the members of the Parliament in order to intervene in the issue of health, especially in resolving the tobacco issue," she said. Representative of WHO, Rajav Pandav said the price of tobacco and alcohol in the country was very low; therefore it contribute to tuberculosis (TB) in the country.

Rotary Youth Club celebrates Valentine with children

Televizaun Timor-Leste, February 14, 2019 language source: Tetun

Rotary Youth Club on Thursday (14/2) celebrated Saint Valentine Day with children selling goods at Largo Lecidere, Dili. The Rotary Youth Leadership Club celebrated the day with the children in the street by sharing love through the acts of charity, TVTL reported. Raina Pereira Ximenes said during the celebrations of the day, they offered gifts to the children as symbol of love in life. "So, we are here to share love with the children, offering them something that we have, so that we can have feelings of what the true love is," she said.

Rice price soar in Covalima as poor roads effect transport

Independente, February 15, 2019

The cost of the rice is forecast to continue to rise in some rural areas after the effects of heavy rain has cut transport of basic goods pushing up prices by 30%. A price of a 25-kilogram bag of rice in market stores across Covalima was selling for \$17 to \$20 on Friday, up from \$12 year on year. Recent heavy rain has damaged roads in Mau Katar, Fatu Lulik, and Fohorem, stopping heavy vehicles carrying goods accessing parts of Covalima. In an address in parliament on Monday, Alexandrinho Cardoso, of the Fretilin party, said many people in Covalima were concerned about food security. He called on the government to fix the damaged roads. The call comes almost a month since the Ministry of Social Solidarity said it had made available 900 tones of subsidies rice for rice-growing farming families in districts where crops were destroyed last year. Under the plan, the governemtn said it would sell 25-kilogram bags of rice for \$11 to families in Viqueque, Baucau, and Lautem. At the time, a 25-kilogram bag of rice in Timor-Leste had increased from \$12 in 2018, to up to \$18. Augusto Junior Trindade, the Director of the National Logistics Centre, told the Independente that rice prices had increased by 20 – 50 percent across Timor-Leste on the back of low local supply volume. Trindade said 626 tons of rice had been imported from Vietnam to increase supply. He said farmers seeking to buy the subsidized rice should contact their village chief. In 2017 and 2018 the level of imported cereals reached the record high level of 190,000 tones in Timor-Leste, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. Timor-Leste remains heavily dependent on imported cereals to meets its consumption needs.

MS and US Pacific Partnership hold talks on social assistance program

Independente, February 15, 2019 Language source: Tetun

The Ministry of Health (MS) Director, Odete Viegas met with the annual U.S. -led Pacific Partnership's Representative Major Aquila Knopf to discuss about social assistance and humanitarian aids that the U.S. Pacific Partnership could provide. This year humanitarian assistance program in Timor-Leste will include health assistance and basic infrastructure rehabilitations. The meeting was also attended by the World Health Organization (WHO) in Timor-Leste's Representative, and Timorese Defense Force (F-FDTL)'s Representative including other relevant departments of the Ministry of Health. The U.S.-led Pacific Partnership is an annual deployment of the U.S. Navy forces to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster reliefs including medical, dental, and engineering assistance to the pacific nations as well as strengthening relationship and security ties between the nations.

ConocoPhillips and Shell's interests' buyout: Ruak says Govt still waits for High Court decision on LAP

GMN Diario Nacional, February 15, 2019 Language source: Tetun

Timor-Leste's government is not able to process the withdrawal of US\$650 million from the nation's Petroleum Fund yet because opposition parties in parliament have requested High Court to review the constitutionality of the changes to the Petroleum Activity Law (LAP) that will change the conditions in which money from the nation's Petroleum Fund can be used. Prime Minister Taur Matan Ruak said the government still waited for High Court decision before withdrawing money from petroleum fund. "We are still waiting for the High Court's decision on LAP before processing the buyout of ConocoPhillips and Royal Dutch Shell's stakes in Greater Sunrise Fields," Ruak told reporters outside Presidential Palace on Thursday (14/02). On December 11, 2018, President of the Republic Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo had vetoed the proposed changes to the law, however, National Parliament overruled the President's decision on January 10, in its second vote, forcing President of the Republic to enact the Law a week after. During the second parliamentary vote that saw 41 members of parliament overrule the law changes decree, members of opposition Fretilin Party had staged a walkout in protest of the bill, declaring the bid "illegal". Fretilin have said the decree could misrepresent or dilute the difference between financial assets and other assets. The purchase of ConocoPhillips's 30% and Shell's 26 % stakes in the Greater Sunrise field, for which Timor-Leste government has committed to pay US\$350 million and US\$300 million, respectively, is seen as a pivotal first step in the government's multi-billion-dollar vision to create an onshore gas-processing industry that includes construction of a pipeline from the Sunrise gas fields to Suai. Both deals, the first in October with ConocoPhillips and the second in late November with Shell, were conditional on receiving funding approval from the Timor-Leste Council of Ministers and National Parliament, as well as regulators and other approvals.

Ruak vows to finalize his cabinet gap shortly

Timor Post, February 15, 2019 Language source: Tetun

Prime Minister Taur Matan Ruak has vowed to complete his coalition government cabinet shortly amid heightened concern over the gaps in his government after the President of the Republic approved his government's US\$1.48 billion budget for 2019. "I continue discussing with President of the Republic to find solutions to the pending nominations of several government members," Ruak told media outside Presidential Palace after meeting with President Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo on Thursday (14/02). Ruak said he was aware the gap in his cabinet would affect the implementation of 2019 State Budget, so as the head of the government, he would continue discussing with President of the Republic to find solutions. Commentators and observers have called for completion of the government structure, warning that several Ministries were currently "ineffective" because of lack of leadership. Camilio Ximenes, a professor of political science from Timor-Leste's National University (UNTL), said the stalemate of government appointments needed to be resolved "immediately", otherwise, it would be a boomerang to the Alliance of Change for Progress (AMP) government. "I think AMP needs to give in and provide alternatives to replace those who have been refused by President of the Republic, otherwise, it will be a boomerang for AMP," Ximenes told GMN at UNTL Campus on Wednesday (13/02). The government's cabinet has been incomplete since June 2018 when President Lu-Olo refused to swear in 11 nominated members because of alleged involvement in corruption investigations, marring the formation of the new government.

Singapore still questions Timor-Leste's ability to join ASEAN

Timor Post, February 15, 2019 Language source: Tetun

Timor-Leste's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Dionisio Babo recognizes that Singapore had been the main holdout in Dili's accession to ASEAN. "Singapore still doubts about our capacity and ability, but each ASEAN member also has doubted Timor-Leste's accession to the group, and we continue trying to convince them that Timor-Leste's is ready and in good condition to join the regional group," Minister Babo told media at Government Palace on Wednesday (13/02). He said Timor-Leste had submitted its application to join ASEAN in 2011 and it had been almost nine years, but it had not yet got a "green light." "We will have to see this year, if there is still no green light, and then we need to redefine our policy of ASEAN membership," Babo said. ASEAN was founded by Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines in 1967. Brunei Darussalam joined the group in 1984, Vietnam in 1995 and Laos and Myanmar in 1997 and 1999. ASEAN was established to accelerate economic growth, social and cultural developments, as well as promoting regional peace, collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interests in the region.

February 14, 2019

Finantil secondary school rooms in poor conditions

Televizaun Timor-Leste, February 13, 2019 language source: Tetun

Dili's Finantil Secondary School, which is located in Comoro, a suburb if Timor-Leste's Capital is in poor conditions, as TVTL, the public television reported that two rooms of the school are flooded in the rainy season. Head Master of the School, Alosius Maubere said this condition had affected the learning process as these two classes were flooded. "When it rains, two classes in this school house are flooded, however the students help clean it before going to the class," he said. Meanwhile, Jose Pina Ferreira said it was urgent to rehabilitate this house school as it had impacted the learning process.

US committed to developing tourism in TL

Televizaun Timor-Leste, February 13, 2019 language source: Tetun

The US Government has declared its willingness and commitment to be in partnership with the country's public and private sectors in order to strengthen the development of tourism sector in Timor-Leste. In regard to this, USAID has officially signed an agreement with Timor-Leste Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCITL), Kaebauk Investimentu no Finansas, and Uniao Cooperativa Hanai Malu to develop the country's tourism sector. Secretary of State for Professional Training and Employment Policy (SEFOPE), Juliao da Silva said it was important to better develop the country's tourism sector in order to diversify Timor-Leste's economy in the future. "So, it is important to better develop the country's potentiality like natural wealth, historical and cultural sites," he said.

Timorese workers in Korea and Australia contributes to economy

Televizaun Timor-Leste, February 13, 2019 language source: Tetun

Secretary of State for Professional Training and Employment Policy (SEFOPE) reported that Timorese workers who are being employed in South Korea and Australia had contributed to the country's economic growth. Director General for SEFOPE, Paulo Alves said young Timorese working in Korea and Australia contributed US \$ 39 million through tax payment. "According to the data that we have, from 2012 until 2018 that our young Timorese have paid taxes more than US \$ 30 million," he said. The Government of Timor-Leste is continuing to cooperate with South Korean and Australian governments to employ more young Timorese in those countries.

Japan ready to welcome Timorese workers, says Ambassador

Televizaun Timor-Leste, February 13, 2019 language source: Tetun

Japanese Ambassador to Timor-Leste, Hiroshi Minami said the Government of Japan was ready to welcome and employ Timorese workers in field of horticulture and other specialized sectors in that country. Mr. Minami made the comments after meeting with Secretary of State for SEFOPE, Juliao da Silva on Wednesday (13/2). “Yes, I met with the secretary of state, Juliao da Silva, we talked about possibility of employing Timorese workers in Japan. My government has not yet made decision, therefore we are in communication on possibility of sending Timorese workers to be employed in Japan,” he said.

Timor-Leste’s Global Corruption Ranking Declines

Independente, February 14, 2019

Timor-Leste has failed to maintain its improving ranking in a global measure of government corruption, dropping back three scores in 2018 after making steady progress until 2016. The most widely recognized measure of public-sector corruption, Transparency International’s corruption index (CPI), was released January 29, ranking Timor-Leste 105th least corrupt in the world. Timor-Leste scored 36 from a possible 100, placing it just below Indonesia (38) and Thailand (36). Denmark was ranked the least corruption nation in the world, just behind New Zealand. Timor-Leste’s results represent a common trend across the Asia Pacific which Transparency International labeled as a region showing “little to no progress on anti-corruption.” Since 2017, several countries in the region have declined by two or three points, including Vietnam (33), Maldives (31) and Bangladesh (26). “Unfortunately, these countries share several common factors that work to counteract anti-corruption efforts. These include a lack of strong independent democratic institutions that can deliver checks and balances, and a strong-handed central government that limits or suppresses free and open media and citizen participation,” Delia Ferreira Rubio, Chair of Transparency International, said in a statement. “As the performance of democratic institutions weakens and political rights decline, corruption festers and grows,” Rubio said. The index, which ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and business people, uses a scale 10 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean. More than two-thirds of countries scored below 50 in this year’s CPI, with an average score of 43. “It reveals that the continued failure of most countries to significantly control corruption is contributing to a crisis in democracy around the world. While there are exceptions, the data shows that despite some progress, most countries are failing to make serious inroads against corruption,” Rubio said.

Police and Military to step up village patrols in Joint Anti-Crime Campaign

Independente, February 14, 2019

Police and military patrols of Timorese communities are to be stepped up amid heightened concern about risk of criminal activity, Timor-Leste’s Minister of Defense and Security has said. Filomeno Paixao said officials had reviewed the criminal threat to Timor-Leste and decided that protection of communities should be increased. Paixao said many people were afraid to leave their homes at night, fearful of their personal security. To support the campaign, Paixao said he had ordered Timorese Defense Force (F-FDTL) Commander Major General Lere Anan Timur and the Commander of Timorese National Police (PNTL) Commissioner Julio Hornai to immediately disperse more officers into the field. As well as increase in visibility of police and security force members, Paixao said steps would be taken to conduct routine on-foot inspections of homes and road-side vehicle inspections in search of illegal weapons.

Police arrest 23 people including a village chief at KORK Oath and Discipleship Ceremony

Independente, February 14, 2019 Language source: Tetun

Dili County Police arrested 23 people including a village chief for taking oath and discipleship to be members of martial art group, Klibur Oan Rai Klaran (KORK) on Tuesday in a sweep targeting gangs amid heightened concern over underground violence which allegedly connected to martial art activities. Police said the group was using a wake in a deceased house in Manleu, Dili for taking oath and discipleship as disguise. “We caught them red-handed and seized their oath attributes including list of names of new members,” Dili County Police Commander, Pedro Belo told reporters at his office in Kaikoli, Dili on Wednesday. KORK and two other martial arts clubs namely the Faithful Heart of Terate Brotherhood (PSHT) and the Kera Sakti Timor-Leste Association (KS-TL) were previously banned under Timor-Leste’s zero-tolerance law. Rival gangs attacks have been reported happened in Baucau, Dili, and Liquisa since December 2018.

WHO committed to supporting Timor-Leste’s health sector

Independente, February 14, 2019 Language source: Tetun

The World Health Organization (WHO) is committed to supporting and providing technical assistance to improve Timor-Leste’s health service. WHO made the commitment when organizing a workshop with the National Parliament (PN) Committee F (for health issues) on how to monitor and evaluate health sector in Timor-Leste. PN Committee F member, Maria Burumali Barreto said WHO in Timor-Leste and PN Committee F talked about how to better monitor and develop health sector in the country. Meanwhile, WHO’s Representative Rajesh Pandaf said PN Committee F was a legislator and inspector of health issues, therefore, it was important to remind them of health issues and problems in the country, so that they were well aware of it and could help resolve it.

Government appointment stalemate: Commentator says AMP should compromise

GMN Diario Nacional, February 14, 2019 Language source: Tetun

Timor-Leste’s ruling coalition government has been operating without several key ministers since it took office in June 2018 and with the approval of its proposed US\$1.48 billion budget for 2019 by President of the Republic last week, concerns about the effectiveness of its performance are increasing. Commentators say the blocked nominations of almost dozen nominees of Alliance of Change for Progress (AMP) would take its toll on the performance of the AMP government this year. Camilio Ximenes, a professor of political science from Timor-Leste’s National University (UNTL), said the stalemate of government appointments needed to be resolved immediately, otherwise, it would be a boomerang to the AMP government. “I think AMP needs to give in and provide alternatives to replace those who have been refused by President of the Republic, otherwise, it will be a boomerang for AMP,” Ximenes told GMN at UNTL Campus on Wednesday (13/02). Last week, after the promulgation of the 2019 General State Budget, President of National Parliament, Arao Noe has called on Prime Minister Taur Matan Ruak to “immediately” finalize his cabinet warning that several Ministries were currently “ineffective” because of lack of leadership. He said the incomplete government structure risked successful implementation of the 2019 budget program. The government’s cabinet has been incomplete since June 2018 when President Lu-Olo refused to swear in 11 nominated members because of alleged involvement in corruption investigations, marring the formation of the new government.

CNRT and Khunto urge Prime Minister and President to finalize govt cabinet

Timor Post, February 14, 2019 Language source: Tetun

The ruling parties in parliament; National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT) and Khunto have urged Prime Minister Taur Matan Ruak and President of the Republic to finalize the coalition government cabinet to ensure the successful implementation of 2019 General State Budget. The passing of the government's US\$1.48 billion budget last week has set up the major political issue of how the government will implement its program with nine members of its cabinet outstanding. Addressing parliament on Wednesday, CNRT Chairman, Duarter Nunes said CNRT would not replace its members who were refused by President of the Republic since there was no reason to replace them because they were innocent. "I think Prime Minister and President of the Republic need to be aware that 2019 state budget has passed, but how could the government execute the budget with the lack of leadership in the nine government ministries? Therefore, they need to resolve the gap," Nunes said. Echoing Nunes' words, Antonio Nobre, Chairman of Khunto, said President of the Republic and Prime Minister needed to swear in the pending government nominees from Alliance of Change for Progress (AMP) coalition to normalize the government's functions. "The lack of government members will affect the implementation of programs, so it is Prime Minister's responsibility to finalize his cabinet to ensure the effectiveness of programs implementation," Nobre said. The government's structure has been incomplete since June 2018 when President Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo refused to swear in 11 nominated members because of their alleged involvement in corruption investigations.

February 13, 2019

ADB presents economic development method to Govt

Televizaun Timor-Leste, February 12, 2019 language source: Tetun

Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Tuesday (12/2) presented economic development method to the Government. This method will help facilitate the Government to achieve the country's national development goal. Speaking to journalists, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Legislative Forms, Fidelis Magalhaes said during the meeting of Council of Ministers, the Government listened to the presentation by the representatives of ADB concerning the ideas and views about national development. "Today, the Council of Ministers listened to the presentation by the Asian Development Bank where they share their methods and knowledge about how to make predictions on the development process. So, today the Council of Ministers only listen to the ADB on its method," he said.

US Embassy holds seminar on nuclear security system

Televizaun Timor-Leste, February 12, 2019 language source: Tetun

The US Embassy on Monday (11/2) in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation held a seminar at Timor Plaza, talking about nuclear security system in accordance with international security standard. In her speech, the US Ambassador to Timor-Leste, Kathleen Fitzpatrick said this seminar was important to share information on the nuclear as new democratic country Timor-Leste needed to strengthen its security system. "Bring together our experts, from our depart of Energy from the United States of America, the expert of Nuclear safe car together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministries in Timor-Leste to discuss how we can work together," she said.

Govt and Japan to sign agreement on airport constructions

Televizaun Timor-Leste, February 12, 2019 language source: Tetun

Governments of Japan and Timor-Leste will sign agreement on the start of Nicolao Lobato International Airport construction project. The construction project will get start next year with a total amount of US \$ 45 million from the people of Japan. "Today the parties presented minutes of the discussion by the technical team of Timor-Leste and Japan. The agreement will be signed in May this year, the implementation of the project will begin next year with total duration of two years," Minister for Transportation and Telecommunication, Jose Agustino da Silva said. Meanwhile, Japanese Ambassador to Timor-Leste, Hiroshi Minami said the Government of Japan was ready to cooperate with the Government of Timor-Leste to implement the project next year with high quality. "I am hoping that my government and Timorese Government would sign a formal agreement in May this year. The construction project of the airport will be implemented next year," he said.

National Institute of Health realizes training on combating illegal drugs

Televizaun Timor-Leste, February 12, 2019 language source: Tetun

National Institute of Health has realized eight-day training for the Ministry of Social Solidarity's public civil servants and universities students in order to fight against illegal drug trafficking in the country. Director General for National Health Institute, Antonio Bonito said it was necessary for all state institutions to work together in order to combat illegal drug in the country. "This training is realized for eight days, it is focusing on the people who consume drugs. So, this is the way how we can prevent people from consuming illegal drugs and how we can provide special treatment for the affected people," he said.

President speaks out against budget and warns of "near-stagnant national economy"

Independente, February 13, 2019

The President of the Republic has delivered a clear warning to the ruling coalition government to "adopt more adequate public policies" and execute them more rigorously, or risk Timor-Leste's economic security. In his 2019 budget speech on Monday, Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo made a lengthy appeal to the government to implement "fiscal reform," and denounced continued reliance and high withdrawals from the nation's Petroleum Fund as a threat to the country's future. The withdrawal to cover the promulgated \$1.48 billion 2019 State budget from the nation's Petroleum Fund is 126.2% above the Estimated Sustainable Income (ESI). "This means that the budget deficit is largely financed through the transfer of the Petroleum Fund, with only US\$529 million falling within its Estimated Sustainable Income (ESI)," Lu-Olo said. The President warned this followed same pattern of withdrawals above ESI in 2012, 2015, 2016 and 2017. "We should be aware with the Government's forecast that in 2023 the final balance of the Petroleum Fund will be approximately US \$12 billion, and the current net worth of the oil wealth will be US \$96 million."

Lu-Olo said economic dependence on Timor-Leste's Petroleum Fund had accentuated as domestic revenues "remained at low levels, declining since 2016." "Indeed, the State Budget is now the only comprehensive public financial policy instrument available to the State annually to pursue policies and channel financial resources from oil revenues and non-oil domestic revenues," he said. The President also made clear that his decision to promulgate the budget was not indicative of support but made "in the present circumstances of a near-stagnant national economy, which urgently needs public funding." "It is up to the Government to manage these resources, in an effective and efficient manner." "But for the achievement of the objectives of economic growth and national development, it is indispensable that the National Parliament and the Government adopt more adequate public policies. It is also necessary to execute them more rigorously," he said. He implored the government to step up economic development responsibilities, making a number of recommendations for the 2020 state budget. This includes; "more" sustainable "greater budgetary balance," and equitable distribution between human development versus physical development and investments. He called for greater scrutiny of investments made using

the State Budget based on criteria of high social and economic return, “with priority for human capital, education and health, productive activities and employment.” The President also endorsed better protection Petroleum Fund assets, calling for strengthening of the criteria for eligible investment and a higher budget financing ratio based on internal tax revenues, long term fiscal sustainability and a concessional lending strategy.

Govt orders PNTL and F-FDTL to tackle conflict rigorously

Independente, February 13, 2019 Language source: Tetun

The Timorese government through its Minister of Defense and Security has ordered the Timorese National Police (PNTL) and Timorese Defense Force (F-FDTL) Commands to tackle conflict rigorously amid rise of underground violence allegedly linked to martial arts groups. Minister Filomeno Paixao said the growing subversive violence had threatened the state’s security and stability, therefore, it was time for police and military forces to act rigorously. “The police and military will start a joint operation and there is no limitation of forces using to tackle the violence,” Paixao told reporters at Government Palace on Tuesday (12/02). The dispatch of likely heavy-handed repression comes as an apparent response to PNTL Command’s appeal to use deathly force in tackling on-going subversive violence in several municipalities including Dili, Baucau, and Liquisa. Last week, PNTL Deputy Commander, Faustino Da Costa said they had submitted a request to the government to allow police to use militarized force when dealing with gang violence. “If the government allows, then we will use deterrence method because currently the violence amongst rival gangs are increasing and people are found carrying weapons such as slingshot arrows around and shooting innocent people during night time,” Commander Da Costa said. Early this week, President of the Republic had also summoned Minister Paixao to discuss about how to end the violence. Rival gangs attacks have been reported happened in Baucau, Dili, and Liquisa since December 2018.

EU and Portugal support Timor-Leste forest development

Independente, February 13, 2019 Language source: Tetun

The European Union (EU) and Portugal are committed to support Timor-Leste’s forest development. The two development partners made the commitment when EU Ambassador Alexandre Leitao and Ambassador Portugal, Jose Pedro Machado met with Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Joaquim Jose Gusmao dos Reis Martins. Minister Martins thanked EU and Portugal for their readiness to support Timor-Leste’s forest development. “We received five cars and five motorbikes from EU to facilitate our work in Liquisa and Ermera,” Minister Martins said in his speech after receiving the vehicles support from EU.

Fretilin accuses Xanana of discrediting judicial system

Timor Post, February 13, 2019 Language source: Tetun

The Fretilin opposition in parliament has warned of threat to Timor-Leste’s justice system after the President of Alliance of Change for Progress (AMP) coalition party, Xanana Gusmao wrote a letter to the Prosecutor-General Jose Ximenes, accusing him of being political parties’ instruments, amid corruption investigation against CNRT Secretary-General Francisco Kalbuadi Lay. Addressing parliament on Tuesday, Fretilin Deputy Chair, Francisco Miranda Branco said court was one of state bodies that entitled for ensuring compliance of laws, regulations and rules in the country, however, there were attempts to discredit the judicial system recently. On January 18, AMP’s President Xanana Gusmao, who is also the President of National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT), the biggest party in AMP coalition, sent a letter to Prosecutor-General Jose Ximenes, complaining about a notification that sent to him to authorize his party’s Secretary-General, Francisco Kalbuadi Lay to appear in Prosecution Office to be questioned. In his letter, he accused Prosecutor-General of being political parties’ instrument. “Fretilin is concerned with all the attempts to question, bring down, and discredit our judicial system. If the court, prosecutors, and judges are incompetent, then who else could play their roles to judge what is wrong and right?,” Branco said. He said Xanana’s letter was to put pressure on judicial actors that were processing corruption cases against former government members. Responding to the accusation, CNRT Bench member, Carmelita Moniz said Xanana’s letter was not to put pressure on prosecutors nor judges, it was simply a citizen complained to General Prosecutor Office regarding justice process that deviated from the laws. Ms Moniz said a president of a party had no legal force to authorize his or her party member to obey legal proceedings and the court did not need the party’s president’s permission in order to process a party’s member. “CNRT’s President simply voiced his disagreement and I myself also does not agree with a notification that sent to a party’s president asking his permission in order to process the party’s member, we can said that it is a political persecution,” she said. Lay, former Minister of Tourism, Art and Culture, and his colleague, Sergio Lobo, former Minister of Health, have been summoned by Prosecutor Office to be questioned regarding corruption allegations cases that involved the two them.

Govt members’ appointment stalemate: CNRT blames Public Prosecutor Office

Timor Post, February 13, 2019 Language source: Tetun

The National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT) Party, the biggest party, in the Alliance of Change for Progress (AMP) coalition, accused Public Prosecutor Office of leaking information to President of the Republic regarding AMP government nominations resulting in the block of nine AMP government nominees. Addressing parliament on Tuesday, CNRT Bench member, Carmelita Moniz said General Prosecutor Jose Ximenes had violated law for leaking confidential information to President of the Republic regarding AMP government candidates. “We have been blamed President of the Republic, but it is clearly the Public Prosecutor Office that disclosed the nominees’ names that under criminal investigation,” she said. Since June 2018, President Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo has refused to swear in nine government nominees mainly over their involvement in corruption investigations. The blocked nominations are seven people from the CNRT Party: Francisco Kalbuadi Lay, Helder Lopes, Tomas Do Rosario Cabral, Virgilio Smith, Jacinto Rigoberto Gomes De Deus, Sergio Gama Da C. Lobo, Amandio de Sa Benevides and two Jose Manuel Turquel and Antonio Verdial from the coalition’s other partner, Khunto.