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Local Daily News

September 29, 2020

Govt and Child Fund to support child development in TL

GMN TV, September 25, 2020 language source: Tetun

The Government of Timor-Leste through the Ministry of Education (ME) has officially signed an agreement with NGO international, Child Fund upon supporting child development programs in the country. Speaking to journalists, Child Fund Country Director, Elina de Castro said the objective of signing the agreement was to implement five programs that would help facilitate the children in the field of education. "This project is run to enhance the children's skills in the field of literacy. There are five programs that will be implemented where some of the programs are being implemented," she said. Meanwhile, Representative of ME, Odilia Martins thanked the Child Fund for financially funding this program saying it was necessary to help support the development of children in the country.

OPPT CPD-RDTL calls on govt to diversify TL's economy

GMN TV, September 28, 2020 language source: Tetun

OPPT (Timor-Leste Popular Labour Organization) – CPD-RDTL has called on the Government and the Catholic Church to organize and mobilize Timorese people to diversify the country's economy by farming. President of OPPT, Ivo de Jesus Sequiera made the call on Sunday (27/9) during his speech marking ceremony of harvesting four hectares of rice in Metinaro, a suburb of the Capital Dili. Mr. Ivo said it was necessary for the Government and the Catholic Church to organize the Timorese people to farm as an appropriate way to strengthen the country's economic growth and stop the imported products. "What OPPT and UNIJMA are doing is an example for our Government and the Catholic Church to mobilize our people gathering in Dili to be back to their home town to farm for diversifying our economy and strengthening our food sovereignty," he said.

TAIS holds campaign on nutritious and safe food

GMN TV, September 28, 2020 language source: Tetun

Timor-Leste's International School called TAIS has held a campaign on promoting nutritious and safe food for the children through a long march marking the Nutrition Day, falling on 25, 2020, GMN TV reports. GMN TV reported that the campaign was conducted to sensitize the public about the importance of nutritious food for the children's physical and mental development. "During the long march, the children were bringing them with paintings and pictures about various fruits and other nutritious foods," GMN TV reported.

Timor-Leste environmentalists concerned about increase in deforestation

Independente, September 29, 2020

Egenio Lemo "Ego", the head of Timor-Leste's permaculture and sustainable agriculture non profit-organization (PERMATIL), said on Monday the influence of deforestation on climate change was undeniable, as another dry wet season is forecast for the country. Early wet season rain statistics from the national agency forecasts a drier than average wet season to come. The preservation of native forest is regarded as important in the attempt to curb global warming due to its ability to absorb carbon from the air. Ego said PERMATIL was working with Timorese farmers to stop them burning and cutting down trees, and instead practice permaculture, an agriculture system that seeks to integrate human activity and the environment to create a highly efficient self-sustaining ecosystem. This method also aims to ensure that farmers can harvest food all year around securing livelihoods. "If we continue to burn and cut our trees we will exacerbate the dry," Ego said, adding that a drier climate was already impacting native animal numbers. In 2019, hundreds of rare Rusa indigenous deer living in Nino Konis Santana National Park in Timor-Leste's eastern cape died because of insufficient water, according to state media agency Tatoli. The government must get permission to cut down a tree from forestry police and plant replacement tree.

PN proposes US\$3 million for 2021 to build its new parliament complex

Independente, September 29, 2020 Language source: Tetun

Timor-Leste's National Parliament (PN) has proposed US\$16 million of funds for 2021 including US\$3 million for its new complex construction in Hera of Dili, PN Deputy President says. "The parliament's budget for 2021 is US\$16 million including US\$3 million to build a new parliament compound," PN Deputy President, Maria Angelina Sarmiento, told reporters outside the National Parliament after the meeting of parliamentary benches' leaders on Monday. In August, the government revealed the estimated cost of the new parliament building would be around US\$500,000 to US\$1 million. However, the new parliament complex which will sit at 10 hectares of land in Hera of Dili will include houses for Members of Parliament. Earlier when announcing the new parliament building construction plan, the President of the National Parliament, Aniceto Guterres, said the new parliament complex will include houses for Members of Parliament. "We all know that the current parliament building is not suitable anymore, thus it is important to have a new office and to better facilitate the MPs' works, we will also build houses for them in the complex," Guterres said.

Forcing children to work puts their future in peril

Independente, September 29, 2020 Language source: Tetun

Timor-Leste's State Secretary for Youth and Sport considered child labour as risking the child's future, therefore, he called on parents to better invest in their child education. Abrao Saldanha said many children in Timor-Leste worked to help their parents such as selling goods and food in the street, picking through garbage, working in the field and it is a reality facing many children in the country even though it is illegal. Timor-Leste's law sets minimum working age at 15 years old for non hazardous works. "Child labour is a sensitive issue because many children that sells vegetables and food in the streets claiming they are helping their parents which should not have happened because they are suppose to be in school, but that is the reality that we are facing," Saldanha told Independente at his office in Lecidere, Dili on Friday. He said they were working together with the State Secretariat for Professional Training and Employment and the National Commission for Child Protection to increase people's awareness and reduce child labour in the country.

President Lu Olo calls on judges to improve their working performance

Independente, September 29, 2020 Language source: Tetun

Timor-Leste's President Francisco Lu Olo Guterres has called on the judiciary to improve their working performance to ensure justice for all in the country. The President made the call in a meeting with the High Court President Deolindo Dos Santos on Monday. "The President of the Republic called on judges to improve their performance to ensure justice for all," the High Court President told reporters outside the Presidential Palace after meeting with President Lu Olo. Dos Santos said they had been doing mobile trials to reduce numbers of pending cases that pile up in courts due to limited resources facing the judicial system; as a result, numbers of civil cases had been reduced in Baucau and Covalima.

Police seize state vehicle used for private interest

Timor Post, September 29, 2020, Language Source: Tetun

A joint team of Timorese National Police (PNTL), General Chief Inspector of the Ministry of Education, National Directorate for State Property Management, National Directorate of Land Transport (DNLT) on Monday seized a state's vehicle that had been used by a staff of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MEYS) for private interest. The Mitsubishi Pajero, with registration number 20.083 TL was donated by the World Bank to the Ministry of Education. The vehicle had been used by the Primary Education Project Coordinator, Almerio da S. R. Soares for a private interest since 2012. The car was pawned to Mariano Agostino, since Soares was unable to return his US\$ 5000 dollar loan in 2015 with a 20% of interest. General Chief Inspector of the Ministry of Education, Rodolfo Aparicio said the vehicle had been taken back to the MEYS office and Soares would be subjected to criminal prosecution. He said the vehicle was still state property because it hadn't been put for auction. Program Officer of Asian Justice Rights, Inocencio Xavier said Soares had committed an embezzlement crime for pawning the state's property for his private interest; therefore he has to be brought to the court.

Timor-Leste registers new active case of COVID-19

Timor Post, September 29, 2020, Language Source: Tetun

The Commission of COVID-19 Prevention of the Ministry of Health (MS), on Monday, announced another new foreign national was tested positive for coronavirus, since the last patient was recovered on September 21. "We want to say that on Sunday (27/09) another foreign national had been moved to Vera Cruz isolation room for having contracted the COVID-19," Odete da Silva Viegas, the General Coordinator for the Commission of COVID-19 Prevention made the comments in a press conference, at Vera Cruz, Dili, on Monday. Viegas said the patient was a 39-year old male, arrived in Batugade border, Timor-Leste, on September 13, traveling from Medan Sumatra, Indonesia. She said among the 178 passengers on the same board with the patient, 176 had been put in State's quarantine, while 2 others were under self-quarantine. She added the commission allowed anyone who entered Timor-Leste during the COVID-19 time to request self-quarantine, but they need to meet WHO's criteria. To date, Timor-Leste has recorded 28 cases of COVID-19 – all imported – and no deaths.

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EU representative inaugurates bamboo fabrication in Ossu

GMN TV, September 25, 2020 language source: Tetun

Representative of the European Union (EU), Paolo Toselli and National Director of Forestry, Raimundo Mau have officially inaugurated the pre-Bamboo Fabrication Centre in Ossu – the eastern municipality of Viqueque. National Director of Forestry, Raimundo Mau said this project was financially supported by the European Union with US\$4000, saying this fabrication centre would benefit the local residents living in that village. "So, in this opportunity we get support from our development partners, GIZ through the program called Ai ba Futuru. It offers equipment that will be handed over to the Ossu Desima group here in Viqueque," he said.

MAE launches water canalization system in Aileu

GMN TV, September 25, 2020 language source: Tetun

Minister of State Administration (MAE), Miguel Carvalho and representatives of the Australian Embassy have launched the first-laying foundation of the water pump canalization system in Quelefa – Selo Kraik village – the Municipality of Aileu. National Director of PNDS, Claudina Soares Pinto said the first-laying foundation ceremony was the first phase to construct the water pump canalization system as it had been many years since the local residents yet to access clean water. "We are here to assist the launching ceremony of the PNDS program, which is financially funded by the Government of Australia. This project is run in Aileu," she said. Meanwhile, local resident Luis Mauleki thanked the Timorese and the Australian governments for running this project, saying it would help facilitate them in accessing the clean water.

Prime Minister Ruak says claims of his resignation look politically motivated

Independente, September 28, 2020

Timor-Leste Prime Minister Taur Matan Ruak said on Friday that "rumors" of his resignation circulating on social media were "fake" and look politically motivated. "I think my resignation is only a dream for irresponsible people," Ruak told reporters, without providing any information on who started the claims. "The time for resignation has already expired. Now I am focused on working hard to develop this nation not thinking about resignation." Ruak said there were many questions about why someone might want to unseat his leadership, but that would be up to Timorese citizens to decide if his government were working how they wanted. Ruak added that he no longer considered asking to resign and that he believed his government could solve the annual budget deadlock without change in leadership. "I have worked hard to elaborate the 2021 annual budget and I will bring it to National Parliament on October 15 for debate," he said. Earlier this year, Ruak did send a letter of resignation to the President Francisco Lu Olo Guterres, after the collapse of the former coalition supporting him in parliament. He then withdrew the letter on 8 April to lead Timor-Leste's pandemic response. At the time Ruak told reporters after a meeting with Lu Olo: "I withdraw the submission of my resignation... because I think that in a situation like this the country needs all of us, especially me as a prime minister."

Community of Hailarino still lives in the dark

Independente, September 28, 2020 Language source: Tetun

After almost two decades of independence, the community of Hailarino of Luro, Lautem still lives in the dark, has no access to road and clean water. Constantino Freitas, a resident of Hailarino, said to date, they still had not enjoyed the full dividends of development since they still lived in the dark and isolated. "Each year, the State spends a large amount of money on development, but which development? We do not know," he told the Independente at his residence on Sunday. He said the main problems facing his community were electricity, roads, and clean water. He said people needed to walk over one kilometer long to fetch water from the river for their daily needs. There are 625 households living in Hailarino hamlet, Luro Village of Lautem Municipality who still lives in the dark and are isolated as the road connect their village with the nearby town severely damaged and there is no public transport going to the village, making it hard for the residents to get access to market and other public services.

Students in Luro study under ramshackle school building

Independente, September 28, 2020 Language source: Tetun

The students at Basic School of Hailarino of Luro, Lautem Municipality, every day, study under a school building that its walls and roof are severely damaged. The school coordinator, Antonio Soares, said the school was established in 2001 and built by an NGO named CONCERN for Hailarino people, since then, there is no maintenance, so the school building and its facilities such as desks and chairs started to damage. "Now we can see, there are holes in the roof and also its walls are also severely damaged," Soares told Independente on Saturday. He added the school has 64 students and five teachers and even though the school building is in bad conditions, the teaching and learning process continued.

Four PNTL officers to be sacked, PNTL Superior Council decides

Independente, September 28, 2020 Language source: Tetun

Through a third meeting recently, the Timorese National Police (PNTL) Superior Council has decided to sack its four officers who were suspected of violating its disciplinary law. PNTL Superior Council Secretary, Chief Superintendent Carlos Almeida Sousa Jeronimo, said PNTL General Inspection Department met with the PNTL Superior Council to make decisions on five disciplinary processes that the Department had carried out recently. "The meeting was to look at five disciplinary processes against five PNTL officers that were carried out and four of them are going to face dismissal," Jeronimo told reporters after participating in the PNTL Superior Council Meeting, recently. He said they would prepare dismissal proposals to be sent to the Minister of Interior for final decision because it was upon the Minister of Interior competence to make a final decision regarding dismissal of PNTL officers.

SEKoop proposes US\$24.1 million for economic recovery

Timor Post, September 28, 2020 Language source: Tetun

Timor-Leste's State Secretary for Cooperatives (SEKoop), Elizario Ferreira, has proposed US\$24.1 million in the 2020 General State Budget for its economic recovery programs amid COVID-19 pandemic. SEKoop Ferreira said the budget would directly benefit people at grassroot level. He said they planned to set up more cooperatives groups in 2021 and 2022 to boost economic recovery and growth. "In 2021 and 2022, we encourage communities to set up more cooperatives to get access to the financial support that we prepare," SEKoop Ferreira told Timor Post on Friday at Bairro Pite, Dili.

September 25, 2020

Japan offers COVID – 19 protective equipment to MAP

GMN TV, September 24, 2020 language source: Tetun

The Government of Japan through its International Corporation (JICA) on Thursday (24/9) officially handed over protective equipment to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAP) for preventing and fighting COVID – 19. Apart from offering it to the MAP, JICA also handed over the referred equipment to the National Logistic Centre (CLN) and Agriculture stores, GMN TV reports. Director of JICA, Gotoko said the given equipment would help facilitate the MAP's officers to be used for preventing COVID – 19 as it was still a threat to human life. "The world is currently facing COVID – 19, and has limited the imported products, namely rice and other products where the country's access to the market is closed. So, this equipment is important to protect MAP's officers," he said.

SEKOP and Peace corps to develop community's economy

Televizaun Timor-Leste, September 24, 2020 language source: Tetun

The Secretary of State for Cooperation Elizario Ferreira and Peace Corps Country Director Katiwa Kulapini have signed an agreement upon developing the economy of the community, especially the group of cooperatives in the country. Speaking to journalists, Mr. Elizario said the Peace Corps would assign its volunteers to help facilitate the cooperative groups in Timor-Leste for increasing the quantity of local productions in the country. "I do appreciate the Peace Corps' readiness to help support the cooperatives in Timor-Leste," he said. Meanwhile, the Peace Corps country Director, Katiwa Kulapini said she would assign 40 volunteers to help support community development in the country.

World Vision holds workshop on women and children protection

Televizaun Timor-Leste, September 25, 2020 language source: Tetun

World Vision in partnership with youth groups has held a workshop talking about children protection, gender equality and the young people's engagement in conflict within the community. Manager of World Vision, Jose Manuel said the World Vision was in cooperation with the youth groups to share information and seek solutions to the conflict and acts of violence occurring in the country. "We also invited our people with disabilities to share information on how to prevent people from engaging in insulting one another, which can lead to violence," he said.

Timor-Leste prosecutor charges former priest with sexual abuse of children

Independente, September 25, 2020

Former US priest Richard Daschbach has been charged with sexual abuse of children, Timor-Leste Attorney General Jose Da Costa Ximenes said on Tuesday, in a case involving over two dozen girls from orphanages he opened in the Oecusse Ambeno enclave. Prosecutors also said Daschbach, 82, was placed under judicial supervision in Dili. Daschbach has previously admitted to several people that he was responsible for the crimes, allegedly committed over several years to dozens of children. "He is accused of the crime of sexual abuse against minor, with an aggravated sentence," Ximenes told Lusa, adding that the Topu Honis orphanage he ran had been closed. Daschbach, a native of Pittsburg, United States, has lived in Timor-Leste since 1966 and, in 1992, established children's orphanages, Topu Honis, in Oecusse enclave. According to victim allegations, published in Portuguese media outlet Lusa, they had been the target of threats for reporting Daschbach's abuses. In December last year, the Dili court had ordered the preventive arrest of Daschbach, who was expelled from the congregation Society of the Divine Word he was linked to, when the crimes were known.

ILO and EU launch rural road constructions in Lautem and Manatuto

Suara Timor Lorosae, September 25, 2020 Language source: Tetun

The International Labor Organization (ILO) through its project called Enhancing Rural Access Agro-Forestry (ERA-AF) has launched four rural road constructions in Lautem and Manatuto to enhance people's access to market and public services. The roads constructions are funded by the European Union (EU). "We are grateful to our partners, the European Union and the Timorese government, that made all these possible," ILO's ERA-AF Project Manager, Albert Uriyo, said in his speech when laying the first stone of the road construction in Caenlio of Iliomar, Lautem on Wednesday. He said there were two roads construction projects in Lautem including Apatmuto-Canfuro corridor, totaling 10.7 kilometers, and Caidavalarin-Liafalun corridor, totaling 6.9 kilometers, adding that in Manatuto, there would be construction of road connecting Ainicolau and Robae Hatu Ana Hun and Boro- Asmanu. At the same place, EU Representative, Paolo Toselli, said he was glad to see development in Timor-Leste, particularly in rural areas. "We are glad to see development in Timor-Leste, particularly rural roads, thus, we pledge to continue supporting more activities like this," Toselli said. The total fund for the projects is US\$ 1, 954, 733, 03. Meanwhile, Lautem Municipality Administrator, Jeferino Dos Santos Sequeira, thanked ILO and EU, for rehabilitating the rural roads to help people access the market and sell their local products.

Baucau Hospital running out of vital medicines

Suara Timor Lorosae, September 25, 2020 Language source: Tetun

Eduardo Ximenes Regional Hospital of Baucau (HoRex) had halted its services as it was running out of four vital medicines. HoRex's Chief Pharmacy Officer, Euclidio Dos Santos said that it has been three weeks now that the hospital had been running out of 10 items medicines, saying among the items, the hospital hasn't found other medicines to substitute the four vital medicines. "HoRex's pharmacy had made a request to the Timor-Leste's Medical and Pharmacy Supply Agency (SAMES), so soon six items of the medicines will arrive at HoRex from SAMES and other hospitals. While we are in the process of requesting the other four vital medicines for the treatment of high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and postoperative patients," Dos Santos told Timor-Post, in Baucau, on Thursday. He said HoRex had enough equipment to carry out its daily services, except the artificial hydration and nutrition supplies and small syringes.

Government to rigorously control illegal movement at border zones

Suara Timor Lorosae, September 25, 2020 Language source: Tetun

The government of Timor-Leste would continue to rigorously control the border zones to prevent the illegal movement. Prime Minister Taur Matan Ruak said recently the public always raised the issue of illegal border crossing therefore the government would put its attention to tightly control the border. "We informed the President of the Republic, Francisco Guterres 'Lu Olo' about the steps that the government will take to control illegal border crossing at the border zones," Ruak told reporters after his weekly meeting with the President at Presidential Palace, on Thursday. Ruak said the first step was to strengthen all of the posts of the Timorese National Police (PNTL) at the border zones, and the next step was to better the coordination with Indonesian Authorities to stop people from illegally crossing the border. "We need to cooperate with Indonesia authorities because our citizens went there illegally but they received them. So, we need to have better cooperation to stop it," said Ruak. Ruak promised in the future the government would socialize to all citizens to obey the rules and regulations to prevent people from going illegally to Atambua Indonesia, which could bring coronavirus to their family and relatives in Timor-Leste.

New Zealand Embassy supports US\$ 26,000 to AFSTL

Suara Timor Lorosae, September 25, 2020 Language source: Tetun

The Embassy of New Zealand in Dili had offered funding support of US\$ 26,000 to Timor-Leste's Healthy Heart Association (AFSTL) to facilitate Community Learning Centers and Prevention of Smoking, Drinking, and Consuming Drugs in Baucau Municipality. The funding support was given through a handover ceremony launched at Baucau's Education Hall entitled 'The launching ceremony of the funding support offered by the New Zealand Embassy to support AFSTL in facilitating the community learning centers and increasing people's awareness of impacts of smoking, drinking, and consuming drugs'. Speaking at the ceremony, the New Zealand Ambassador to Timor-Leste, Philip Hewitt said New Zealand was pleased to sign the contract with its partners. Hewitt called on all parties to work in a secure and healthy environment in order to reach the goal that had been set. He thanked the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, and PNTL for the cooperation and all support that they had given. "We need to support each other to ensure a secure and healthy environment for all of us so that we all could have good opportunities to do what is good for our communities. It's not easy to work alone, therefore I want to thank the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health for the cooperation," said Hewitt in Baucau, on Thursday. At the same place the founder of AFSTL, Fidelio Antonio da Costa said the US\$ 26,000 would be used to finance two main programs, including facilitating the Community Learning Center and increasing people's awareness of the impacts of smoking, drinking and consuming illegal drugs.