

# **East Timor News Digest No 4 - April 1-30, 2007**

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\* UNMIT Public Information Unit - April 3-27, 2007

## NEWS & ISSUES

### **Horta flouting the constitution says interim premier**

Adnkronos International - April 30, 2007

Dili — East Timor interim premier Estanislau Da Silva has accused prime minister and presidential candidate Jose Ramos Horta of having shown contempt for the country's institutions when he unilaterally called off the hunt for renegade general Alfredo Reinado.

In an interview with Adnkronos International (AKI), Da Silva said that East Timor does not need a president who does not respect the constitution. He is mandated to run the country until the government is sworn in.

"Security is the joint responsibility of all three organs of sovereignty. Horta should learn to show more respect for institutional channels before making public comments and commitments," Da Silva told AKI on Monday.

"There has been no official change in the position of the East Timor State and no recommendation has been received from the recent meeting of the High-Level Coordination Commission," added Da Silva, regarding the hunt for Reinado — a fugitive for some eight months.

The High Level Coordination Commission includes members of all three state institutions responsible for security, the president, the parliament speaker and the prime minister, plus the deputy prime minister and the UN Special Representative. The commanders of national Army and the International Stabilisation Forces (ISF) are also invited to these meetings.

Australian Brigadier Mal Rerden, chief of the ISF, confirmed that there has not been any official change of order concerning the status of Reinado as wanted. "We haven't received any formal letter from the government. If the government thinks this is the best solution, then the government and the ISF should discuss this," he told AKI.

Da Silva and Rerden's comments follow East Timor parliament speaker and presidential candidate, Francisco "Lu-Olo" Guterres' accusation that Horta is using Reinado and the ISF for his own electoral advantage.

Guterres accused Horta of having called off the hunt for Reinado as part of a deal to secure the Democratic Party votes for the presidential run-off to be held on 9 May. "Five Timorese died in the recent action to bring Reinado to justice.

Australian soldiers put their lives at risk, and Timorese villagers in the areas where Reinado was hiding were placed under extreme duress," Guterres told the media during the weekend.

"But now Horta has tried to call the action off, because Reinado's capture will damage his chances of being elected president. This is totally unacceptable. Horta has no power under the constitution to act on such matters act

unilaterally, either as prime minister or as president," he added.

Guterres received 28 percent of votes in the first round of the presidential election compared with Ramos Horta's 22. Votes from the third-placed candidate, Ferdinand Araujo Lasama of the Democratic Party, who polled 19 percent, are deemed to be crucial in the run-off next week.

The election of a new president to replace independence hero Xanana Gusmao is seen as an important test for the young nation after last year's violent upheaval that left scores dead and forced more than 150,000 people from their homes.

Lasama polled best in the western districts, where Reinado enjoys most support. According to local sources, Lasama made the end of the operation against Reinado a condition of his agreement to support Horta. Horta made a public call to end the hunt for Reinado on 23 April, four days before he and Lasama signed an accord.

Reinado has been on the run since he escaped from jail in East Timor's capital Dili in August along with 50 other inmates. President Xanana Gusmao ordered his arrest after he was accused of raiding a police post and stealing 25 automatic weapons last month.

The rebel leader had been arrested for his role in the violence that erupted in East Timor last April after the dismissal of approximately 600 soldiers, who were complaining of ethnic discrimination over promotions. Reinado abandoned the army and joined them on 4 May, 2006.

The clashes in East Timor left 37 people dead, forced 155,000 to flee their homes, brought down the government of former prime minister Mari Alkatiri, and resulted in Australian-led peacekeeping troops being deployed in the tiny Southeast Asian nation.

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### **New Timor treaty 'a failure'**

Melborne Age - April 21, 2007

Richard Baker — A former senior Australian Government negotiator has criticised a controversial new treaty between Australia and East Timor that fails to permanently establish a maritime boundary between the two countries.

Andrew Serdy, a former executive officer in sea law in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, said the Timor Sea treaty ratified in February failed to deal with resources other than petroleum and did not establish a maritime boundary.

East Timor is the only nation with which Australia has not finalised its maritime boundaries. There has been a long-running dispute between the two countries over the gas and oil deposits in the Timor Sea.

Mr Serdy, who was on Australia's negotiating team for a 2003 treaty with East Timor, also told Federal Parliament's joint standing committee on treaties that Australia's handling of the most recent agreement was "suggestive of a persistent policy failure".

Now a lecturer in maritime law at Southampton University in Britain, Mr Serdy said that negotiations for the treaty began in 2004 with the aim of establishing a permanent boundary, as is East Timor's right under international law.

East Timor had insisted on negotiations for a permanent boundary, "a course of action to which Australia agreed with markedly less enthusiasm than its previous practice (with other nations) would have led one to expect," he wrote. "There is still ample room for disagreement and dispute between the two countries over any non-petroleum deposits that might subsequently be found on or under the seabed."

Under the new treaty, which took nearly two years to negotiate, East Timor has agreed to forgo claims to a permanent maritime boundary for 50 years in return for an equal share of revenue from the disputed Greater Sunrise gas field. The deal is worth billions to the impoverished nation and is a big improvement on its previous position.

But the treaty precludes East Timor from pursuing claims against Australia for any other gas and oilfields in the Timor Sea. Nor can it take legal

action against Australia in any disputes over resources.

Previously, East Timor had claimed that most of the gas and oil deposits being exploited by Australia actually belonged to it if a permanent boundary was established at the median distance between the two countries.

Australia has consistently rejected this view. In 2002 it withdrew recognition of the maritime boundary jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, leaving East Timor no avenue to pursue its claim.

Other submissions to the committee are critical of Foreign Minister Alexander Downer's decision to invoke a rarely used "national interest exemption" to bring the treaty into force in February, preventing the usual scrutiny by Parliament.

Academics Clinton Fernandes, from the University of NSW, and Scott Burchill, from Deakin University, wrote in their submission that although details of the treaty were agreed in January 2006, Mr Downer did not table the report in Parliament until February this year.

Mr Downer said the exemption was required to bring the treaty into force before elections in East Timor. However, Dr Fernandes and Dr Burchill said that Mr Downer acted without good reason and had prevented proper scrutiny of the treaty.

Australia has come under international pressure to resolve the dispute in recent years. In 2005, 17 senior US politicians wrote to the Government seeking an urgent resolution of the issue, with revenue from oil and gas fields close to East Timor to be held in a special account.

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## **East Timor resumes talks with rebels**

Reuters - April 19, 2007

Tito Belo, Dili — East Timor Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta met with a rebel representative on Thursday to discuss an end to a military operation

against a fugitive army renegade.

Lawmaker Leandro Isaac, who abandoned his job in parliament to join former army major Alfredo Reinado in a mountain hideout in Manufahi district, said he had asked Ramos-Horta to end a military operation against Reinado and his supporters.

"People's fundamental rights have disappeared since the operation began," Isaac said. "We asked the prime minister to establish calm and peace in Manufahi. Law and order should be implemented."

Ramos-Horta said on Tuesday the government would resume talks with Reinado, wanted for his alleged involvement in the violence last year which left more than 30 people dead.

Last August, Reinado escaped from a prison where he had been held on charges of murder during the unrest in May, which was triggered by the sacking of 600 rebellious soldiers.

Australian troops, dispatched to East Timor to help restore order, launched a major manhunt to apprehend Reinado after government efforts to negotiate with him failed. Five of Reinado's followers were killed during an operation to capture him last month.

Ramos-Horta said he had decided to resume talks with Reinado because the rebel did not disrupt the April 9 presidential elections.

Ramos-Horta was one of eight candidates in that vote, and will face the candidate of the Fretilin party, Francisco Guterres, in a run-off poll on May 8 after neither won an absolute majority in the first round.

Some analysts said Ramos-Horta's popularity had been hurt because of his decision to arrest Reinado, who enjoys support from many in the impoverished country.

Ramos-Horta became prime minister when his predecessor, Mari Alkatiri, quit after receiving much of the blame for last year's violence. The unrest displaced more than 150,000 people and led to the deployment of an international peacekeeping force.



Gang violence still occurs sporadically in East Timor. On Wednesday, five people were injured by gunshots and steel darts when about 50 people clashed near the capital, Dili, police said.

East Timor voted in a 1999 referendum for independence from Indonesia, which annexed it after Portugal ended its colonial rule in 1975. The country became fully independent in 2002 after a period of UN administration.

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### **Dili anger over Australian raids**

Australian Associated Press - April 14, 2007

Dili residents are angry about the latest Australian military operations, apparently undertaken to increase pressure on the fugitive Major Alfredo Reinado.

Eight Reinado family members were detained during a night-time raid on their central Dili home on Monday, a move prompting criticism from human rights watchdog Yayasan Hak.

"The soldiers think Alfredo is in Dili. His uncle Victor Alves's house was encircled, and relatives taken to an Australian camp for questioning," rights activist Jose Luis Oliveira said.

He said they were interrogated for four hours. "Among the questions asked was how they voted in the elections," Oliveira said. "This is a violation of human rights."

On Thursday, houses in the inner suburb of Kampung Alor were surrounded and searched around 4pm (local time), raising occupants' hackles.

Widow Rosa Soares said soldiers entered her house with guns in hands. "They held up a photo of Major Alfredo and asked if I had seen him. Then they went through each room, searching drawers, and pulling things out," she said.

Next-door neighbour Ana Maria was alone with three children when soldiers appeared at her front door, but in this case they asked permission to enter.

She said they searched each room, pulling out drawers and overturning mattresses. "We were scared," she said. "My son Iko asked: 'Mummy why are foreigners searching our house?'"

A spokesman for Australia's International Stabilisation Force (ISF) denied Thursday's operation was linked to Reinado, or that any homes had been entered.

"UN police and ISF forces conducted operations in relation to electoral security," he said. "Our targets were gangs and illegal weapons." "He said" many illegal weapons" were confiscated, including a home-made rifle.

Ana Maria said the troops returned things to their place before leaving, but Ms Soares said they left her house in disarray, as did neighbour Jacinto de Andrade, a deputy for the opposition Social Democrat Association.

"They forced entry," he said. "These troops were supposed to come here to free us, not to violate our rights. This system reminds us of Indonesian times." "The spokesman denied the charges." "We did not enter any houses," he said.

The ISF is currently sending regular unsolicited SMS messages to mobile phones in East Timor calling on Reinado to surrender. "We want a peaceful solution-when are Reinado and his fugitives coming to check this with us?" an army text sent out to Dili phones last night asked.

## **PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS**

### **Timor Leste president elected head of new party**

Agence France Presse - April 30, 2007

Dili — Timor Leste's President Xanana Gusmao was elected the chairman of a controversial new political party on Monday.

Gusmao was the sole candidate for the chairmanship of the new organisation, the National Congress of Reconstruction of Timor (CNRT), which has already drawn criticism from a rival party.

"With this result, the president and the secretary general for the 2007-2012 period are Kay Rala

Xanana Gusmao and Dioniso Babo," party spokesman Virgilio Smith said. Gusmao, a charismatic onetime guerrilla leader, made no immediate comment.

He is not seeking re-election in the former Portuguese colony's ongoing presidential poll, which is to be decided by a runoff vote on May 9.

But he has said he wants to become prime minister, a more powerful job in Timor Leste than the largely ceremonial role of president, providing the new party does well enough in a parliamentary election due in June.

Timor Leste's ruling Fretilin party, the most powerful political force in the troubled and impoverished country, has already attacked CNRT. The new party's initials, which are based on the Portuguese version of its name, are the same as a now disbanded pro-independence movement active during Timor Leste's occupation by Indonesia.

Mari Alkatiri, the Secretary General of Fretilin, has said the use of the initials was "cynical" and "opportunistic" and has threatened legal action.

The May 9 presidential runoff pits Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta against Fretilin's candidate Francisco Guterres.

If Ramos-Horta wins and Gusmao achieves his goal of becoming premier, the two associates would end up swapping their current jobs. Gusmao has backed Ramos-Horta's candidacy.

The presidential election is Timor Leste's first since it achieved independence in 2002, after 24 years of occupation by Indonesia and a period of UN stewardship.

Gusmao, feted by many Timorese for taking up arms against occupying Indonesian forces, became head of state in a presidential poll prior to independence.

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## **East Timor candidates open old wounds in campaign**

The Australian - April 30, 2007

Mark Dodd — A damaging rift has opened between East Timor's two rival presidential candidates over the treatment of a group of army mutineers whose demands for military reform a year ago brought the country to the brink of civil war.

Interim prime minister Jose Ramos Horta favours compensation for the 591 so-called petitioners, the name given to former eastern-born soldiers dismissed after protesting ethnic discrimination in the ranks.

If elected president in next month's run-off ballot, Mr Ramos Horta has promised to re-open a contentious investigation into the illegal distribution of weapons to civilian groups by the former Alkatiri government.

That provoked an angry response from rival candidate Francisco Guterres, head of the ruling Fretilin party.

Speaking in the mountain town of Aileu yesterday, Mr Guterres warned against plans to pay compensation to the petitioners. He said it could reignite civil strife in the troubled country still trying to recover from violent ethnic unrest.

A decision last year by former Fretilin prime minister Mari Alkatiri to dismiss the petitioners erupted into bloody mayhem that left dozens killed, forced his resignation and led to the deployment of an Australian-led peacekeeping force. "We should be careful not to make a new wound to heal another. If we decide to compensate the petitioners, what will be the impact on the other soldiers?" Mr Guterres said.

The plight of the petitioners, who are nominally allied to another army renegade, Major Alfredo Reinado, should be resolved "institutionally," he added, referring to a government commission into the problem.

With a second-round of voting only weeks away, Mr Ramos Horta was also challenged to explain what happened to a diplomat-training college he promised to build from his 1996 Nobel Peace Prize winnings.

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## **East Timor's Ramos-Horta wins key support for runoff**

Reuters - April 26, 2007

Jose Ramos-Horta has won the backing of a key powerbroker ahead of next month's presidential vote in East Timor by agreeing to call off a manhunt for a fugitive rebel soldier wanted by Australian troops, party officials have said.

Mr Ramos-Horta and parliament chief Francisco "Lu-Olo" Guterres will contest next month's runoff after they failed to win a majority in the April 9 election, East Timor's first since independence in 2002.

Fernando "Lasama" de Araujo, who finished third in the election with 19.18 per cent of the vote for the opposition Democrat Party, has publicly backed Mr Ramos Horta at a party rally today.

In return for the support, Democrat Party officials have said, Mr Ramos-Horta has agreed to resume talks with and call off the search for Major Alfredo Reinado, blamed for his part in last year's unrest which resulted in Australian and other international peacekeepers being sent in.

Speaking to Democrat supporters in the capital Dili and flanked by Mr Ramos-Horta, Mr Lasama said the Nobel laureate, as president, would safeguard democracy, unite the people and promote human rights.

"Therefore, I call on all PD (Democrat Party) activists to vote for Ramos-Horta in the upcoming May 9 election," he told about 100 supporters. "Yesterday (Wednesday) the PD leadership reached a decision, by acclaim, to throw its support behind Ramos-Horta."

Impoverished Timorese hope the run-off will pull them from a cycle of violence and turmoil that has beset the country since it voted for independence from Indonesian rule in 1999.

In the run-off, Mr Ramos-Horta faces Mr Guterres, candidate for the ruling Fretilin party, which has

been a force in the country since the struggle for independence.

Mr Ramos-Horta, the nation's current Prime Minister, thanked Mr Lasama and the party for their support. "Even though the party was set up just a few years ago, it has already helped build the country and help democracy and freedom in this country," Mr Ramos-Horta told the crowd.

Mr Ramos-Horta has already clinched the backing of three other candidates who bowed out after the April 9 round.

East Timor voted for independence in a UN-sponsored referendum in 1999, triggering an orgy of killing by pro-Jakarta militia before independence was declared in 2002.

Foreign peacekeepers have been on the streets for nearly a year after gang violence left 37 people dead and sent 150,000 more fleeing their homes.

Major Reinado has been on the run since his escape from a Dili prison last year. Elite Australian troops attacked his mountain hideout earlier last month in a failed bid to capture him. Five of his armed supporters were killed during the raid on his hideout, which triggered rowdy protests.

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## **East Timor: Socialists prepare for parliamentary elections**

Green Left Weekly - April 18, 2007

Max Lane — "The PST has increased its vote slightly on its results in 2000", Avelino Coelho da Silva, secretary-general of the Socialist Party of Timor, told Green Left Weekly by telephone from Dili. Coelho was the PST's candidate in the country's April 9 presidential election, the final results of which will be officially announced by the National Election Commission (CNE) on April 16.

Preliminary results suggest that the ruling Fretilin party's Francisco "Lu'olo" Guterres received 29% of the votes cast, while Prime

Minister Jose Ramos Horta, running as an independent, received 23% and Fernando "Lasama" de Araujo of the Democratic Party 19%. This will require that a run-off ballot be held between Guterres and Horta on May 9.

The Timorese Social Democratic Association's Francisco Xavier do Amaral, a founding member of Fretilin and East Timor's first president, received 12%. The only female candidate, Lucia Maria Lobato of the Social Democratic Party, received almost 10%. Coelho said he had received about 3% of the 357,766 votes cast.

Complaints of irregularities have been lodged by five of the eight candidates, including Coelho. Horta has accused Fretilin supporters, including police officers, of intimidating voters to back the party's candidate. Fretilin's secretary-general Mari Alkatiri has rejected Horta's claims. There was a 68% voter turn out. While CNE officials have conceded that there were many "inconsistencies" in the presidential election, including discrepancies between the number of voters and the numbers of votes cast, they have rejected calls for recounts.

Referring the parliamentary elections scheduled for June, Coelho said: "If we work hard over the next few months, and put forward some of our best cadre to stand as members of parliament, we may be able to win 3 or 4 seats, perhaps more, in the parliament". The PST currently has one member of parliament.

"We have a long struggle ahead", said Coelho. "Symbols and personalities, rather than policies, still hold a lot of influence in the mass consciousness. None of the three presidential candidates who have emerged on top campaigned around any platform for national development. They concentrated on stories of the past struggle for East Timor's independence and tried to associate themselves with past symbols, or with symbols connected with the Catholic Church."

Coelho explained how his campaigners had been heartened by the good response they had received at public meetings and rallies, "But this has not yet turned into a strong political consciousness", he cautioned. "In the areas where our vote has increased, it is a result of genuine political

identification and agreement with our platform. Ideology and platform did not play a big role in these elections. All the larger parties have more-or-less the same political character."

According to Coelho, the drop in the Fretilin vote to half its numbers from the 2000 election reflects a growing disaffection with the government. "But this disillusion is most likely to be focussed on the leading figures" rather than the Fretilin party, which continues to trade on its role in the 1975-98 struggle for independence first against Portugal and then against Indonesia. Fretilin derives its name from the Portuguese words for "Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor". "There will be blame apportioned to Alkatiri and Luolo within Fretilin", said Coelho. "But if they keep these leaders, the discontent may continue to grow and also be aimed at Fretilin as well.

"The people's loyalties here are clearly very fluid. It is not for certain, for example, how people who supported losing candidates will vote in the next round. When platform and ideology is not operating as big factors in political consciousness, other factors can come into play in an arbitrary way. We will just have to wait and see."

Coelho added that the PST would now be concentrating on selecting its parliamentary candidates. "We have made some steps forward but we have a lot of work to do. We must be patient. We are a very small force and, unlike some others, we are committed to building up our party without becoming dependent on the finances of the European NGOs and other similar institutions."

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## **East Timor re-checks votes**

Agence France Presse - April 16, 2007

Dili — East Timor officials have said they have found more discrepancies in last week's presidential election while stressing the poll's outcome will remain unchanged.

Some votes counted in the poll, the first since



the impoverished nation gained its independence in 2002, would be re-checked amid concerns of irregularities, they said.

"This afternoon, we will reopen 42 ballot boxes because the documents (inside) were incomplete," National Election Commission spokesman Martinho Gusmao told reporters.

Voter turnout was high for last Monday's election and East Timorese hope that concerns about the credibility of the poll will not plunge the tiny nation back into turmoil and bloodshed.

In a closely fought race, the ruling Fretilin party's Francisco Guterres and Nobel Peace laureate Jose Ramos-Horta emerged to run again after neither gained more than 50 percent of the vote.

Gusmao said the votes concerned were lodged in seven districts, including the capital Dili, and were originally counted in Monday's poll. But he said fears now existed that some of them had not been properly filled in. He declined to specify the problem or the number of votes involved.

Gusmao also said the election commission had lodged legal action seeking to re-examine votes placed in another 26 ballot boxes.

"The CNE (national election commission) is submitting a request to the court of appeal to be allowed to see again 26 ballot boxes because of an inconsistency in data," he said, without saying what the inconsistency was. Gusmao said the court would determine whether there were grounds for a re-check.

He stressed the checks on votes in both sets of boxes would not affect the outcome of Monday's election, which would be decided in the runoff vote on May 8. "The checks on those data do not mean that (they) would change the existing preliminary results," he said.

The checks come after it emerged on Saturday that a district with 100,000 eligible voters had produced three times as many votes. The discrepancy was later put down to a technical error.

Some candidates have also alleged intimidation at booths on polling day, and have also demanded a re-count.

There had been fears that violence would mar the vote in East Timor, where foreign peacekeepers have been on the streets for nearly a year after gang violence left 37 people dead and sent 150,000 more fleeing their homes.

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## **Allegations mar East Timor election process**

Sydney Morning Herald - April 14, 2007

Lindsay Murdoch, Dili — The first indication there would be problems with East Timor's presidential election came days before when Martinho Gusmao, a key member of the organising commission, publicly endorsed the rising star of the country's politics, Fernando "Lasama" de Araujo.

Father Gusmao, an influential Catholic priest, shrugged off cries of foul play, saying he could anoint whoever he likes.

High in East Timor's coffee-growing mountains Alfredo Reinado issued his own public endorsement of 43 year-old Mr de Araujo, humiliating once again Australian combat troops who have been hunting him for weeks after botching an attack on his base that left five men dead.

Yesterday, Reinado, a cult-hero figure for many Timorese, told The Herald through an interpreter who rang him on his mobile telephone he was preparing a statement on how he rated the election. Apparently, like many other Timorese, he is not happy.

The election of a new president to replace independence hero Xanana Gusmao is an important test for the young nation after last year's violent upheaval that left scores dead and forced more than 150,000 people from their homes.

But despite the eagerness of more than half of the country's one million people to have a say in the

resolution of the country's problems all eight candidates have raised serious allegations about the conduct of the election.

The High Court in Dili will be flooded with complaints next week, almost certainly forcing a delay in announcement of the official result.

Despite the problems which included intimidation and count irregularities, voters showed they want to punish somebody over last year's violence. Leaders of the ruling Fretilin party were taken aback on Monday evening when they started to receive reports from 500 polling booths around the country.

Their candidate Francisco "Lu-Olo" Guterres was polling poorly in many areas, including traditional party strongholds in the country's eastern towns and villages.

Only hours earlier Mari Alkatiri, the party's powerful secretary-general, had refused to even discuss the possibility that Mr Guterres would not win a clear majority, preventing a run off vote in a second round in one month.

"We never lose. We will win again," he told reporters as he voted alongside Mr Guterres at a polling centre in a Dili beachside suburb where they both live. But Mr Alkatiri did not hear shouts from people lining up to vote. "Horta best, Horta best," they called.

Mr Ramos Horta received 80,851 votes, according to the unofficial count, a remarkable effort considering he had no party to run his campaign. This was only 23,000 votes behind Mr Guterres, who had the backing of the biggest political machine.

What is shaping as a bitterly fought run off vote between the two men will be held on May 8. Mr Ramos Horta relied mainly on his high profile to give him more votes than Mr de Araujo, who heads the reformist youth-based Democratic Party. In interviews Mr Ramos Horta, co-winner of the 1996 Nobel peace prize, portrayed Fretilin as arrogant and out of touch with Timorese, one third of whom often do not have enough to eat. He said Mr Guterres was a nice enough man run by Mr Alkatiri, whose image was damaged last year when he was forced from the prime ministership over

allegations he knew about the arming of a civilian hit squad.

A former guerrilla fighter, Mr Guterres can claim, like many other Timorese, to be a hero of the independence struggle.

But he is not well known. He didn't show up at a press conference on Thursday when Mr Alkatiri gave Fretilin's version of what happened. For months Mr Ramos Horta worked hard to portray himself as a man for the poor, making frequent trips to remote villages and Dili's refugee camps where tens of thousands of people are still languishing as monsoon downpours turn them into quagmires.

When Fretilin's leaders reassess their tactics, after recovering from the shock of Monday's vote, they may realise that not only will they struggle to win the run-off because all the non-Fretilin candidates will back Mr Ramos Horta, they face a tough battle to stay in power by winning the parliamentary elections.

Maybe it is time to elect a new face to lead the party, somebody like former NSW public servant Estanislau da Silva, who has been Mr Ramos Horta's deputy for 10 months.

Mr Alkatiri insists he will continue to lead the party into the parliamentary elections after being cleared of the hit squad allegations even though he appears to be unpopular.

Xanana Gusmao, the outgoing president who plans to lead his own party into power, is already telling voters they must shun Fretilin because it has failed to significantly improve their lives. Mr Gusmao, who remained distant and aloof during last year's crisis, will vacate the presidency on May 20.

The parliamentary elections are likely to see even more insults flying than the presidential vote. Mr Gusmao and Mr Alkatiri have been political enemies for decades.

Mr Ramos Horta plans to swing his support behind Mr Gusmao's campaign no matter what the outcome of the presidential run-off. The close friends and longtime political allies plan on Monday to announce a deal to compensate 700 soldiers whose

sacking sparked last year's violence.

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## **Confusion mounts over East Timor polls**

Agence France Presse - April 14, 2007

Dili — The confusion surrounding the first round of voting in East Timor's presidential election mounted Saturday when the election commission said a district with 100,000 eligible voters had produced three times as many votes.

Martinho Gusmao, spokesman for the national election commission, could not explain the discrepancy, which emerged amid growing questions about East Timor's first presidential poll since independence in 2002.

"It registered a little more than 100,000 but the result is more than 300,000," he said of Bacau, East Timor's second town. The surplus 200,000 would represent a huge proportion of the total vote — East Timor has just 520,000 eligible voters.

"The commissioners will discuss it together in order to find out how this illogical situation happened in Bacau."

Gusmao refused to say whether the new discovery could invalidate the provisional results, in which Jose Ramos-Horta, East Timor's current prime minister, and Francisco "Lu-Olo" Guterres, the ruling Fretilin party's candidate, emerged to contest the run-off.

The commission said Friday that serious flaws in the election could force some areas to repeat first-round voting.

Most of the candidates who stood formally demanded a recount, even though international observers said the poll in the former Portuguese colony was generally orderly and peaceful.

The commission rejected their demand on Thursday, saying there was no legal basis on which to grant the request.

A number of the candidates also raised the possibility that voters were intimidated, stoking fears of instability in the troubled state ahead of the second round.

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## **East Timor election body rejects call for recount**

Reuters - April 12, 2007

Ahmad Pathoni, Dili — East Timor's election commission rejected on Thursday calls for a vote recount as the tiny nation looked set for a presidential run-off between Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta and the ruling Fretilin Party's candidate.

Monday's polls were mostly peaceful but a drawn-out election period and allegations of irregularities will raise concerns about fresh instability in the impoverished nation, still suffering from deep divisions five years after independence.

Overnight dozens of people in the predominantly Roman Catholic country, once a Portuguese colony, held a candlelit vigil near a statue of the Mother Mary in Dili to pray for peace.

Martinho Gusmao, the election commission spokesman, said the commission had offered to meet candidates to discuss voting disputes. But he said there would not be any major shift in the results and rejected calls by some candidates for a recount. "If there's a change it won't be drastic. No candidate will win more than 30 percent."

He said it was almost certain Ramos-Horta and parliament chief Francisco Guterres of the ruling Fretilin Party, who is also known by the guerrilla nickname "Lu'olo" he had during the fight against the 24 years of Indonesian rule that followed Portugal's withdrawal, would contest a run-off.

In a later news conference, Gusmao said all complaints would be submitted to the court of appeal. "If the court decides we have to do a recount, we will do so," he said.

If no one wins more than half the vote, a run-off will be held on May 8. Preliminary vote counting showed that Guterres, whose well-organised Fretilin Party has bigger support in rural areas, had 29 percent of the vote, while Ramos-Horta, a Nobel peace prize winner who spearheaded an overseas campaign for independence from Indonesia, had 23 percent.

The election commission spokesman said, however, that there were still disputes over the validity of 30 percent of the votes. "We must understand that we are not well prepared for this election and things are a bit chaotic."

### **Counter claims**

Five candidates, including Fernando de Araujo of the Democratic Party, called for a recount on Wednesday, alleging widespread irregularities.

Ramos-Horta also said there had been many flaws in the polls. "I think there should be another count because there are serious allegations," he told reporters.

But he said if there was no recount he would accept the results to contribute to stability. He accused police in some districts of acting as thugs for Fretilin.

Ramos-Horta said he had been told by the chief of the UN mission assisting in the polls that about 150,000 voters did not vote, either because of too few polling stations or bad weather.

A UN mission spokeswoman said: "If any of the candidates have concerns they should be raised with the national authorities and appealed through the court of appeal if necessary."

EU observer chief Javier Pomes Ruiz said on Wednesday that the election had mostly gone smoothly with a high turnout.

The secretary general of Fretilin said there had been a "well mounted campaign against Fretilin" which he linked to Ramos-Horta and outgoing President Xanana Gusmao.

"This campaign includes disinformation, abuse of power and intimidation," said Mari Alkatiri, replaced as prime minister by Ramos-Horta after

taking much of the blame for the chaos that emerged in East Timor last year.

A regional split erupted into bloodshed last May after the sacking of 600 mutinous troops from the western region. Foreign troops had to be brought in to restore order.

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## **Presidential poll run-off as candidates threaten court action**

Radio Australia - April 12, 2007

Tony Eastley: Doubts are being raised about the fairness of the Presidential election in East Timor with claims of vote manipulation and voter intimidation.

The accusations come from five of the eight candidates. The Electoral Commission says it won't investigate though until it receives a formal complaint.

At this stage of counting the Fretilin Party Candidate, Francisco Lu Olo Guterres, is clearly in the lead. From Dili, Anne Barker reports.

**Anne Barker:** All five candidates from East Timor's minor political parties have written to the National Electoral Commission demanding a recount of the entire vote otherwise they say they'll mount a court challenge to the final result.

**Candidate:** We are not happy with this process and we want the boxes to bring all to Dili and we recount it in, in the Capital.

**Anne Barker:** They're not the only ones alleging irregularities in the electoral processes.

European Union observers say they too witnessed intimidation at four polling booths and irregular practices during the count. One Australian observer says he's alarmed that close to a quarter of all votes have been declared invalid.

Damien Kingsbury from Deakin University says there must be a recount.



**Damien Kingsbury:** The problem's not with the vote, the problem appears to be with the counting process.

Last night we had observers count, watching the count, and the number of invalid votes appeared to be very small, in order of a couple of per cent at most and today we see it's jumped to what looks like about a quarter and that simply can't be explained.

It's also worth noting that on a 70 per cent count of the vote, provisionally, Lu Olo, the Fretilin candidate had about 23 per cent of the vote at the end of the day, when the last 30 per cent was counted, he jumped to 29 per cent and that would seem to be statistically highly unusual, highly irregular.

**Anne Barker:** But doesn't that, isn't that because the votes that have come in today have included those towns where Fretilin has its strongest voter base in Vlatat (phonetic) and Vlatem (phonetic).

**Damien Kingsbury:** Well they would come in from the more remote polling stations for sure, but that goes equally across the country where Lu Olo is both popular and unpopular, you don't usually expect to see such a significant shift in voter intentions, once 70 per cent of the vote has been counted.

**Anne Barker:** So do you believe there's been some sort of manipulation of the vote in those two towns?

**Damien Kingsbury:** I don't know if it's in those two towns as such, I think that what we need to do is to have a recount in Dili, with independent scrutineers not party scrutineers but independent scrutineers, participating and perhaps not allowing the Electoral Commission to participate because there has been concerns that a number of Electoral Commission members are in fact Fretilin Party appointees.

**Anne Barker:** Are you saying then that the count hasn't been properly supervised or that some of the counters then are corrupt?

**Damien Kingsbury:** It looks like some of the counters have been influenced by their, their own

political affiliations.

**Anne Barker:** So do you believe if, if Lu Olo becomes the President of East Timor, that he may have got there illegally?

**Damien Kingsbury:** Well, on the basis of the current numbers he still only has 29 per cent of the vote so he has to go to a second round.

That means that 71 per cent of the vote is non-Fretilin so his chances of being successful of becoming President are still pretty slim, but having said that, I think that candidates like Fernando Lasama de Araujo would have real concerns about this because at 70 per cent of the count, he was within a hairbreadth of overtaking Jose Ramos Horta, now he's well behind, and I think he would have real grounds for being concerned.

*Tony Eastley: Damian Kingsbury from Deakin University. That report from Anne Barker in Dili.*

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## **Voters intimidated in East Timor: rights group**

Agence France Presse - April 12, 2007

Dili — An East Timor human rights group said Thursday it had received reports that supporters of the troubled nation's ruling party had intimidated voters ahead the country's presidential election.

"We have reports from the districts and we noted an increase of violence from Fretilin members," said Jose Luis de Oliveira, of the human rights group Yayasan HAK.

Fretilin, the ruling party in East Timor, has previously been accused of intimidatory tactics and a lack of openness.

Its candidate, Francisco Guterres, will contest a May 8 presidential runoff with Jose Ramos-Horta, East Timor's prime minister, after a closely fought first round on Monday between eight candidates ended in stalemate.

There were reports of increased violence in

Viqueque, Baucau and Ermeira districts, de Oliveira said. "In Ermeira, on the last day of the campaign, Fretilin members beat a Catholic priest and one journalist," he said.

The reports received by Yayasan HAK indicated intimidatory door-to-door campaigning by Fretilin, he said. "They noted the identity numbers of people and said if you don't choose Fretilin, your number will show on the computer. Even if that's not true, people are afraid."

But Fretilin spokesman Filomeno Aleixo took issue with the claim of intimidation. "Fretilin never encourages our people to use violence," he said. "In fact people were intimidated not to vote for our candidate. We have been targeted too," Aleixo said.

International observers have said the election was generally open, orderly and peaceful despite fears that the former Portuguese colony's violent history heralded poll unrest.

But de Oliveira said while election day may have gone well, international observers lacked a proper understanding of the situation in East Timor. "They cannot see or feel what's happening," he said, adding there could be more intimidation ahead of the runoff vote.

Monday's poll was the first presidential election in East Timor since its independence in 2002, but has been clouded by growing calls for a recount and allegations it was conducted unfairly.

Indonesian occupation of East Timor ended in 1999 with a bloody split, and violence has pulsed through the impoverished state since then. International peacekeepers were dispatched last year to restore order.

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## **Timor savours its taste of democracy**

The Australian - April 10, 2007

Stephen Fitzpatrick, Dili — Hundreds of thousands of East Timorese queued for hours under a blazing sun yesterday to choose a new president in the

first election wholly run by the young country.

As UN police and observers, joined by European Union monitors, helped with security and logistics, East Timorese officials dealt with streams of people voting at more than 500 polling sites across the country.

Many participants said the result was not as important as the fact the presidential election — only the second since the country voted for its independence in 1999 and the first without the UN in charge — was taking place.

"There is little difference between this party or that party; what's important is that we have a safe and democratic situation," said Faustino da Souza, village chief of Vila, on the small island of Aitaro, just a few kilometres north of the capital, Dili.

"Whatever the people choose, it's up to them. It's up to everyone, not just one person."

The presidency is being contested by eight candidates but only two — current prime minister Jose Ramos Horta and parliamentary speaker Francisco "Lu Olo" Guterres — are thought to have a strong chance.

There will be a run-off poll next month if no candidate wins an absolute majority, and then parliamentary elections on June 30, which could see the ruling Fretilin Government unseated and an administration led by current President Kay Rala "Xanana" Gusmao take its place. Mr Gusmao has not yet committed to running in that election but is generally expected to stand on behalf of his CNRT — or National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction — party.

Mr Ramos Horta voted at a primary school near his home as soon as polling opened, at 7am, and said: "If today the people decide I should carry on for five more years, I will accept that. But whatever the result, I am the winner. I'm the winner if I win and I'm the winner if I lose."

On Sunday Mr Ramos Horta said if he lost he would at least get his life back. Asked who would be his first lady should he take the presidency, however, the single Mr Ramos Horta — whose ex-wife Ana

Pessoa is Administrative Affairs Minister in his government — replied: "All the poor women of East Timor will be the first lady."

Former prime minister Mari Alkatiri, who was replaced by Mr Ramos Horta during last year's crisis, was full of confidence as he arrived at a polling booth in his Dili harbourside suburb of Farol with the Fretilin candidate, Mr Guterres.

"We have never lost, and we will win again," the Fretilin secretary general, whose opponents accuse him of arrogance and a distant attitude, boasted.

Mr Guterres also predicted a result in his favour. "I am happy because this is an election for the Timorese people, and I am certain we will win," the former anti-Indonesian guerilla fighter said.

Opponents have accused Fretilin supporters of dirty tricks, and Mr Ramos Horta claimed yesterday to have been pelted with rocks by supporters of his opponents while campaigning in Los Palos, Viqueque and Metinaro — all towns in the east, where Fretilin support for Mr Guterres is strongest.

"I urge Fretilin militants to make the right choice," Mr Ramos Horta said. "If they don't, Fretilin will not be at the front line. I also say that the leaders must be expelled or replaced so Fretilin can go forward."

Mr Ramos Horta said his greatest priority if he won would be addressing the nation's security problems, particularly its crisis-hit military and police forces.

Casting his vote at a polling station in the often-troubled Dili suburb of Comoro, Democratic Party chairman Fernando de Araujo — widely considered to be a dark-horse candidate who could help force the poll to a run-off election between Mr Ramos Horta and Mr Guterres — conceded that he did not expect a spectacular result from his campaign.

"I think I must be realistic," Mr de Araujo said. "There are eight of us, so it's difficult for anyone to get 50 per cent. I'm not hoping to win in the first round — what's more important is the process."

Mr de Araujo promised that if he failed in his bid to become president, he would not abandon his place in East Timorese political life.

Mr Gusmao has backed Mr Ramos Horta, bringing with him the votes of many veterans of the 1975-1999 armed struggle for independence.

Losing candidates are expected to throw their weight behind Mr Ramos Horta or Mr Guterres in the event of a run-off presidential poll.

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## **Calm holds as East Timor sets poll record**

Melbourne Age - April 10, 2007

Lindsay Murdoch, Dili — East Timorese voted in record numbers yesterday in a peaceful election for president. There were few signs of violence, particularly in Dili where politically motivated gangs have been fighting pitched battles for months.

First reports of vote counting last night indicated ruling Fretilin party candidate Francisco "Lu-Olo" Guterres, 53, Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta, 57, and Fernando "Lasama" de Araujo, head of the reformist Democratic Party, were receiving the most votes. Voting was continuing at many centres late into the night.

East Timor's top election officials and the UN mission in Dili last night declared the election a landmark success.

Steven Wagenseil, the UN's chief electoral officer, said there were small problems that officials worked to overcome. "People were able to vote peacefully and happily," he said. "That is a very good sign for the country."

Former Australian diplomat in East Timor James Dunn said he was amazed at how smoothly voting went at packed polling centres in areas where United Nations police and Australian and New Zealand soldiers had been unable to stop violence.

More than 3000 international security forces in the country will remain on high alert amid

concerns that violence could erupt after the vote results become known, possibly later today.

Election officials were overwhelmed as an estimated 500,000-plus voters cast their ballots in East Timor's first election since independence five years ago. Three UN helicopters took thousands of extra ballot papers to polling centres in all districts before booths shut at 4pm.

UN spokeswoman Allison Cooper said UN police reported that voting was without major violence or intimidation.

Federal member for the Darwin-based seat of Solomon Dave Tollner said he and six other members of his Australian monitoring group were impressed by the peaceful behaviour of voters.

Analysts say it is likely that none of the eight candidates will win 51 per cent of the vote, forcing a run-off contest early next month between the two candidates with the highest tallies.

Fretilin's powerful secretary-general, Mari Alkatiri, dismissed speculation Mr Lu-Olo would not win an outright majority. "I know the people very well and I know they will vote for our candidate," Mr Alkatiri said.

Mr Alkatiri, who was forced to step down as prime minister amid violence last year, plans to lead Fretilin into a parliamentary election in June or July, which looms as a bitter battle between himself and Xanana Gusmao, the outgoing President, who has formed his own party.

Mr Gusmao has made clear that if his party wins power and he becomes prime minister he will unlock hundreds of millions of dollars of Timor Sea oil and gas revenue to spend immediately to help his country's poor.

His Australian-born wife last night called for political activists not to react violently to the result of the election.

"There's a lot at stake so I guess there will be different groups and individuals who will not be satisfied to be in a losing position," Kirsty Sword Gusmao said on ABC TV. "We would like to

think that our leaders will be appealing for calm and doing their best to ensure that violence won't erupt."

Mr Lu-Olo, a former guerilla fighter, said he could unite the country where thousands of people in refugee camps are still too afraid to return home.

Mr Ramos Horta said he believed that if Fretilin lost, its militant supporters would try to create problems.

"The common people have behaved with civility and respect during the campaigning, which I think, by and large, was peaceful," he said. "I appeal to all our leaders to show their sense of responsibility and statesmanship and abide by the result whatever it is.

[With AAP.]

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## **Fear of chaos shadows East Timor poll**

The Australian - April 9, 2007

Stephen Fitzpatrick, Dili — Jose Ramos Horta went to Easter mass at the weekend with "a host of sins" to confess, not least of which was having entertained lustful thoughts towards the film star Jennifer Lopez while presenting her with a prize in Berlin last year.

This morning, he will visit a small primary school on the eastern outskirts of Dili to cast a vote for himself as East Timor's next president, in an act he hopes can help expiate the sins lately visited on his benighted nation.

It's a risky move, partly because word on the street is that if Ramos Horta defeats his main opponent, the ruling Fretilin party's Francisco "Lu'Olo" Guterres, he will be assassinated.

In a broken-down country that thrives on rumour, the threat is probably an empty one, although there are genuine fears that a Fretilin loss could herald a return to the violence of last year that left dozens dead and injured and rent the



country's body politic asunder.

There have already been scattered clashes between supporters of various candidates in today's poll, with the tempo of threat and counter-threat escalating at the weekend to the point where some families in regions outside the capital were fleeing homes in fear for their lives.

Ramos Horta is sanguine about the possibility of more chaos, though far from humble: "If I am elected, I will bear a wooden cross almost as heavy as Christ's," he said during an interview on Holy Thursday. "If I lose, it's my freedom."

Indications are that East Timor's Nobel Peace Prize laureate will not be free just yet to resume the urbane life for which he yearns: of writing, contemplation and courting the world's political elite.

Of the eight candidates running for president today, only Ramos Horta and Guterres are thought to have any real chance of success. Dark horse candidate Fernando "Lasama" de Araujo, of the Democratic Party, looks likely to make third place, with his main effect being to split the frontrunners' votes and force a May 9 run-off election.

A fourth, the Social Democratic Party's Lucia Lobato, could attract a decent following from certain sections of the population keen to buck East Timor's strong patriarchal tradition and install the country's first woman leader — one who is a cousin of founding president Nicolau Lobato to boot — but she is not expected to overly trouble the scorers.

Fretilin officials insist they have the result in the bag without even the need for a run-off, and while Guterres himself urges caution — "I am optimistic, but the only proof is the ballot papers," he said in a weekend interview at his comfortable Dili home — his advisers are far more gung-ho.

"Look, if you just go by the numbers — we'll get 80 per cent in Baucau, maybe 60 to 70 per cent in Los Palos, about the same in Viqueque and 45 or 50 per cent in Manatuto — then he's won," chief political adviser Harold Moucho said. "The rest is

minor. "We also have the votes of the small parties, many of whom are offshoots from Fretilin," adds Guterres campaign manager Filomeno Aleixo.

Others disagree, and with fair logic. Moucho's number-crunching focuses on the country's east, where undiluted Fretilin support is most evident, and ignores the western districts, where the heart of the military discontent that contributed heavily to last year's chaos lies.

Moucho is also relying on 270,000 registered Fretilin members, out of a total voting pool of 522,933 East Timorese adults, to get his man over the line.

It won't be quite that simple, however. Even within the party there is dissent, with an internal "Fretilin Mudanca (reform)" bloc directing members to vote for Ramos Horta, a party founder who left the organisation more than 15 years ago but resumed his alliance with the Marxist-based group when he replaced its secretary-general, Mari Alkatiri, as prime minister as an emergency pressure-releasing strategy at the height of last year's violence.

Fretilin Mudanca prime mover Jose Luis Guterres, who took on the job of Foreign Minister after Ramos Horta's ascent to the prime minister's office, says there is no way the Fretilin leadership can be allowed to continue "misdirecting the country".

"We have already seen that this Government cannot do a good job," he says, sitting in an airy cafe overlooking the Dili waterfront, filled with New Zealand police and foreign bureaucrats and aid workers, here as part of the massive international effort to steer a straight course for the struggling country.

"They are not doing any kind of rural investment, and they have not even said sorry for what happened last year. We had close to a civil war, and all they can do is blame others for it, not look to themselves.

"I think that Ramos Horta, and probably Xanana as prime minister, can help unite the country. Ramos Horta is someone everyone knows and they trust him to work for East Timor. "The support of President Kay Rala"Xanana" Gusmao

will be crucial to Ramos Horta's chances. After bringing to his long-time ally the votes of the nation's "veterans" — those who, like Gusmao, spent most of their adult lives in the jungle waging guerilla war against the 24-year Indonesian occupation — the man regarded as East Timor's founding father will then almost certainly stand in mid-year parliamentary elections and run for prime minister in a government led by his newly formed National Congress for East Timorese Reconstruction.

The intensity and complexity of East Timor's politics can be bewildering, and the reliance on symbol and myth a crucial part of understanding it.

Gusmao's new grouping uses the acronym CNRT — the same as that of the former National Council for East Timorese Resistance, the umbrella group formed by Ramos Horta and Gusmao that ushered in independence and effectively functioned as both political party and state machine between 2000 and 2002.

Reigniting the CNRT brand will attract a nostalgia vote in the countryside, where heroes and freedom fighters are revered.

The phenomenon helps explain the support for renegade former military police commander Alfredo Alves Reinado, who appears to have been spirited away with the help of villagers in Same, south of Dili, during a botched raid on his hideout by Australian SAS troops last month.

Brigadier Mal Rerdon, the Australian commander of the International Stabilisation Force providing military security in East Timor, says "Alfredo Reinado is a fugitive who must face justice". "Some people in the districts seem to have the impression that Alfredo is a hero," he said last week. "It's important for them to understand that Alfredo is not going to provide them with any kind of solution. While he remains a fugitive, he's only going to bring instability and unrest."

But for many East Timorese it's not so simple: they buy a parallel deliberately cultivated by the rebel with Dom Boaventura, who waged a bloody struggle against heavily armed Portuguese troops in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Boaventura was finally forced out of his Same stronghold in a 1912 military action that resulted in the deaths of thousands of men, women and children; a statue in his honour stands not far from the Australian embassy in Dili, overlooking a refugee camp.

For many of the camp's displaced people and others in a nation where unemployment runs at well over 50 per cent and per capita GDP was \$425 last year, expectations are low and relatively easy to fulfil.

All sides agree that the more than \$1 billion in oil money sitting in a New York bank account needs to start flowing into infrastructure and development. A recent Asian Development Bank report predicted growth of more than 30 per cent for East Timor in the coming financial year.

Filmmaker Max Stahl, who has followed East Timor's fortunes for years, is fluent in the Tetum official language and occupies the privileged position of documentarist and participant in the country's travails, likens it to a "basically well-constructed but unstable boat". "It's as though it doesn't have a heavy enough keel," he muses, "so that as soon as it's hit by gusts of wind it rocks from side to side and threatens to capsize, although it never quite does. It's still well enough built that it doesn't tip over." Stahl insists "the important question is can East Timor be governed, not who should govern it".

But first the mechanics of the poll must be managed and, despite the best efforts of UN representative Atul Khare to help East Timor run its first general election, problems are inevitable.

Criticisms have included concerns from a UN certification team as recently as last month that the conditions for free, fair and transparent voting remained to be met. These fears were emphasised on Friday, when it emerged that identity cards produced by the country's electoral commission did not include photographs and were unlikely to reach district booths in time.

"It's like he (Khare) is so desperate for it to go well, he doesn't want to admit there are any problems at all," says one Dili-based foreign

analyst.

But for many, including Khare, the fact that a nation born in the fire of 1999's violent separation from Indonesia can so soon be holding its own elections at all is a minor miracle.

"These elections, if they are credible, free and fair, independent and if the results are acceptable and accepted by the population, then they can have a unifying effect," says the Indian diplomat. "Moreover, elections are not the final step in the democratic process but the first step — it is the day after which I believe is far more important than the day on which votes are cast."

[Stephen Fitzpatrick is The Australian's Jakarta correspondent.]

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## **Elections tension rises in East Timor**

The Guardian - April 8, 2007

John Aglionby, Dili — When East Timor's 600,000 voters head to the polls Monday for the first round of a presidential election they do so aware that their choice will resonate far beyond which of eight candidates they select to fill the largely ceremonial position.

Everyone is convinced that after the nation collapsed into anarchy a year ago, how they vote will set the tone for a general election expected in the next four months and which will therefore determine the five-year-old nation's future.

Last year's crisis, which began with an army mutiny, saw the poorly run police force implode and communal violence erupt on the streets of Dili, the capital. Three dozen people were killed and 150,000 were forced to flee their homes.

Order has been restored since the deployment of 2,500 international troops last May and the massive expansion — including the arrival 1,748 international police officers — of what had been a United Nations mission focused mostly on planning its exit. But as a five-year-old East Timor and its 1m people seek to avoid becoming a

failed state, tensions remain high this election season.

"The situation is [now] calm but the calm is superficial," says Atul Khare, the head of the UN's mission. "The situation is volatile and it is tense. [It] is a post-conflict country with unresolved issues."

All election participants expect a significant redrawing of the political landscape this year.

Fretilin, the leftist ruling party that won 57 per cent of the vote in the only previous general election, in 2001, believes voters are going to flock to it and its presidential candidate, Francisco "Lu Olo" Guterres, to lift the country out of its mess.

For his part, Mr Guterres is convinced he will win majority support in Monday's vote and thus avoid a run-off.

"We have not yet got to the point where we are mature enough to rotate power," says Filomeno Alexio, a Fretilin central committee member. "Fretilin is like a banknote, with two sides that cannot be separated. On one are the people, on the other the state institutions."

With no opinion polls taken, the result is impossible to predict. But virtually everyone outside Fretilin believes the only real question is how big a defeat it will suffer.

"In 2001 there was political euphoria," explained Julio Pinto, the executive director of the East Timor Institute for Security Studies, a local think-tank. "For 24 years [during the brutal Indonesian occupation that ended in 1999] Fretilin had been banned and so everyone ran to them. Yet now it is fractured and there has been little economic progress."

Fretilin's biggest opponent is Jose Ramos-Horta, the Nobel laureate who took over as prime minister after last year's crisis forced Fretilin's Mari Alkatiri to step down amid charges that he and political allies helped engineer at least some of the violence. The other leading contender is Fernando de Araujo of the Democratic Party.

Allied against Fretilin with Mr Horta — although neither will say so publicly — is Xanana Gusmao, the revered former guerilla leader who is now president. Mr Gusmao plans to run for prime minister in the general elections as head of a new party, the National Congress for the Reconstruction of East Timor, or CNRT, of which Mr Horta's campaign manager has been elected secretary-general.

In an interview with the Financial Times last month, Mr Gusmao lashed out at what he dubbed the corruption and incompetence of East Timor's Fretilin-led political elite. "People suffered severely for 24 years and they hoped that independence would bring something new and better, but it hasn't," Mr Gusmao said. "Indonesia used to kill and lie, but the economy continued to function. Now we're independent it doesn't anymore."

Observers say that Mr Gusmao's decision to challenge Fretilin has created an entirely new political playing field. "For the first time in this country, the two big bulls are coming to clash," says one senior diplomat. "For the first time people are going to have to choose between [Mr Gusmao and Fretilin]."

Many ordinary East Timorese are eager to see a change. "The people here are certain the [2006] crisis was triggered by the national leadership," says tailor Deonsius da Silva, referring to the 5,000 people he shares a refugee camp with in Dili. "So what we need is new leadership."

But whoever triumphs in the days and months to come, Mr Gusmao's new party is a positive development, Mr Horta says. "Whichever [wins the general election], you will have a real balance, whereby whoever governs cannot govern with absolute disregard for everybody else," he says. "This has been the case for the past five years, where [under] Fretilin everybody became enemies."

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## **East Timor votes for president after crisis year**

Reuters - April 9, 2007

Ahmad Pathoni, Dili — East Timorese streamed to

the polls on Monday to vote for a new president, hoping the election can help end deep divisions after a year of instability in one of the world's youngest and poorest nations.

Over half a million voters are picking a new president in Monday's election, which outgoing President Xanana Gusmao says is a chance to demonstrate his nation is not a failed state.

Supporters of rival candidates clashed during campaigning last week, injuring more than 30 people and prompting international troops to fire tear gas and warning shots.

As truck loads of troops patrolled the streets of a sunshine-bathed Dili, voters poured into polling stations across the capital. Some had queued from before dawn.

"This election is important for the country's future. I hope the new president will lift us out of the crisis," said Rogerio dos Santos, a 30-year-old farmer waiting to cast his ballot in a polling station in an elementary school.

Turnout appeared to be high and although official results are not due until April 16, an electoral commission spokesman said preliminary results could emerge on Tuesday.

The capital was calm on Monday, although residents said that overnight two soldiers described as drunk fired shots while stopping traffic. No one was hurt in the incident, they said.

Campaigns have focused on how to reunite East Timorese, split by an east-west divide that erupted into bloodshed last May after the sacking of 600 mutinous troops from the western region.

Eight candidates are running, including Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta, a Nobel peace prize winner who spearheaded an overseas campaign for independence from Indonesia. If no one wins more than half the vote, a run-off will be held, a scenario some analysts see as likely.

Gusmao, an ally of Ramos-Horta, is not running for re-election but plans to seek the more hands-on post of prime minister in a separate parliamentary election later this year.



## **Free and fair, so far**

Ramos-Horta, speaking to reporters while waiting to vote, said he was happy with the conduct of the election so far. "Despite some flaws, despite some intimidation, it can be said to be free and fair," he said.

Around 3,000 international troops and police will patrol during the elections, while about 200 international observers are monitoring the voting.

"There have been a few problems in the districts but it's completely normal in any election," said Javier Pomes Ruiz of the EU monitoring mission.

No figures have been released yet on voter turnout, but all districts reported many voters queuing outside polling stations before 7 a.m., a statement from the election logistics body said. Some of the 700 polling stations are so remote the ballot papers had to be delivered on horses.

Gusmao has blamed last week's clashes on the Fretilin Party of ousted Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri, accusing its leaders of allowing supporters to provoke violence. The party has denied the charges.

Fretilin's candidate, Francisco Guterres, a former guerrilla fighter known as "Lu'Olo", is a front-runner in the elections.

The electoral commission's spokesman said that in Kovalima district a warning letter would be sent to Guterres after his supporters had warned of consequences if people did not back their candidate. However, the spokesman said: "Overall the election is going smoothly."

Julio Thomas of the National University of Timor Leste expects the poll to be a three-way race between Ramos-Horta, Guterres and the Democratic Party's Fernando de Araujo, who has backing from many young people.

Pro-Jakarta militiamen went on a violent rampage following a 1999 vote for independence, killing about 1,000 people and destroying much of the territory's infrastructure.

In the chaos after the mutiny by some troops last May, more than 30 people were killed and 100,000

fled their homes, until the government asked foreign troops to quell the unrest.

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## **Rivals for Timor vote accuse PM of tricks**

Melbourne Age - April 8, 2007

Lindsay Murdoch, Dili — Leading candidates in East Timor's presidential election have accused each other of manipulating tomorrow's vote as officials race to deliver ballot papers to 500 polling centres, many of them in remote villages.

The ruling Fretilin party claimed yesterday that Timorese Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta had manipulated state-owned television to make a final pitch to voters for the presidency of the troubled nation.

Earlier, four candidates including frontrunner Fernando "Lasama" de Araujo claimed that their campaigns were being damaged by intimidation, violence, and manipulation in the issuing of scrutineer passes for polling centres.

Fretilin's candidate, Francisco "Lu-Olo" Guterres, said Mr Ramos Horta's TV appearance on Friday evening with outgoing President Xanana Gusmao and Dili Bishop Alberto Ricardo da Silva was an abuse of power.

"The program was structured so as to give the impression that Gusmao and the church endorsed Ramos Horta's presidential campaign," Mr Guterres said.

During the broadcast Mr Ramos Horta told Timorese, most of whom are Catholic, that the day after Resurrection Sunday "we will see the resurrection of democracy for East Timor".

More than 500,000 registered voters will choose their head of state from eight candidates tomorrow in the first election run by East Timor since independence five years ago. Campaigning has been marred by violence, but 1600 United Nations police and 1120 Australian and New Zealand troops have moved quickly to prevent more fighting.

With none of the candidates likely to win a majority, a second run-off election is expected in a month.

Mr Ramos Horta had criticised influential priest Martinho Gusmao, the church's representative on the electoral commission, for publicly endorsing Mr de Araujo.

Father Martinho told journalists last week that priests and bishops in 200 churches would not endorse any candidate during Masses today, but they were free to speak their minds outside the church walls.

The UN mission in Dili has provided helicopters to deliver ballot boxes to remote polling centres, many of which are cut off during the current wet season. The result is not expected to be announced for several days.

Once a president is elected, East Timor must hold parliamentary elections within two months.

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## **Nobel winner vs former rebel**

Courier Mail (Australia) - April 7, 2007

John Martinkus — There was a moment this week in Dili when it looked as though the increasingly bitter race for the presidency would spill over into violence.

On Thursday afternoon, as supporters of Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta gathered to attend a rally, a convoy of rival Fretilin supporters drove past.

Portuguese riot police frantically waved both convoys away from each other as a few stones began to fly between the two groups. Panicked bystanders began to flee expecting a fight. But the convoy drove on and the tension subsided.

Inside the Dili football stadium, Mr Ramos Horta addressed the crowd. He spoke about the dangers of supporting the Fretilin candidate Francisco Guterres, who is known universally as "Lu Olo", as President and former resistance leader Xanana

Gusmao, watched approvingly from the crowd.

Monday's vote to decide the president is a power struggle with Fretilin, the majority party in East Timor's parliament, on one side.

The other camp is led by Mr Gusmao and Mr Ramos Horta. The problem for these two high-profile politicians is that they are relying almost entirely on their own personal popularity to win the contest.

Neither has a political party or organisation behind them. Fretilin, on the other hand, has a political organisation that has survived the Indonesian occupation and formed the Government since Fretilin won the first elections in East Timor in 2001.

"In 2001, we had 270,000 militants and that got us 45 seats in parliament," he told The Courier-Mail. "In the last five years, many of the youth who are sons and daughters of our members can now vote so the figure will be higher."

Monday's election requires a candidate to obtain 50 per cent of the total vote to be elected president. If no candidate reaches this figure then a run-off election will be held between the two highest polling contenders.

The contrast between the two main candidates could not be greater. Mr Ramos Horta is well known internationally for his role in lobbying successfully around the world for East Timor's independence through the 24 years of Indonesian rule. Lu Olo spent that period as a resistance fighter in the mountains of East Timor rising to the rank of Chief of Staff of the Falintil resistance army where he oversaw operations against the Indonesian military.

A lifelong Fretilin supporter he was elected as chairman of the Parliament and oversaw the writing of the East Timor constitution. He speaks little English and has been mainly ignored by the foreign press. Mr Ramos Horta by contrast is fluent in English and openly courts the foreign press.

On the last day of the campaign he invited the foreign media to his home to discuss his program. "Lu Olo is not his own man," he told the gathering. "He is a puppet," he said referring to

Lu Olo's relationship with ousted prime minister Mari Alkatiri who remains as the Fretilin party's president.

Lu Olo is direct about Mr Ramos Horta. He praises the man's diplomatic skills that brought a Nobel Peace prize and international profile. But he adds: "Ramos Horta became recognised because it was our people fighting in the mountains. The Nobel Peace prize was not for him but for us."

More than any other issue it is responsibility for last year's violence that remains the central issue for this election. Lu Olo is scathing about President Gusmao's role in the crisis that led to the resignation of Mr Alkatiri. He says Mr Gusmao's reputation has been burnt by his involvement.

"There were demonstrations here to call for the resignation of Mari Alkatiri," he told The Courier-Mail. "Xanana Gusmao and the first lady participated. He told the demonstrators 'you have to shake the Government'."

Mr Ramos Horta is perceived in East Timor as the candidate favoured by the international and business community. He promises to kickstart the economy by distributing part of the money accumulating in the Timor petroleum fund and to relax restrictions on foreign investment and tax.

Lu Olo believes these decisions should remain with Parliament and Mr Ramos Horta would be acting outside of his constitutional powers.

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## **Candidates allege manipulation of Timor election**

Agence France Presse - April 6, 2007

Dili — Half the candidates in East Timor's presidential poll said Friday they fear many attempts have been made to manipulate the election process ahead of Monday's vote.

"We fear that there are a lot of attempts to manipulate the whole election process," the candidates said in a joint statement. "There's

been a lot of intimidation, a lot of violence, and a lot of threats. We fear that violence can occur on the day of the vote," they said.

At least 32 people have already been injured in clashes this week in and around the capital Dili, although most of the two-week presidential campaign has been peaceful, the UN has said.

The candidates' statement was read at a press conference by Joao Viegas Carrascalao, one of eight people seeking to replace President Xanana Gusmao in the election, the first since troubled East Timor's independence in 2002.

Joining Carrascalao was Fernando "Lasama" de Araujo, chairman of the opposition Democratic Party, who is a strong contender to win the election. Two other candidates, Lucia Lobato and Francisco Xavier do Amaral, were also present.

"We ask the UN to guarantee security and to be aware of all these attempts of manipulation," Carrascalao said. "We have in many cases made complaints to the proper authorities and so far we haven't seen any measures taken."

Carrascalao said the four candidates received identity cards for their own election observers only on Friday, leaving them insufficient time to prepare to oversee the election.

They alleged the ruling Fretilin party got its identity cards some time ago from a government department, the Timorese Technical Secretariat for Election Administration (STAE), which is organising the election.

"The timing is premeditated," Carrascalao told AFP. "It's a government department and we fear that the government is manipulating through this department."

Faustino Cardoso, the president of the Nation Election Commission, said he was aware of the identity card problem.

"We have been in contact with STAE. Most of the cards have been finalised. I strongly believe that everything is going to be ready for the election on Monday," he said. The UN said 2,000 East Timorese and 232 foreign observers would monitor the ballot.

Two other presidential candidates, both considered possible winners of the election, did not join Friday's press conference.

But Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta and Francisco "Lu-Olo" Guterres's Fretilin party separately accused a priest who sits on the National Election Commission of interference.

The accusation was levelled against Father Martinho Gusmao, the Catholic church's commission representative and spokesperson.

Filomeno Aleixo, of Fretilin's central committee, said Martinho Gusmao "clearly prejudiced the outcome of Monday's ballot" by voicing support for de Araujo's candidacy.

Ramos-Horta said the church hierarchy was "equally shocked" by Martinho Gusmao's action, which he said was inconsistent with his role on the electoral commission.

But when contacted by AFP the priest said "it's not for the Catholic church to dictate" who people should vote for. "Officially, as an institution, we say all candidates are Catholic and we have no preference," he said.

Aleixo, whose party led East Timor's independence struggle, said the electoral commission is supposed to act as an independent body that helps ensure free and fair elections.

Indonesia occupied East Timor for 24 years before the former Portuguese colony gained independence after a period of UN stewardship.

Violence has pulsed through the fledgling state. Last year at least 37 people were killed and more than 150,000 fled their homes in unrest that triggered the dispatch of Australian-led international peacekeepers.

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## **Legacy of Fretilin party looms large over Timor poll**

Australian Associated Press - April 5, 2007

Karen Michelmore, Dili — The distinctive buzz of motorcycles can be heard in the distance, growing increasingly louder.

Within seconds more than 30 motorbikes, engines revving and adorned with party flags and posters, spill into the dilapidated compound, the headquarters of East Timor's major political party, Fretilin, in the capital Dili.

Several large dump trucks crammed full of shirtless youths chanting "Fretilin, Fretilin", many of them drunk, soon follow in the convoy, as rallying music from the nation's former decades-long guerilla campaign for independence blares at full volume.

Scores quickly clamber down and begin to jump and dance in the dirt beside the trucks, as one supporter wrapped in Fretilin's distinctive red flag shouts: "We are independent because of Fretilin, fight for independence".

It is the end of another successful day on the campaign trail ahead of Monday's historic presidential elections — the first since East Timor gained independence from Indonesia in 2002, and also the first national poll to be run by local authorities.

Despite its profound poverty and social problems, East Timor has embraced its chance at democracy with vigour, with tens of thousands turning out at political rallies across the nation over the past two weeks.

Truckloads of mainly young people waving flags and screaming in support for one of eight candidates have circled towns across the country, and there has been strong voter registration, with 522,933 set to cast their ballot at one of 705 polling stations on Monday.

While the campaign has been marred by isolated incidents of violence and intimidation — dozens were injured in attacks on rival supporters in the districts, and on the final big day of campaigning in Dili yesterday — many feared it could have been much worse.

Gang violence continues to haunt Dili, and thousands of people remain in refugee camps across



the capital, still too afraid to return home after last year's wave of violence in which 37 people were killed and 150,000 displaced after 600 army members were sacked by the government.

The ruling party Fretilin's candidate Francisco Guterres "Lu Olo" is considered a favourite among the eight candidates vying to replace independence fighter Xanana Gusmao as president of the tiny nation.

The 52-year-old President of East Timor's National Parliament describes himself as "the son of a poor family, of humble people", a devout Catholic and former guerilla fighter who has vowed to be a president for everybody, regardless of their affiliations.

The party itself exudes confidence, saying that if the election was judged on its turnout at rallies across the tiny nation it would win in a landslide.

"Things have been going well in all districts for the Fretilin candidate — the lowest turnout was four to five thousand and the biggest at Suai was 17,000," campaign manager, and East Timor's Minister for Labor and Solidarity Arsenio Bano said.

"We have already won from the number who have turned out everywhere we go. If we compare it with the other candidates, the highest number they can get is 1500. From that comparison we can already say we will win the election."

But many, including some of the party's own members, disagree and believe there is a mood for change in the electorate. Fretilin, they say, is increasingly being perceived as arrogant, and many Timorese have felt little improvement in their daily lives after five years of Fretilin rule.

Independent candidate Jose Ramos Horta, who replaced Fretilin's Mari Alkatiri as East Timor's prime minister after last year's crisis of violence, is another frontrunner for the presidency.

The well-educated Nobel Peace Prize laureate has delivered a slick message of unity, along with a swag of promises, vowing to funnel at least \$US10

million (\$A12.2 million) per year to the church to help the impoverished nation "heal our wounds".

Like other candidates he has promised to set up a welfare system in the tiny nation, offering \$US40 (\$A50) a month to the 100,000 poorest citizens, along with the elderly, disabled and veterans of East Timor's fight for independence.

And there are also plans to review and, if necessary, simplify the Constitution, install a new tax system and scrap tax for those earning less than \$US1,000 (\$A1,220) per month; and create a network of "zones of peace" across the island in a bid to curb violence.

Disillusioned by the recent crisis that has engulfed the nation, a breakaway faction of Fretilin is backing Ramos Horta for the presidency over the party's own candidate Lu Olo.

"We are supporting Ramos Horta — he has all the diplomatic skills and is well known in the national and international community, and was a founding member of Fretilin," East Timor's Foreign Minister Jose Luis Guterres said.

"This country is in a bad state, its a divided country... facing so many problems. We need someone with the right skills to find a way out of this crisis. I believe Lu Olo and (former Fretilin prime minister) Mari Alkatiri, they are responsible for the crisis (last year). People want change in this country."

Ramos Horta says he is relaxed about Monday's vote, and rates his chances as "reasonable".

"I'm not worried about whether I win or I lose, because for me, whatever the outcome I am a winner," he said. "If I win, I win the election, and if I lose I will win my freedom. I will take the message from the people that they want me to retire and that I deserve a proper early retirement. I would not hesitate to follow that advice and retire for good."

Another major challenge to Fretilin could come from the Democratic Party's leader Fernando "La Sama" de Araujo, who enjoys wide support among the nation's youth. La Sama has campaigned on a platform of "stability, justice and governance",

with a vision to unite the nation in "love and peace".

However, in order to win, either candidate would need to overcome the powerful symbolism of the Fretilin logo on the ballot paper, which many in the largely illiterate nation identify with the nation's long struggle for independence.

Ramos Horta is one of four candidates who have chosen to put the symbol of Timor's national flag beside his name on the ballot, while La Sama has opted for no symbol.

The outcome of the poll is expected to be announced next Wednesday. If there is no clear winner, the top two candidates will face off in a second poll early next month.

There are fears that further violence could erupt amongst those on the losing side when the results are published. The head of the United Nations in East Timor, Atul Khare, hopes the elections will have a unifying impact on the fragile state.

"(An) election, in my view, is not the last step in the democratic process, it is the beginning of the democratic process," said the Special Representative to the UN Secretary General.

"The day after the election, both the victors and the losers have to get together with mutual respect and have to decide to work together for the betterment of the people of Timor Leste.

"Democracy is not something which begins with the casting of the vote and then for five years you forget about it until you have another casting of the vote. It is the day after the election that I believe is far more important than the day on which the votes are cast."

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## **I'll bring home oil millions: Gusmao**

The Australian - April 5, 2007

Stephen Fitzpatrick, Dili — East Timorese resistance hero Xanana Gusmao has promised he will unlock hundreds of millions of dollars in oil

revenue held in a New York escrow bank account if he is elected prime minister.

Mr Gusmao's current post of president is up for election on Monday. He is not contesting the symbolically important position but eight others are, including incumbent Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta.

Monday's presidential polls will be followed by parliamentary elections mid-year, including for the powerful position of prime minister — a job Mr Ramos Horta inherited last year after the ruling Fretilin party's Mari Alkatiri was deposed in a bout of bloody public unrest.

Campaigning in Dili deteriorated into violence yesterday as sporadic fighting broke out between gangs of youths from rival parties. Police fired tear gas and warning shots to break up fights and rock-throwing attacks, which left several injured, including two UN policemen who were hurt during a clash near the Australian embassy.

Mr Ramos Horta attracted several thousand people to a stadium in the capital, Dili, yesterday afternoon for the final official event of campaigning for Monday's vote.

No further election rallies will be allowed, leaving the pulpits at Easter Sunday masses as the last opportunity for political direction in this devoutly Catholic country.

Electoral Commission spokesman Martinho Gusmao, a senior Catholic priest, said yesterday that parishioners would not officially be told who to vote for, since "we ask people to choose according to their conscience".

However, Father Gusmao said that of the eight candidates, he favoured Democratic Party leader Fernando "Lasama" de Araujo "and if someone asks me to give advice in my personal capacity, that is what I will say".

The priest denied he was creating a conflict of interest in appearing to endorse a particular candidate while working for the electoral commission, "since we Timorese still in a way have to develop the character of our political style — the culture of our politics".

Speaking at a public forum in Dili, Father Gusmao was interrupted by his namesake, the former president, who said: "What he means is that, of the candidates, Lasama is the one who satisfies the younger generation — of the others, there are only grandparents standing for election."

The issue of a generation gap cutting across East Timor's political divide has become a rhetorical theme of the poll, with the demarcation being seen as between those who carried arms against the Indonesian occupation and those who did not.

Mr Gusmao, a one-time guerilla leader jailed by Indonesia for his actions, appears to have delivered to long-time ally Mr Ramos Horta the votes of those who did fight in the 24-year resistance, by personally backing the latter's campaign. Mr Gusmao, wife Kirsty Sword Gusmao and their children were at yesterday's Horta rally, to the delight of supporters.

In a targeted attack on the current government — led by Mr Ramos Horta but run by the Fretilin party machine — Mr Gusmao said yesterday it was important that the next administration "put our fingers on the many things that we did in not the right way".

Key among these, he said, was the failure to provide adequate healthcare, education and other important social needs, "or even to make sure people had enough to eat". "Now we need to have a master plan on how to spend the money, so that in 10 to 15 years this country will live in a very good condition," he said. "But democracy will not work if the people are hungry. We have so much money in an account in New York, while here in Timor people are struggling and living in misery." Mr Gusmao went on to say he would be able to get access to that money.

A third contender with a chance is Fretilin's Francisco "Lu Olo" Guterres, who attracted several thousand people to a rally in Dili yesterday. Formal election results are not expected to be known for at least two days after polls close, leaving the possibility of more violence should the outcome be in dispute.

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## **Socialist campaign mobilises in East Timor's districts**

Green Left Weekly - April 4, 2007

Max Lane — East Timor's presidential election campaign is now officially underway. Voting will be held on April 9. Max Lane spoke by phone with presidential candidate Avelino Coelho, secretary-general of the Socialist Party of Timor (PST).

*What issues are people raising with you in your campaign?*

We have visited several towns already where we have organised rallies and other meetings. The language issue is important and people are responding strongly. I am opposing the use of Portuguese as the national language and arguing that Tetun be both the national and official working language. Indonesian can be a back-up working language, as stated in the constitution, but Tetun must be the national language.

*Why is this so important?*

There is the big issue of the urgent need for Timorese to win back pride, to start defending and developing their own national character. We are more and more dependent on foreigners for everything and are losing any sense of national integrity. We have to develop the language that the people speak. But at the same time it is a very pressing concrete issue. People are being discriminated against, especially regarding jobs, because they don't speak Portuguese. People who fought long and hard against the military occupation and can't speak Portuguese — they speak Tetun and Indonesian — can't get jobs.

*And this gets a bigger response than economic issues?*

The economic situation is a big issue too, but they are tied together, the need to develop a strong independent character for the nation and the struggle to get out of the economic crisis that the government has created. Apart from employment, rice is the other issue. It is still very expensive and hard to get. There are queues for people to get rice despite the fact that we have more than enough land to grow a lot of rice.

This is a failure of the Mari Alkatiri and Jose Ramos Horta governments.

*How are you finding campaigning?*

It is hard. Unlike others, we have little money. Our party is a party of the poor and the youth. There is no media that reaches outside of the capital, Dili. There is TV in Dili but not outside. So we have to travel. I have invitations from groups in every single district of East Timor, to go there and speak. But we won't be able to do that. It costs money for petrol and for cars. We will have to be selective about where we go.

*So how have things gone on your visits?*

Where the PST has been doing work and where we have had time to prepare, we have had some good turnouts. A few days ago in Ossu we had a town gathering where 7000 people turned up — in a town of 9700. Fretilin held a rally around the same time and got 1200 people, using more than 40 trucks to bring in people from outside. In Viqueque we got about 1000 people. In Manututu, there was less preparation time and we got about 500. We have made quite a few visits to the Bacau region. They are not always big gatherings, sometimes we visit people in the rice fields and at work.

*And what about the other campaigns, by Horta or Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo from Fretilin?*

To be honest, I can't really say. I have been visiting the villages and towns and there is no media here, so I don't hear much about what others are doing. We don't come across each other. But I don't think Horta has attracted more than 400 people at his meetings. Where there are rallies, they are on different days. And there have been no debates. Occasionally, we may have some contact at a rally. On March 28, for example, in Vemasse, in Bacau district, we held a rally of about 1000 people. A truck turned up with about five youth in it shouting "Fretilin will win!" They confronted our people and started shouting for the rally to disband. They tried to provoke a fight but didn't succeed.

*Why no debates?*

There have been some invitations for debates between candidates, for example from the university students on campus, but Horta and Luolo have declined. So they don't usually happen or they are attended just by some of the other candidates. Horta and Lu-Olo, I think, are relying a lot on symbols.

In Dili, for example, there are colour posters everywhere with a picture of Horta receiving the Nobel prize alongside Bishop Belo. He wants to give the impression that he is supported by the Catholic Church. I even heard there may be posters with his photo when he was meeting the Pope. But the church has stayed neutral so far.

*And Fretilin?*

I think they are worried about Lu-Olo's national profile and popularity. They have been pushing for something that we think is not legal under the current law. They want the Fretilin flag to appear next to Lu-Olo's name on the ballot paper. Fretilin more and more relies on the historical myth of its past. But under the current constitution, presidential candidates are not nominated as party representatives. They are supposed to be nominated as individuals, by at least 5000 people. I protested this move by Fretilin at a meeting with the president a while ago.

*So your campaign is not actually a PST campaign?*

In fact, there are different people getting involved helping us. We are pleased about that. The last round of campaigning will be focussed in Dili. We are hoping to attract more than 10,000 people to our election rally there. We will press home our case that the government has failed.

*And what about the Australian and foreign military presence? The last time we spoke you called on the Australian military not to take sides in the internal conflicts. Has that become an issue in the campaign?*

No, the foreign military presence has not generated any big negative impacts so far.



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## **Violence hits Timor campaign as candidate urges unity**

Reuters - April 4, 2007

Ahmad Pathoni, Dili — A former East Timorese independence fighter jailed by Indonesia for six years pledged on Wednesday to unite his conflict-torn country and bring justice to its people, as the final day of election campaigning was marred by violence.

Fernando de Araujo, whose nom de guerre was La Sama, is among eight candidates running in Monday's presidential poll.

By the standards of the tiny country's chaotic history, the election campaign has been relatively peaceful, but on Wednesday rock-throwing clashes between supporters of various candidates left some 30 people in need of medical treatment in the capital Dili, according to Reuters eyewitnesses and hospital staff.

Several victims had bleeding head injuries and a nurse said at least one person had been wounded by an arrow.

UN police said in a statement "the situation in and around Dili has mostly been calm" but noted two incidents, one brought under control when officers fired two warning shots and another in which five people were taken to hospital with minor injuries.

However, a rally for De Araujo — at 44 the youngest among the candidates and considered by some to be a strong contender — went peacefully. "La Sama has a good chance of winning. He appeals to young voters who are disappointed with the failure of the older generation," political analyst Julio Thomas told Reuters.

The candidate with the highest profile, however, is Jose Ramos-Horta, who succeeded Alkatiri as prime minister and won a Nobel Peace Prize during the struggle against Indonesia.

About 2,000 people turned up at a Dili soccer field, waving De Araujo pictures and blue flags of the Democratic Party he founded. "I believe the young generation of Timor Leste will unite again," De Araujo told his supporters, who chanted "Viva La Sama".

### **New generation**

"It's time for young people to replace the old ones, who have brought only chaos to this country," said supporter Leo da Costa, his bare chest emblazoned with the Democratic Party's initials painted in yellow.

De Araujo, whose campaign theme is "It's time for a son of the poor to lead the country," said he would create a legal system free from discrimination.

"The current judiciary is trash. Law must not discriminate. It must not only punish people who steal chickens but also those who distribute weapons illegally," said De Araujo, standing on a truck and wearing a colourful traditional scarf around his neck. He did not mention any names.

Former East Timor Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri was accused of giving weapons to supporters to kill political opponents during last year's wave of violence which prompted the government to invite in foreign troops to restore order.

The charges against Alkatiri were dropped earlier this year after authorities said there was not enough evidence.

East Timor became independent in 2002 after a period of UN stewardship. It has rich energy resources but has only begun to tap them and most of the country's one million people remain among the world's poorest.

De Araujo spent six years in a Jakarta prison, from 1992 to 1998, for campaigning for East Timor's independence. He continued his studies after being released and graduated from the University of Melbourne in 2001.

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## **East Timor: Elections on track, under heavy guard**

Interpress Service - April 4, 2007

Mario de Queiroz, Lisbon — With less than a week to go to the presidential elections in East Timor, the violence has not let up in this small island nation that was born in May 2002 after nearly five centuries of Portuguese colonial rule and 25 years of brutal occupation by Indonesia.

In the Apr. 9 elections, voters will choose the successor to Josi Alexandre “Xanana” Gusmao, a leader of the guerrilla struggle against the Indonesian occupation who is currently president of one of the smallest and poorest nations in the world, with a total territory of 15,000 square kilometres and 400 dollars a year in per capita income.

The candidates with a real chance of winning are Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta, an independent backed by Xanana Gusmao, and Francisco “Lu Olo” Guterres of the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Fretilin), who is backed by former prime minister Mari Alkatiri (2002-2006).

Also running for the largely ceremonial post of president are Avelino Coelho of the Socialist Party of Timor, Lzcia Lobato of the Social Democrat Party, Xavier do Amaral of the Timorese Social Democratic Association, and independent candidates Manuel Tilman, Joco Carrascalco and Fernando “Lasama” de Arazjo.

Voter registration surpassed expectations, with more than 500,000 people registering out of a population of 1.063 million, as indicated by statistics that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) resident representative in East Timor, Finn Reske-Nielsen, provided to Portuguese correspondents on Mar. 29.

The elections will be overseen by around 1,000 local observers and some 100 foreign experts who have received training from the UNDP, and according to Reske-Nielsen, the process should go smoothly, with neither logistical nor security problems.

But the continuing instability in this Pacific

island nation means the elections will be held under the vigilant gaze of a heavily armed international peacekeeping force, in accordance with a Feb. 22 UN Security Council resolution, which extended the mandate of the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) for another year and authorised police reinforcements.

Violence has continued intermittently since June 2006, after rebel officer Alfredo Reinado, a former military police chief, escaped from prison with a group of followers. From their hideout in the mountains surrounding Dili, they have incited the activities of gangs made up of youths from the city's slums.

The election campaign has become the latest excuse for street violence, like clashes between supporters of different candidates, who threw rocks at each other Wednesday, leaving an estimated 30 people injured.

Local authorities have asked for help from Portugal, given the growing tension caused by the increasing presence of Australian peacekeeping troops.

In the early hours of Tuesday morning, a Hercules C-130 of the Portuguese air force transported to Dili 77 members of Portugal's National Republican Guard to reinforce the UN police contingent in East Timor, which occupies half of the island of Timor, located southeast of the Indonesian archipelago and north of Australia.

The international peacekeeping force is led by Australia, which has deployed 1,100 troops. They are treated with suspicion by the local population, who fear that the country will become a kind of Australian protectorate.

The governments of Australia and East Timor are caught up in a longstanding dispute over the demarcation of their territorial waters. The underlying conflict is over who has the right to exploit the immense oil and natural gas deposits beneath the Timor Sea.

Since its empire fell apart in the mid-1970s, Portugal has been especially careful in its relations with its former overseas territories. In the case of East Timor, it appeals to the friendly

relations with many local residents and the political leaders, who were mainly educated in schools and universities in Portugal.

Portugal is taking part in the peacekeeping force with 220 National Republican Guard troops, who were sent in response to a direct request by the government of East Timor.

The election campaign began on Mar. 23. The majority of violent incidents have occurred in Dili. But on Mar. 27, stones were lobbed at the headquarters of Fretilin in Liquiga, 34 km from the capital.

A day later, in Viqueque, 220 km from Dili, stones were thrown at the entourage of candidate Ramos Horta, and 24 hours later, demonstrators threw sharp objects at the motorcade of supporters of "Lu Olo" Guterres. In none of the cases were the aggressors identified.

In statements to the Portuguese news agency Lusa, Catholic priest Martinho Gusmao, spokesman for the National Electoral Commission, urged the candidates to keep their supporters under control but said the elections would be held as scheduled. "We must not blow this out of proportion. We regret what has happened, but these cases are not going to stand in the way of the elections," he said.

The priest took analysts by surprise Wednesday by coming out in favour of a candidate, "Lasama" de Arazjo.

Ramos Horta, a 1996 Nobel Peace laureate and the candidate with the strongest chance of replacing Xanana Gusmao, also downplayed the violence, in a telephone interview with IPS from Dili.

Over the past year, "the violence has been localised in Dili, and only in a few neighbourhoods of the city actually. There is a mistaken perception that the violence is a nationwide phenomenon, but that's not true," he said.

Ramos Horta said that despite the violent incidents that have been occurring for almost a year, "crime levels in Dili are no higher than in the large cities of Asia, or in Rio de Janeiro or

Johannesburg. The difference is that these and other cities have police forces that are strong enough to do something about the gangs."

The candidate said the future will be complex, but not impossible to deal with. "Our police force fell apart in late April 2006, and we are now trying to reorganise it. Until we are able to do that, we depend on the UN police, who are unfamiliar with the city, the gangs and their leaders. But little by little we are regaining the initiative."

On Tuesday, Ramos Horta announced that if he loses the elections, he will quit politics and retire to private life.

The crisis erupted in late April 2006 after nearly 600 East Timorese soldiers led by Major Reinado were fired after they went on strike, complaining about ethnic discrimination and poor pay and conditions. The crisis led then prime minister Alkatiri to resign.

Many of the members of the military were former guerrillas who had spent years fighting the Indonesian occupation army. One-third of the population of East Timor was killed during the invasion and occupation.

When Reinado was interviewed in his hideout by the Portuguese Lusa agency last month — refusing to speak in Portuguese, and insisting on English — he said he was opposed to what he sees as "neo-colonisation" of East Timor through the increasing influence of Portugal

Gertrudes Lambiza, who was a UN humanitarian aid official during East Timor's transition to independence (2000-2002), told IPS that "many international functionaries and diplomats from English-speaking countries fuelled a systematic campaign in that period to prevent Timor from choosing Portuguese as a second language after Tetum." Both are now the official languages of East Timor.

Besides the internal conflicts among factions disputing power, "there is also still a clear division between the 'pro-English' and 'pro-Portuguese' camps," said Lambiza. (END/2007)

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## **Rival supporters clash during East Timor campaign**

Australian Associated Press - April 2, 2007

Karen Michelmore, Baucau — Two people were injured when supporters of rival political parties clashed during campaigning in East Timor's presidential elections, a candidate said today.

Presidential candidate Fernando "La Sama" de Araujo, of the Democratic Party (PD), said 20 supporters of the rival Fretlin party threw rocks as he campaigned in regional Macadiquei, in East Timor's east, yesterday.

Final preparations are under way for next week's presidential poll, the first since East Timor was granted independence from Indonesia in 2002. Eight candidates are vying to replace independence fighter Xanana Gusmao as president.

The two week campaign has been marred by isolated incidents of violence and intimidation, including an attack during the campaign of Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta where 21 people were injured last Thursday. La Sama today said one or two groups of young people threw stones at his supporters yesterday.

The presidential candidate today campaigned in another rival Fretlin stronghold Baucau. Tight security surrounded the outdoor rally, with UN police dressed in riot gear and more than 20 local police on hand.

More than 1,000 people braved light rain for the low key event, where La Sama urged young people to stop the violence. The event, peppered with cries of "viva La Sama", was peaceful except for a lone protester who was quickly bundled away by local police.

After the rally, La Sama said he was campaigning on a platform of national unity and peace. "I'm very sad by that incident yesterday," he said. "I did deliver a good message to them. I said political parties shouldn't divide the people. Political parties should stop the violence."

He blamed supporters of Fretlin — East Timor's major party — saying they were scared of losing the Easter Monday poll.

"I think East Timorese know that this election is a moment for them to decide who they want as president," he said. "I'm confident more than 90 per cent — the majority — will come to the polling stations and vote. We have to start with peace in our hearts, I want people to revive their love."

The UN team overseeing the election warned in a recent report that it would have difficulty certifying the poll unless the security situation in the capital, Dili, improved significantly.

It warned the electoral process was "not proceeding satisfactorily", with delays in setting up the legal framework for the election and establishing the electoral authority "already having a serious impact on the process".

However local authorities today said they were confident the April 9 election would proceed as planned.

"The (UN) certification team has the highest standards, and we are doing our best to fulfil all those standards," said Electoral Technical Administration Secretariat (STAE) director Edgar Sequeira Martins.

"They are very useful to improve our work, our preparations, and we will do all we can to fulfil all that is necessary."

He said officials would begin distributing election materials to the districts over coming days.

There had been an improvement in security since last month, although there have been reports of sporadic violence and intimidation in the districts, Martins said.

"We hope there is no more trouble during these last few days during the election, especially on the election day," he said. "We are feeling confident there will be an election on April 9, even with all the limited resources we have."



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## **In shadow of violence, Asia's newest nation prepares for polls**

Associated Press - April 2, 2007

Rod McGuirk, Dili — Machete-wielding gangs roam the dusty streets of Asia's newest nation, torching homes and shooting each other as international troops struggle to keep order. Nearly 40,000 refugees remain in crowded camps, too afraid to return home.

Against this backdrop, East Timor is preparing for presidential elections that many hope will usher in an era of peace and stability. Others fear the vote will only add to tensions in the desperately poor country, triggering more violence.

"I'm ready to go home with my family and rebuild our house if our leaders make it safe for us," said Brigida da Conceicao, 27, whose has lived in a camp since her house was torched at the height of unrest one year ago. "But I have no idea how long that will take."

East Timor voted to end nearly a quarter century of brutal Indonesian rule in 1999 and formally proclaimed nationhood in 2002 in a lavish ceremony complete with fireworks and traditional dance. Then-UN chief Kofi Annan and former US President Bill Clinton were among the celebrants.

But the tiny nation was pushed to the brink of civil war in May 2006 when then-Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri fired 600 soldiers, sparking clashes between rival security forces in the capital Dili that spilled into gang warfare. At least 37 people were killed and another 155,000 others fled their homes, leading to the fall of the government.

Though international troops curbed the worst of the violence, analysts note that the underlying causes remain unresolved — intense political and regional rivalries dating back to Indonesia's occupation, economic stagnation and a failure to bring to justice perpetrators of past crimes.

"It's a very fragmented society," said Benjamin

Reilly, a scholar at Australian National University who is helping carry out election training in East Timor. "It's a very volatile situation."

One of the leading presidential candidates is Jose Ramos-Horta, who was in exile during Indonesian occupation and shared the 1996 Nobel Peace prize with former East Timorese Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo for keeping the spotlight on his people's plight.

He blames much of the population's anger on the government's failure to fight poverty despite rich offshore oil and gas fields. In a country of less than one million people, nearly half the children are said to be suffering from malnutrition.

"People have been waiting for more than five years for the fruits of independence," said Ramos-Horta, who thinks a fund created by parliament for oil and gas revenues should be used to create jobs and stimulate the economy. It's valued now at US\$1.2 billion (euro900 million), but is being largely saved for future generations.

Around 3,000 foreign police and soldiers, most of them from neighboring Australia, are currently deployed to East Timor. They were invited by the government at the height of last year's crisis, but resentment against them is steadily rising.

Australian soldiers killed two East Timorese at a camp and another five during a failed bid to capture a renegade military leader from his jungle stronghold several weeks ago, sparking protests by street gangs and unemployed young men demanding foreign troops pull out.

Many of the gang members are common criminals capitalizing on a general sense of lawlessness to steal and extort, but politicians have also been accused of plying gangs with amphetamines and alcohol to continue the chaos.

Scores of people have been arrested over the violence but are often released without charge, giving them a sense of impunity, analysts say.

"We don't have a culture of peace. We have a culture of war," Belo said in a bleak assessment of the former Portuguese colony. "Since the 16<sup>th</sup>

century we have been fighting each other. Fighting seems to be the only situation in which we are content. It's in our blood."

The April 9 elections will be followed by parliamentary polls in September that will decide who will become prime minister, a more important role than the largely symbolic president.

Ramos-Horta's main ally, independence hero Xanana Gusmao, said he would run for prime minister, setting the stage for a bitter political battle with Fretilin, Alkatiri's party and the country's largest political grouping.

Some observers say there is an urgent need for a national unity government. "If Fretilin is sidelined there will be trouble, but if Fretilin stays in power there will also be trouble," said Olandina Caeiro, a respected female activist and ex-member of parliament during the Indonesian occupation.

The violence in the past year was the worst in East Timor since the independence referendum, when Indonesian soldiers and their militia proxies killed more than 1,000 people and left much of the territory in flames.

Brig. Mal Rerden, commander of Australian and New Zealand troops, said he was confident violence could be contained during the upcoming polls.

"The government, the UN and ourselves have a very strong election security plan," he said. "I think it's going to be robust enough to deal with the circumstances that we might find during the election period."

## HUMAN RIGHTS/LAW

### **Rights groups slam truth body**

Jakarta Post - April 2, 2007

Alvin Darlanika Soedarjo, Jakarta — A number of human rights monitoring groups have accused the recently-completed second phase of Indonesia-Timor Leste Commission of Truth and Friendship (CTF) hearings of having distorted facts regarding human rights violations that occurred during Timor

Leste's 1999 referendum.

"The CTF has deconstructed rather than reconstructed the existing findings collected previously," the head of the Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence's impunity division, Haris Azhar, said Saturday.

He said the CTF had ignored data gathered collectively by the Indonesian National Commission of Inquiry into Human Rights Violations in East Timor in 1999, Timor Leste's Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation and the UN's Special Panel for Serious Crimes.

The groups, which have joined forces to raise an "alternative" voice in parallel to the second phase of CTF hearings, said the original aim of the hearings had been distorted to keep several political players from both countries secure.

They said more "actors" and policy makers were present at the hearings than victims. "Eurico Guterres, a pro-Indonesia militia leader, spoke a lot about (events) in 1959 and 1975 rather than focusing on events in 1999. The hearing of former president Habibie was also unfair because they had a closed-door meeting."

The groups claim the CTF has strayed from its original mission of disclosing the truth of human rights violations during the 1999 referendum. The second phase of hearings was completed Friday.

Khoirul Anam, deputy coordinator for the Human Rights Working Group, said information concealed during the hearings could be used as a basis for a reform of the Indonesian Military (TNI).

The testimonies of actors have turned the United Nations Mission for East Timor (UNAMET) into a scapegoat, he said. "The CTF should reject the data they gathered during the public hearing, as they failed to focus on human rights abuses," said Agung Yudhawiranata, networking coordinator for the Institute for Policy Research and Advocacy.

The group noted that the testimony of Yenny Rosa Damayanti, a member of a referendum monitoring group, differed from statements made by (ret) Gen. Zacky Anwar Makarim, who blamed UNAMET for sparking the unrest. Yenny said she regretted that

UNAMET lost its dignity through its failure to maintain a non-violent approach during its running of Timor Leste's administration.

Taufik Basari, a legal director at the Foundation of the Indonesian Legal Aid Institute, said his organization would send letters to the presidents of Indonesia and Timor Leste, as well as to the UN, signaling the need to question more victims and less policy makers. "They can start by changing their method of conducting the hearings," he said.

Several other rights watchdogs, such as Forum Asia and the People Empowerment Consortium, are among the organizations involved in the unified group.

Political observer Ikrar Nusa Bakti of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences said it would be difficult to uncover the truth behind the incidents and violence that surrounded the Aug. 30, 1999, referendum.

"Such orders to destroy people's houses and public property could only have been made orally, rather than in writing, to avoid it being used as proof," he told The Jakarta Post.

At the CTF hearing, former president B.J. Habibie denied he had given the go ahead for the destruction of property. Military officials also denied they had received or issued any orders to damage property.

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## **Former East Timor 'comfort women' now speaking out**

Kyodo News - April 25, 2007

Keiji Hirano, Tokyo — Human right groups in Japan and East Timor have launched a campaign to donate history teaching materials to the newly independent nation that focus on the struggles of women who were forced to provide sex to Japanese soldiers during World War II.

Based on interviews with 15 former "comfort women" and others in East Timor, the groups have set up 50 panels bearing their pictures and testimonies

for an exhibition at the Women's Active Museum on War and Peace in Tokyo through May 27.

Under the ongoing campaign, they plan to translate the explanations on the panels into the official East Timorese language, Tetun, so people there will be able to learn about wartime history.

"People in East Timor do not have enough materials to learn their own history," said Akihisa Matsuno, a member of the East Timor Japan Coalition. "We hope we can raise 2 million yen in order to complete the translation and creation of the panels by the summer."

They plan to show the panels to junior and senior high school teachers in East Timor at seminars for use in their history classes, according to Matsuno, also professor at Osaka University of Foreign Studies.

As part of their efforts to promote the campaign, the Japanese groups recently invited Angelina de Araujo from East Timor, a member of the HAK Association, or the association for human rights and justice, so she could talk to people in Japan about her interviews with the former sex slaves.

"I did not know anything about the wartime sex slavery before the interviews, and I felt sad, as a woman, about what they told me," Araujo, 27, said. "Sometimes I was unwilling to listen to their stories, but I continued the interviews as I believed their history would be terminated if we did not record them."

According to the study by Araujo and other researchers, the Japanese military established wartime brothels all over East Timor after invading the region in 1942, and intimidated the local people into providing young women for the soldiers.

Some interviewees testified that they had been repeatedly raped by the soldiers, even though they had not yet started menstruating, while one woman said that young girls were afraid of condoms as they did not know what they were and felt afraid to have something unknown entering their bodies.

Another woman said she had been kept at the house of a high-ranking officer. "My parents sometimes

brought me food, but they never entered the house," she said. "They just stood at the door and stared at me while I was inside the house."

Araujo, who held talk sessions in five Japanese cities, including Sendai, Tokyo and Osaka, said, "Some of them were initially hesitant to speak out as they felt embarrassed with their past hardships, while some started crying while telling me their stories." "But now they have allowed us to display the panels on their testimonies," she said. "Now that I have come to know their tough lives, I expect the Japanese government to compensate them." The interviews also covered 85 other people who went through the era of Japanese occupation and were aware of the damage caused by the Japanese military.

A former village chief said he had been ordered to find and offer young girls, while another man testified he had made the "comfort women" — called "sweet girls" in the local language — bathe every day to ensure that they would not become dirty.

"The women were unpaid, and they were given neither food nor clothes, so their parents brought them food," he said. "As for me, I was ordered at the end of every day to clean up the women's rooms, in which condoms were scattered over the floor."

Kiyoko Furusawa, another member of the East Timor Japan Coalition, said, "Many high-ranking Japanese government officials have visited East Timor so far, but none of them has apologized for Japan's wartime acts or referred to compensation."

Furusawa, also associate professor at Tokyo Woman's Christian University, called on the government to acknowledge the wartime history of East Timor sincerely.

East Timor officially gained independence in 2002 after two-and-a-half years under UN administration following a vote for independence from Indonesia in 1999.

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## **East Timor candidates should protect rights: activists**

Agence France Presse - April 4, 2007

Dili — The candidates for next week's East Timor presidential election should publicly commit to addressing the country's human rights problems and propose reforms, a rights group said Wednesday.

"Institutional weaknesses in the police, military and judiciary have fuelled the current crisis in Timor-Leste," Human Rights Watch researcher Charmain Mohamed said.

"Timor's next president should immediately address these weaknesses so that the country can meet its international human rights obligations," she said.

Violence has pulsed through impoverished East Timor since its people voted for independence from neighbouring Indonesia in 1999 after 24 years of occupation.

At least 37 people were killed and 150,000 forced to flee during unrest last year which led to the dispatch of an Australian-led international peacekeeping force to stabilise the former Portuguese colony.

"Long-term stability for Timor-Leste depends on transparent and credible prosecutions of perpetrators of last year's violence," said Mohamed.

Human Rights Watch also called on the candidates to address "the ongoing impunity for gross human rights violations perpetrated during the Indonesian occupation."

The April 9 election will be the first since East Timor formally won independence in 2002. Eight candidates are vying for the presidency, a largely ceremonial post, amid tightened security over concerns that the poll could be a trigger for more violence.

The fledgling state's current prime minister, Nobel laureate Jose Ramos-Horta, is thought one of the favourites to win, along with Francisco Guterres from Fretilin, East Timor's largest political party.



## LANGUAGE & CULTURE

### **East Timor drowns in language soup**

Reuters - April 23, 2007

Ahmad Pathoni, Dili — Portuguese is one of the two official languages in East Timor, but you can hardly hear it spoken in the streets of the young nation.

The tiny country was a Portuguese colony for more than three centuries, but only an estimated 5 percent of its one million people now speak the European language.

After Lisbon cut the territory free, East Timor was occupied by neighbouring Indonesia for 24 years before gaining full independence in 2002. Under Indonesian rule, Portuguese was suppressed and speakers of the language now mostly come from the political elite or are older people educated in the colonial era.

Despite government attempts to push the use of Portuguese as an official language, Indonesian remains the main language of instruction in secondary schools and universities, along with native Tetum, the other national language.

Many of East Timor's leaders left for exile in Portugal or its colonies before or soon after the territory was invaded by Indonesian forces and many of them do not speak Indonesian. They consider Portuguese to be the language of resistance.

But the government's decision to enshrine Portuguese in the constitution is criticised by some, who see it as short sighted. They say many young people educated under Indonesian rule have been denied state jobs because they lack Portuguese skills.

"This is the biggest type of discrimination practised by the government," said Suzanna Cardoso, a Timorese journalist. "The government does not recognise the contribution of those educated under the Indonesian system to the struggle for independence," she told Reuters.

Cardoso said English would be more useful for East

Timor. "Why do we have to use Portuguese? Portuguese-speaking countries are poor and they are far from us," she said.

## **Jumble of languages**

Tetum is used in daily interaction but some experts say it is mainly a spoken language and has to be developed further for wider usage.

But the issue is sensitive and a cabinet minister has been criticised for only speaking Portuguese and never using Tetum in public.

Signboards at government offices are written in Portuguese, although for most Timorese it remains a foreign language they don't understand. Newspapers run articles in Tetum and Indonesian side-by-side. Indonesian TV soap operas are also hugely popular.

"I don't know any Portuguese. I'd rather learn English than Portuguese," said Ano Pereira, a driver and high school graduate.

The language issue was raised by some of the eight candidates contesting April 9 presidential elections, with one promising to ditch Portuguese if he won the presidency.

News conferences during the elections were held in four languages — English, Tetum, Portuguese and Indonesian — adding to the difficulty of co-ordinating the fairly chaotic polls. No candidate in the election won a big enough majority to win outright and a run-off is expected to be held next month.

At the National University of East Timor, teachers give lectures and students write their theses in Indonesian. "Most of our textbooks are in Indonesian and most lecturers don't speak Portuguese," management student Julio Rangel said as he sat at the hallway of a white-painted campus building, a Catholic seminary during colonial times.

A report released by the United Nations Development Programme in 2002 said 82 percent of East Timor's one million population spoke Tetum, while 43 percent could speak Indonesian. Only 5 percent spoke Portuguese.

The government, dominated by the Fretilin party which spearheaded the struggle against Indonesian rule, has brought in teachers mostly from Portugal to teach in elementary schools. But there are concerns that once pupils finish elementary education, they will have to enrol at a secondary school where teachers don't speak Portuguese.

"This is going to be a big problem. These students don't speak Indonesian and their teachers don't know Portuguese," said Julio Thomas Pinto, who teaches at two universities in the East Timor capital Dili.

The head of East Timor's National Institute of Linguistics, Dr Geoffrey Hull, defends the adoption of Portuguese as a national language.

"Anyone with the slightest familiarity with East Timor's history knows that the Portuguese language has long been central to the national identity," he said on the institute's Web site. "East Timor needs both Tetum and Portuguese to be fully itself," he said.

But Silvino Pinto Cabral, an economics lecturer at the national university, is not convinced. "This policy of imposing a foreign language will not work. I doubt that in 50 years the government will be able to make the whole nation proficient in Portuguese," he said.

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## **Indonesian, English, yes, Portuguese, sorry, no**

Jakarta Post - April 11, 2007

Abdul Khalik, Dili — Opening his math book, Manuel da Silva, 17, discovered he had something to clarify before he could finish the homework his teacher had given him.

"I don't understand question number three," he told his teacher in Indonesian, his eyes not moving from his Indonesian-language textbook

His teacher, Jose Ribeiro, a man educated in Jakarta, explained the problem in Indonesian before walking out the door to the teachers' room in one of Dili's senior high schools.

"We have to use the Indonesian language in class because most of the textbooks we use are written in Indonesian. Sometimes we mix it with Tetum (the native language of Timor Leste) to make students understand better," Ribeiro told The Jakarta Post.

Although Timor Leste's government has declared Tetum and Portuguese the country's official languages, only a few older people use Portuguese in everyday conversation, he said.

"I don't speak Portuguese, neither do most of the teachers here, and my students certainly don't. But all of us speak Indonesian and some English.

"Although we use Tetum in everyday conversation, it can't be used in class as we have no national standard for the language and words. We could end up misinterpreting a scientific concept," he said.

He said that every educational institution, from junior high schools to universities, experienced the same problem.

The government made the teaching of Portuguese and English mandatory in schools after receiving independence from Indonesia five years ago, but this is yet to have an impact on the student's fluency.

In every press conference during Timor Leste's presidential elections, local and international journalists and observers shake their heads in disbelief when officials continue to speak in Portuguese despite the fact that even Timor Leste natives cannot understand.

As a young citizen of Timor Leste, Vicente Pereira, 21, has experienced life under Indonesian rule and independence. He also is baffled as to why his government adopted the Portuguese language rather than Indonesian.

"We know nothing about Portugal or its language. We need books from Indonesia. I hope one day will have a book store like Gramedia here," he said, referring to Indonesia's largest bookstore and publishing house.

An expert on Timor Leste, Nugroho Katjasungkana from the Institute for Popular Education, said that while the Timor Leste government seemed to

want to leave everything about Indonesia behind, people were still very much attached to Indonesia.

"They did not like Indonesia when it occupied their land. Now that they are independent, they have no reason to continue this. Most people know they need Indonesia for basic commodities. Everything from soap to gas is still being imported from Indonesia," Nugroho said.

A businesswoman from Indonesia, Utik, who has for several years ran a business in Dili with her Singaporean husband, also complained about the attitude of the many officials who tend to prioritize the Portuguese language.

"All businesspeople from Indonesia are very confused when they have to fill in documents in Portuguese as most of these documents are not translated into English. Most officials pretend they don't understand Indonesian. I mean, come on, they need Indonesian businesspeople because we are the closest neighbor," she told the Post.

Indonesian Ambassador to Timor Leste Ahmed Bey Sofwan said that Indonesia was now working on establishing a cultural and language center in Dili to monitor the development of the Indonesian language in the country.

## **BOOK/FILM REVIEWS**

### **New focus helps crack Balibo Five film**

The Australian - April 26, 2007

Sandy George, Film writer — It has taken four years to work out how to turn the story of the Balibo Five, the TV newsmen killed in East Timor on October 16, 1975, into a feature film. But director Robert Connolly (The Bank, Three Dollars) is confident filming can begin.

"Lots of film-makers have tried to crack this story but haven't been able to," Connolly said yesterday, speaking publicly about the film for the first time. "We finally think we have — by telling it from the East Timorese point of view."

His two key characters are Jose Ramos Horta, now East Timor's Prime Minister but then 25 and a key

figure in the Timorese nationalist movement, who went on to win the Nobel prize for peace; and Australian journalist Roger East, who went to East Timor to investigate the deaths and was executed in December 1975 when Indonesia invaded the island. Mr Ramos Horta does not yet know he will feature so strongly in the film.

David Williamson has written the script from Jill Jolliffe's 2001 book *Cover-Up*, the inside story of the Balibo Five. The film will concentrate on the month following the killings and encompasses key events since, including the NSW coronial inquest into the deaths, due to resume next month.

"Thirty-two years later, the Balibo Five is still deeply rooted in our culture and people are still really troubled by it," Connolly said, referring to the uncertainty surrounding Canberra's role in the invasion of East Timor.

"The film is about journalists in war and what it takes to free a country," he said. "The thing I love about it is that it shows how the truth always comes out. Decisions politicians made 32 years ago are still being investigated in the court."

Connolly and business partner John Maynard, producer for *The Balibo Five*, said they were committed to exploring political issues. The Bank tackled business ethics, for example. Their next film, *Romulus, My Father*, is a migrant story. Maynard describes *The Balibo Five* as his most difficult film yet.

"The cinema world is full of First World heroes going into Third World countries to liberate their citizens, and it doesn't work like that," Maynard said.

"In 20 years, 200,000 people in East Timor, one-third of the population, were killed while the world turned its back on them... Their desire to be independent is like some sort of miracle."

New Zealand Herald - April 10, 2007

['Negligent Neighbour: New Zealand's Complicity in the Invasion and Occupation of Timor-Leste' by Maire Leadbeater. 280 pages \$34.99 Craig Potton Publishing.]

Cameron Walker — In this book, long time anti-nuclear and East Timor solidarity activist, Maire Leadbeater, draws largely on official declassified documents to paint a clear picture of the NZ state's shocking role in backing Indonesia's 24 year long occupation of East Timor (now known as Timor Leste).

Between 1975 and 1999 the Indonesian Military is estimated to have killed 183,000 people in East Timor — nearly one third of the population.

During this time both Labour and National Governments voted against UN resolutions supporting the Timorese people, attempted to blacken the image of the Timorese resistance movement and invited the Indonesian Military to visit NZ to learn 'counter-insurgency' techniques and how to lay landmines from the NZ Defence Forces.

Reading Negligent Neighbour you come to realise that much of New Zealand's foreign policy is made behind closed doors by diplomats and bureaucrats, without any care for what the public might think.

It is shocking the racist contempt that many NZ diplomatic staff held for the Timorese. In 1978 New Zealand's then ambassador to Indonesia, Roger Peren, in official diplomatic communication, said of the Timorese people 'considered as human stock they are not at all impressive' If you still have illusions about New Zealand being a 'good international citizen', be prepared to have them dashed. Even David Lange, who is remembered fondly by many as the Prime Minister who stood up for nuclear disarmament, was a happy cheerleader for the brutal occupation of East Timor.

However, this book is certainly not completely a show case of what's wrong in our World. Leadbeater's account of New Zealand's East Timor solidarity movement and its eventual ability to change government policy is extremely inspiring. She writes of one incident in 1995 where

government officials had to write an apologetic letter to Indonesia postponing a joint 'ground attack skills' exercise (read bombing East Timorese villages from the sky).

After anti-military ties posters appeared around Wellington the government was scared it would be used as an opportunity for activists to raise awareness about East Timor.

Maire Leadbeater was in the final stages of writing her book when last year's violence in Timor Leste broke out and NZ and Australian troops were sent to intervene. However, she does tackle this issue. She writes 'While apparently welcomed by all political forces in the country, the troops of Australia, New Zealand and other countries are, at the time of writing, taking on something of the nature of a colonial occupation.' She reiterates the calls of Timorese NGOs for a fair distribution of resources and for people at the grassroots to be in control of development, not suited businessmen from overseas.

The epilogue describes how East Timor is now a supposedly independent nation but, like many other developing nations, the World Bank has come to control its economic policy — making the Timorese economy work for multinational corporations not the Timorese people. Things haven't been helped either by Australia's theft of oil and gas resources in the Timor Sea. Whoever ends up winning the recent Presidential election or the Parliamentary elections later this year will have to cater to institutions like the World Bank and Asian Development Bank.

Towards the end of the book Leadbeater says New Zealand should retain its ban on defence ties with Indonesia. Unfortunately this is now out of date.

Despite the fact the Indonesian Military is still mass murdering people in West Papua and cracking down on progressive forces within Indonesia, an Indonesian Military officer shall be attending the NZ Defence Force's staff and Command College from May 14<sup>th</sup> this year.

Negligent Neighbour is a brilliant book that reminds us NZ foreign policy, like that of other Western capitalist nations, is too often on the side of the oppressor rather than the oppressed.



## OPINION & ANALYSIS

### **East Timor struggle may yet realise a failed state**

Irish Times - April 9, 2007

Joe Humphreys — It is the first such ballot since the country gained independence in 2002 — after 21/2 years of transitional rule by the UN, and a 24-year occupation by an often brutal Indonesian military.

It had been hoped the elections would show East Timor is on the road to success. Instead, however, they are raising fresh questions as to whether the Timorese people struggled for freedom, only to realise a failed state.

Ask why East Timor has fared so badly (it continues to have the lowest income per capita in Asia), and you will get a plethora of contradictory answers from aid workers, diplomats and local politicians.

Expectations were too high, ambitions were too low, the UN stayed too long, the UN left too soon; such are views of experts who seemingly agree on just one point, the situation is complicated.

Take, for example, last year's unrest which left 37 people dead and more than 150,000 displaced from their homes. A trigger was former prime minister Mari Alkatiri's decision to sack 591 soldiers who had gone on strike over alleged discrimination in the army. Passions were also inflamed by President Xanana Gusmao who, in a public pronouncement, unwittingly stoked up ancient ethnic rivalries.

Whoever should take the blame, the episode highlighted a failure of leadership which, in an ideal world, should be punished. This being East Timor (also known now as the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste), no action has been taken — except against one low-ranking minister who was found guilty of illegally distributing weapons.

Far from showing remorse, the leading figures implicated in last year's crisis are continuing to fight for power. Gusmao, a former guerilla leader once dubbed East Timor's Nelson Mandela, has broken away from the ruling party Fretilin to form

his own political grouping. The outgoing president is seeking to become prime minister, and will compete directly against Alkatiri in June's parliamentary elections — a poll that is sure to test the country's security apparatus to its limit.

As for today's presidential election, outside observers are broadly satisfied about the conditions. This is despite sporadic fighting last week when Alkatiri joined election front-runner Lu-Olo Guterres, the leader of Fretilin, on the campaign trail.

The other main candidate in a field of eight is Dr Jose Ramos-Horta, the former Nobel peace laureate who dislodged Alkatiri as prime minister following last year's unrest.

Whatever the outcome of the series of ballots, East Timor's security situation is unlikely to improve. At least, that's according to Jose Luis de Oliveira, director of Timorese human rights groups' Hak Association.

"The priority for us is law enforcement, and getting the justice sector to operate without interference from politicians," he says.

Like many Timorese, he believes the government must address not just the latest wave of violence but the countless atrocities committed during the 1999 vote for independence.

At least 1,500 people were killed, and countless women raped, when pro-Indonesian militia went on the rampage — seemingly armed and supervised by the Indonesian military.

Last month Indonesia and East Timor reopened an inter-state inquiry into the murders. But the Bali-based Commission of Truth and Friendship has been dismissed as a farce by human rights observers.

At the hearings, Indonesian military chiefs and militia leaders — including Eurico Guterres, who controlled some of the worst killing squads - have denied any responsibility for the atrocities, blaming the UN instead for supposedly fuelling tensions.

James Dunn, a former Australian consul to East Timor, says attempts to portray the country's woes as stemming from some sort of civil war "makes me ill". "What we are seeing in Bali is history being written in a most distorted fashion, and that destabilises the current situation. "Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous state," is on its way to becoming a democratic country but it won't get there if it denies its past", he adds.

Human rights groups both in East Timor and Indonesia are now calling for the establishment of an international criminal court to prosecute those responsible for the slaughter of 1999.

Ironically, such calls are being resisted by both Gusmao and several other Timorese politicians who believe prosecutions will sour relations with a neighbour on which East Timor is now dependent for food aid.

A country like Ireland, which played a prominent role championing the Timorese cause, could help to break the logjam. That said, the chances are slim of the UN sanctioning a criminal inquiry, especially now Indonesia has joined the security council as a temporary member until the end of 2008.

Can East Timor move forward without dealing with the past? De Oliveira, for one, believes not. "Without justice," he says, "we can't find peace".

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## **Election offers no guarantees for East Timor**

Melbourne Age - April 8, 2007

Damien Kingsbury — Those who view East Timor's politics as largely benign describe the mood before tomorrow's presidential election as "dynamic". Those who view the situation more ominously describe the environment as "fluid". Either way, it is likely that the outcome expected just a few days ago has been thrown into doubt.

Of the eight candidates for East Timor's presidency, only three are believed to have any real chance of winning — Fretilin's Francisco

“Lu-Olo” Guterres, Democratic Party leader Fernando “Lasama” de Araujo and the current prime minister, Jose Ramos-Horta.

A week ago it seemed the contest would be between Guterres and Ramos-Horta. Last week, de Araujo became a favourite. All would distinctively shape the political landscape.

A former guerilla fighter, parliamentary speaker Guterres is regarded as a palatable option for Fretilin’s hardliners. But support for Fretilin has fallen since the civil conflict of a year ago, for which the Fretilin government has been held largely responsible.

Complicating Fretilin’s position, last year’s stymied push against Fretilin leader and former prime minister Mari Alkatiri by the party’s “Mudansa” (reform) faction has led to an open split. Up to half of the party, largely identified as its youth wing, has now backed President Xanana Gusmao’s new Council for East Timor National Reconstruction (CNRT) party, which will contest the elections, with Gusmao hoping to become prime minister.

This split and likely additional protest vote has seriously weakened Guterres’ chances of winning the presidency. Should he be successful, however, it will be an endorsement of Fretilin’s conservative leadership and back to the problems that led to the violence last year.

Former foreign minister and perceived “clean-skin”, Ramos-Horta is standing as an “independent”, although Gusmao and CNRT are backing him for the presidency. This should have put him in a prime political position.

However, since assuming the prime ministership last year, Ramos-Horta has been constrained by a lack of parliamentary and organisational support and has been seen as somewhat ineffective.

Further, Ramos-Horta’s comments at the recent trial of now-convicted former interior minister Rogerio Lobato, that Lobato’s arming of civilians was intended to establish security, has backfired badly.

Although sentenced to seven years for manslaughter, Lobato has not yet gone to jail,

living at home under “house arrest”. This has angered many, especially those who already had little faith in the justice system.

Ramos-Horta is also seen as responsible for authorising the attack by Australian troops last month on renegade prison escapee Alfredo Reinado and his supporters in the town of Same. While Reinado faces charges of murder and escaping from prison, many East Timorese see his actions within the context of last year’s troubles and support him accordingly.

The Australian troops hunting for Reinado could no doubt find him if they choose but are holding back for fear that another attack could further destabilise the delicate political environment. Opposition to Fretilin tended to sympathise with Reinado. Ramos-Horta has consequently lost much of that anti-Fretilin vote.

With Guterres and Ramos-Horta both mired in political troubles, the way is increasingly open for de Araujo to come from behind and take the lead. De Araujo was a key leader of the underground student movement during Indonesia’s occupation of East Timor and was a political prisoner in Jakarta’s Cipinang prison with Gusmao.

De Araujo’s political standing is largely built on this foundation, his reformist policies and his coalition with other non-Fretilin parties. De Araujo is also strongly identified with the “young generation” that grew up under Indonesian occupation, as opposed to the “1975 generation” of politicians who spent the occupation overseas or, in a few cases, in the mountains.

Assuming Ramos-Horta cannot recover — and his political rallies have been small — de Araujo will attract the young and anti-Fretilin vote, probably in a second contest between the two leading candidates from tomorrow’s election. With Fretilin’s “Mudansa” faction behind Gusmao’s CNRT, a coalition of non-Fretilin parties is likely to form a majority in the elections, with Gusmao their likely prime minister.

The problem with this scenario is that Gusmao and de Araujo are not only separated by a political generation but they have differing policies. A working relationship between these two built on

mutual respect could secure East Timor's future. Their failure to work together, however, could split the parliament and spell further political troubles for this still struggling nation.

Fretilin is likely to view losing with considerable chagrin. If it restricts its loss to active opposition, it will assist this fledgling democracy. But Fretilin's old guard has not yet shown it is prepared to play a peaceful political game. The elections are thus a possible step forward for East Timor, but not a guaranteed one.

[Associate professor Damien Kingsbury is director of the master's program in international and community development, Deakin University. He is co-editor, with Michael Leach, of East Timor: Beyond Independence, soon to be released by Monash University Press.]

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## **Politics and poverty**

South China Morning Post - April 7, 2007

Fabio Scarpello — Fiery campaigner Ceu Lopes, 50, was active during her fledgling nation's 24-year struggle against the occupation by Indonesia. From Australia, where she has lived since 1985, the founder of the NGO Timor Aid, campaigned tirelessly, raised funds and often travelled covertly to the jungles of her native island, where she met guerilla fighters, sharing their fears and hopes for a better future.

Yet, almost eight years after the 1999 referendum that ended the Indonesian occupation and five years after the declaration of independence, most of those hopes remain unfulfilled. "I am utterly disappointed with the current situation," Mrs Lopes said.

In April and May last year, the country was rocked by violence. Nearly 40 people were killed and 150,000 forced to flee their homes as the national army and police disintegrated. A change in government and deployment of foreign peacekeepers brought a veneer of security, but ongoing violence means nearly 70,000 people are still too afraid to

return home.

It is generally acknowledged that the violence sprung from scars left by the trauma of Indonesia's occupation. More than 200,000 people died during the occupation, tainted by widespread abuses.

Moreover, most observers agree that the UN's hasty departure and Australia's foreign policy have been two aggravating factors. The UN administered East Timor between 1999 and 2002, but left while the country's institutions were still weak.

Australia's refusal to abide by international law in regards to disputed gas and oil fields has deprived the tiny state of much-needed income at a crucial time.

Mitigating factors aside, most of the blame falls on the Timorese leadership. "Our leaders proved to be incompetent and arrogant," said Mrs Lopes, who knows most of them personally. "Throughout the years they have been more concerned about strengthening their power than working for the good of the country."

The leading characters in East Timor's politics are President Xanana Gusmco, Prime Minister Josi Ramos Horta and former prime minister Mari Alkatiri, who is also the leader of Fretilin (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor), the country's largest political party.

The same leaders are now getting ready to contest the country's first post-independence elections, which will start with a presidential vote on Monday that will be monitored by more than 2,000 national and international election observers. A parliamentary election is due shortly after. In a plot aimed at sidelining Mr Alkatiri, Nobel Peace Prize-winner Mr Ramos Horta and former resistance leader Mr Gusmco are seeking to swap places. They have a good chance of success.

"I think that Horta will win," said Warren Wright, 45, formerly based in East Timor with the UN and now head of East Timor Law Journal.

The race for parliament is trickier. An internally split Fretilin party remains favourite, but Mr Gusmco's new Congress for the National Reconstruction of East Timor (CNRT) party, holds

some potential aces up its sleeve.

The Democratic Party (PD), which has forged an alliance with several smaller parties, could be the spoiler.

Damien Kingsbury, an academic with Australia's Deakin University and observer of East Timor politics, said that "if the CNRT and PD-coalition join forces, then Fretilin is probably out of government".

Regardless of who wins, most agree that there is a lot to do to get the country back on track. Agriculturalist and veteran pro-Timor activist Rob Wesley-Smith has a clear set of priorities.

"People's basic needs must be taken care of first. That is nutrition, clean water and sanitation," he said, underlining the fact that rice shortages in February triggered a fresh wave of violence.

The crisis was partially over-come after the intervention of the UN World Food Programme. It is estimated that East Timor requires 83,000 tonnes of rice per year, but the Ministry of Agriculture calculates that domestic production is only 40,000 tonnes.

"The new leaders must energise the agriculture sector. People have abandoned the fields, and some of the young causing troubles do so because they have nothing to do," Mr Wesley-Smith said.

On the other hand, Mr Wright listed the restoration of peace and the normalisation of social and political relations as the overwhelming priorities.

"These include the prosecution of gangs, the confiscation of all weapons and prosecution of those involved in distributing them, the creation of competent institutions to deal with conflict and disputes, the demobilisation of the military from civil life, and a reformation of the judicial system," he said.

Mr Kingsbury added the ongoing problem of rebel soldiers to this list. "The new leadership will have to resolve the issue of the sacked soldier-petitioners and that of Major Alfredo Reinado. The petitioners are still angry and have the potential



to cause future problems," he said.

Nearly 600 petitioners were sacked in March last year after going on strike over what they claimed was discrimination against those from the west of the country. Violence erupted in the following month when the petitioners and their supporters attacked the Government Palace.

Mr Reinado joined them a while later. A fugitive, he leads a group of well-armed men and has become a cult figure among young Timorese.

Mrs Lopes stressed that "lack of justice" was the main cause of the problems. "Timorese entrusted their leaders to uphold the values they fought and died for. But the general consensus is that no changes have taken place since independence and people's cry for justice has gone unheeded.

"People feel that the leaders have failed our country badly. The outbursts of violence are the culmination of their frustration, anger and profound mistrust."

Reviewing events since 1999, Mrs Lopes cited perceived injustices such as the dismissal of Falintil (the military wing of Fretilin) and the abolition of the National Council of Timorese Resistance, a neutral body formed by Mr Gusmco to win the referendum for independence in 1999, as key mistakes.

Falintil was highly respected, yet after independence a narrow age requirement excluded most of the guerillas from the national army.

"The army that emerged was a weak institution with its pride and dignity in tatters. Former resistance veterans started to reorganise themselves to fight for their rights," Mrs Lopes said. "The seeds of post-independence rebellion were planted with this injustice."

Another negative byproduct of the abolition of the National Council of Timorese Resistance was the emergence of Mr Alkatiri's Fretilin as the only political force in the country. With hegemony, Fretilin became despotic, inefficient and corrupt, guilty of a series of wrong policies and injustices. Among other problems, Mrs Lopes singled-out the adoption of Portuguese as the

official language, despite the fact that more than 85 per cent of the population speaks Indonesian. Portuguese is spoken only by a small elite, considered supportive of Mr Alkatiri.

"Portuguese robbed the young Timorese of a hope for a better future. After years of fighting and studying, now they cannot get a job. They feel marginalised, isolated, poor and full of rage," she said.

In her passionate analysis, Mrs Lopes did not spare Mr Gusmco, whom she considered "guilty of letting Indonesia off the hook for the crimes committed during the occupation". Her comment referred mostly to the findings of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor (CAVR), which documented countless cases of executions, torture, mutilations and rape.

Released early last year, the report shocked the world, which called for justice. Yet, Mr Gusmco rejected CAVR's call for reparations and a war-crimes tribunal, saying that "Timor-Leste must look forward and not to the past". "Thousands of victims of war expected some justice with CAVR. But they were, once again, greatly disappointed," Mrs Lopes said.

Regarding the elections, she agreed that Mr Ramos Horta was likely to become the new president and that Mr Gusmco had a good chance of wresting the power away from Mr Alkatiri. Her message to the two of them was simple.

"Bring justice to Timor-Leste, because without justice there cannot be security, prosperity, respect of human rights or peace."

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## **Is there hope for East Timor?**

Irish Times - April 7, 2007

It's five years on from independence, and as the troubled country gears up for Monday's elections, people there tell Joe Humphreys how they see the future.

Frangelino is sitting on a wooden bench near a

taxi-stop when The Irish Times arrives. With an inquisitive air, he tests his English on us. "I like mathematics," he says, "and chemistry, physics, biology; I want to be a scientist."

Clearly a bright lad, Frangelino speaks lucidly about his education and his plans. He's the sort of quietly determined, outward-looking 20-year-old you could image topping his class in university, or maybe setting up a small business, if he happened to be from Ireland. But Frangelino is from East Timor.

A few feet away from where he speaks is the crumpled hulk of a government vehicle — hijacked and torched last month by armed gangs who had previously brought the small, southeast Asian nation close to civil war. In a nearby laneway, a column of Australian troops searched youths for weapons that might be used to destabilise Monday's presidential election — the first such poll since East Timor's independence in 2002.

Few adults can be seen in Frangelino's neighbourhood — partly a knock-on effect of the recent unrest, which caused tens of thousands of families to flee to the countryside. The demographic profile is also a legacy of East Timor's bitter occupation by Indonesia — a foreign power that wiped out a third of the Timorese population through starvation and slaughter.

Today, East Timor has one of the youngest populations in the world (40 per cent of people are under the age of 14). The country is also the poorest in Asia, thanks in large part to the Indonesian army, which destroyed most of the infrastructure on departing the former Portuguese colony. Unemployment is conservatively estimated at 50 per cent. For youths like Frangelino survival depends upon small change — like the dime he has lodged for safekeeping in his right ear when we meet him.

"I was in college but I had to stop because I couldn't pay the fees," he says. "The government doesn't help so I am trying to save." About the only employment available, he explains, is selling newspapers or mobile phone credit on the street. "If you sell \$100 of phone credit you get \$2." His eyes lower with what seems to be shame. "I did it

one day and I sold \$5; I got 5 cents." Shortly after he finishes speaking, our transport comes. We say goodbye and go on our way, thinking of how Frangelino must have felt doing a day's work for the price of a sweet.

East Timor is, in every sense, an uncomfortable place to visit. There is no easy way of reaching the remote half-island, 500km north of Darwin, Australia, nor of travelling around it. Although only a fifth the size of Ireland, it takes at least five times as long to get anywhere, so bad are the potholed, snake-like roads that regularly disappear behind tropical rains, mountain fog and landslides.

Timor is an uncomfortable place to visit emotionally too. Not only do you have to hear sad stories such as Frangelino's but you must delve into the heart-breaking history of his homeland.

You must acquaint yourself with the victims of Indonesian rule — from 1975, when a murderous invasion began, to 1999, when Timorese who voted for independence were mercilessly hacked down by Indonesian-backed militia.

You must learn about the role played by certain western governments in giving Indonesia diplomatic and military support for many years.

And you must ask whether the United Nations, despite all its good intentions, is really capable of "nation-building".

One person who has made the long, difficult journey to the heart of East Timor is Tom Hyland. A former bus driver from Ballyfermot, Dublin, he first learnt about East Timor from a TV documentary broadcast in 1992, a few years after he was laid off by CIE. Along with some neighbours who were also unemployed at the time, he founded the East Timor Ireland Solidarity Campaign — a group that persuaded successive governments to champion the Timorese cause internationally, as well as to send Defence Forces troops to the country to secure the outcome of the 1999 ballot for independence.

Today, Hyland can be found chugging around Dili on his second-hand motorbike, stopping off to meet everyone from government ministers to jobless

youths. Officially, he is employed by the Timorese department of foreign affairs to teach English to the local diplomatic corps, swear-words in a Dublin brogue included.

Unofficially, he is something of a social worker, living among the young of Timor, and also funding dozens of them through college from his own salary.

A clandestine visitor to Dili during the years of occupation, he has been a resident there since 2000, and has seen first-hand how the population has suffered. Conscious of East Timor's international image as something of a lost cause, he says: "Things are difficult at the moment, yes. But in 1999, there was nothing. Everything had been destroyed."

Like many, he believes the UN was too hasty in announcing its withdrawal from East Timor last year. Under pressure from cash-conscious donors, the international body was scaling down its local mission, UNMIT, when violence erupted. The main trigger of the fighting was a government decision in April 2006 to sack a group of soldiers who had gone on strike amid claims of discrimination in the army. Passions were inflamed by intemperate comments from politicians, including President Xanana Gusmco, who was widely blamed for helping to revive an ancient but largely artificial division between "easterners" and "westerners" in East Timor.

Following the unrest, the UN agreed to extend its mandate in the country until February 2008. Australian and New Zealand peacekeeping troops restored order, but only after 37 people had died with more than 150,000 displaced. As many as half of these remain homeless, and are sheltering today either with relatives or in refugee camps such as that on the grounds of Dili hospital.

"People are frightened to move — especially with the elections coming up," says Jose da Costa (43), a school teacher who lives with his family of nine on a tiled floor outside one of the hospital's clinics. "Compared to 1975 and 1999, this is worse. People are asking, 'What did we suffer all that loss for? For this?' What's so sad is that it's internal destruction — suco (village) against suco."

The crisis has also affected the regions, particularly Manufahi, where rebel Alfredo Reinado — the leader of the main anti-government faction — had been hiding up until a few weeks ago. On March 4<sup>th</sup> last, Australian troops attacked his base in Same, killing five of Reinado's soldiers but failing to capture the man himself, who has considerable popular support.

The fighting meant markets were closed for almost a month, and emergency aid programmes — such as that run by Concern at Weberek, in southern Manufahi — had to be suspended. The Irish Times visited the centre the day it re-opened to see hundreds of families queuing for food supplements and immunisation shots. A few of the children had bloated bellies — a clear sign of malnutrition.

"Whoever becomes president, we hope they give some support to the people," says local villager Aurelia da Costa, a mother of three who has no family income. Asked to compare her situation now with that before independence, she replies: "Life was better then. Now it's very difficult to get work."

The Hak Association, a Timorese human rights group, fears the government is using the elections to deflect attention from underlying problems, such as poverty and a poorly-functioning administration. "Politicians think the elections will solve the crisis. They will not," says Jose Luis de Oliveria, director of the group, which is part funded by the Government's overseas development arm Irish Aid. He says there is a particular need to combat a widespread "culture of impunity", noting that those responsible for the massacre of innocent civilians during Indonesian rule have never been held accountable.

"People are still traumatised," says James Dunn, a former Australian diplomat who now acts as a political adviser to the Timorese government. "The trauma goes right back to the Japanese invasion [during the second World War]. Each episode in the country's history since then has had similar characteristics — horrendous atrocities about which really nothing was ever done."

For some youths, the violent gangs that caused much of the recent unrest are a form of escape from — and also retribution for — this trauma.

The groups, bearing names such as Korka and 77 (Seti-seti), engage in bitter turf wars, fighting hand-to-hand with machetes and rama ambons — home-made catapults that fire crude but deadly steel arrows.

Clarewoman Emma O'Loghlen, a psychologist with local mental health organisation Pradet, reports that "gang identity is stronger than national identity" among certain youths. With to depression and alcohol abuse — the latter of which is exploited by sellers of tuamutin, a cheap, egg-flavoured local brew.

"Mental illness is a huge problem here, but it's just not on the agenda at the moment," says O'Loghlen.

"The country needs a lot more help, and it has to be long-term," says Hyland, who is glad to learn that Irish Aid has just extended the lease on its Dili headquarters by 10 years. He says a "deeper" commitment from the aid community is also needed, suggesting Ireland could play a valuable role in "mentoring" East Timor in areas such as tourism and education. This would be similar to a role Norway is playing in helping to manage the country's oil revenues — now coming on stream under an Australian-led exploration of the Timor Sea.

To those grumbling about the cost of such involvement, Dunn has an answer. "People keep saying, 'look at all the international community has done for East Timor'. But I say, 'look at all it has done to East Timor'."

As the Easter Monday election approaches, tension is mounting in East Timor. Dozens of people have been injured in sporadic clashes linked to the poll. Despite the ever-present setbacks, however, there are signs of hope. People are back working the land, and fresh reconciliation efforts are under way. Money may be hard to find, but "at least we are free", says local peace activist Antero "Nito" da Silva. "We don't have to run to the mountains to hide (like under Indonesian occupation)." Da Silva, who spent two years studying in Dublin under an Irish Aid scholarship programme, was shot with a rama ambon arrow and nearly killed during last year's unrest in Dili.

But he is not bitter, and nor is he pessimistic about his country's future. Describing the easterner-westerner conflict as "temporary", he says: "There is a lot of intermarriage and common relations between the two sides, so the chances of a Rwanda- or Bosnia-type situation are not there."

To Hyland, the key challenge for the country is job-creation. "The people need good political leadership," he says, "but also a vested interest in the economy to keep things stable."

The cost of success in East Timor may seem great to donor organisations that are always itching to cut and run. But the cost of failure is arguably greater. Don't forget that, for all its problems, this troubled little country is blessed with rich natural resources and a relatively homogenous society that has overcome massive odds in the past. If the international community can't build a nation here, then where can it build one?

[Joe Humphreys and Bryan O'Brien travelled to East Timor with the assistance of Irish Aid under its Simon Cumbers Media Challenge Fund. Concern also contributed to travel expenses. Their reports and extensive photo galleries are freely available at [www.ireland.com/focus/timor/](http://www.ireland.com/focus/timor/).]

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## **Who's to blame for Timor Leste's chaos?**

Jakarta Post - April 4, 2007

Aboeprijadi Santoso, Amsterdam — Former president B.J. Habibie has often been synonymous with unpredictability. For a decade he was seen as Soeharto's crown prince loyalist, yet, as president, he introduced press freedom, freed political prisoners, initiated real autonomy for the regions, held free elections and presided over an orderly succession of head of state.

Most surprising was his decision to offer the referendum that led to East Timor's independence in 1999. Now he blames former UN secretary general Kofi Annan for the violence that was unleashed after the vote. Why?



Habibie's contention before the Indonesia-Timor Leste Truth and Friendship Commission recently that Annan's decision to announce the ballot outcome two days earlier than planned "had escalated violence", is dubious. It avoids the need to investigate the behavior of the security apparatus and the militias.

At issue is whether the UN's earlier announcement triggered extensive violence.

Let's recall the dramatic turn of events on Sept. 4, 1999, the day the UN announced the pro-independence victory. Within a few hours, fear pervaded society as the euphoric and joyful morning at the Mahkota Hotel, Dili, where people flocked in to hear the UN's statement, changed into fear and people went into hiding. Shots were heard, tensions increased, yet there was little destruction. Dili was a dead city. Fearing the occupying army, people resisted by fleeing eastwards — most did it immediately after casting their ballots on Aug. 30. They had done so since the invasion and the great Matebian tragedy in the 1970s, and did it time and again since in response to threat and oppression.

While roughly half of the inhabitants went eastward, the other half was forced to run away or was deported to West Timor. But this was only possible after extra troops arrived by Hercules planes at night between Sept. 4 and 6 and the militias were deployed to guard the city ports. I was among a group of Indonesian activists and journalists led by Yeny Rosa Damayanti and Mindo Rajaguguk who witnessed a scene in Dili with visible tension until, that is, the carnage occurred. Those were the days when persecution, attacks on Bishop Carlos Belo's diocese, killings, infernos and deportations had just begun at some places or were about to begin elsewhere.

In other words, the mayhem could only start between Sept. 4 and 6 as the Army organized the militia violence more extensively.

Meanwhile, hundreds of locals and foreigners, including UN staffers, were hiding at UNAMET (United Nations Mission in East Timor) compounds while most Indonesian officials, observers and journalists had left East Timor the week before Sept. 4, including liaison officers, who were

supposed to safeguard the UN administered referendum. Many were clearly aware of the coming mayhem. Some had even been warned by the military authorities in Jakarta to leave the territory in particular after the UN changed the announcement date. This suggests some planning on violent actions.

Rumors about the pro-independence victory on the eve of Sept. 4 had shocked Jakarta. It might have caused some panic and moved the military authorities to act quickly — possibly to implement the so-called Garnadi Plan B. But to say that because of the UN changing the announcement date, the troops were “totally unprepared” to face “riots” and, therefore, as Habibie and some officers indicated, could not control the militias, is turning logic and reality upside down. A scapegoat was thus sought and found in the need to act sooner than planned.

The truth is there were no “riots” except sporadic incidents — let alone big clashes. The National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT), led by Xanana Gusmao from the British Embassy compound in Jakarta, who commanded the Falintil guerrilla and led the pro-independence group, had instructed their supporters not to respond to any provocation.

Armed, transported and financially supported by the Army, the militias were not autonomous units. This obviously was the Army’s strategy of using proxies. But there is a problem of political language here. From the outset, Jakarta’s intervention in East Timor was constructed a political and military response to a “civil war”, despite the fact that the bloody war among the Timorese (Fretilin vs. the Timorese Democratic Union) had ended in 1974.

Twenty-four years later, in November 1998, this paradigm was reactivated and the militias revived as the Habibie administration moved toward a wide-ranging autonomy option. Jakarta wanted to put the pro-Jakarta Timor militias on equal footing to the Falintil and attempted to provoke the guerrillas, while military chief Gen. Wiranto came to Dili on the critical day of Sept. 6, claiming to be there to reconcile the warring Timorese factions — rhetoric then resistance spokesman Jose Ramos-Horta likened to “Jack The

Ripper pretending to reconcile the women he raped".

However, the project failed. The Army commanders not only failed to provoke the Falintil and, as a consequence, found it harder to find motives to discredit and intimidate the pro-independent supporters.

The latter's victory and the UN's earlier announcement only made the humiliated officers more desperate. But the language — the myth of the Timor "civil war" — remains.

Instead of looking at the modus operandi of the orchestrated carnage, i.e. the conduct of — not the policy on — the security apparatuses (who according to a UN Agreement of May 5, 1999, should guarantee security), Habibie took the "civil war" for granted and blamed the UN chief and UNAMET; neither did he explore them in his recent book.

"His" generals — Zacky A. Makarim, Adam Damiri, Tono Suratman — sung the same song. Gen. Wiranto, who is to testify at the next commission hearing, is also likely to deny his responsibility and replay the blame game.

Rather than contributing to impunity by blaming outsiders, former president B.J. Habibie should analyze the tragedy that shamed the country — just as he made a cost-benefit analysis following the pro-Timor protests in Dresden, Germany, in 1995 that, as this writer witnessed, humiliated him and Soeharto. For wasn't it the post-Dresden analysis that led to his decision to offer a self-determination vote and earned him international respect?

[The writer is a journalist with Radio Netherlands. He covered the East Timor referendum in 1999.]

## **EAST TIMOR MEDIA MONITORING**

### **East Timor media monitoring**

UNMIT Public Information Unit - April 27, 2007

PD Supports Ramos Horta

The president of the Democratic Party (PD), Fernando de Araujo Lasama, during the signing of an accord between PD and Horta on 26/4, said that PD all across the 13 districts has decided to support presidential candidate Jose Ramos Horta during the second round of the presidential election. He said Horta has the capacity to lead the country and is able recognizes different people and political parties. (DN, TP and STL)

Government waiting for the official letter from PR to halt operations on Alfredo

Deputy Prime Minister Estanislau Aleixo da Silva said that the government has not received any official letter from President Gusmco requesting to halt the operation on Alfredo.

"The government is waiting for the official letter from the president of the republic," said Aleixo on Thursday (26/4) at the Palacio das Cinzas in Caicoli, Dili, after meeting with President Gusmco. (DN)

Horta: "I want to be the president for the poor"

Presidential candidate Jose Ramos Horta's second round of campaigning began on Wednesday (25/4) in Manufahi, Dotik Village sub-district Alas, where he said that if he is elected president he would make peace and poverty reduction a priority. (DN)

UNMIT will rehabilitate damaged roads

The UN Special Representative of Secretary-General in Timor-Leste, Atul Khare, stated that UNMIT would look into ways to rehabilitate the roads in order to ensure the road safety and minimize traffic accidents. (DN)

Horta asking ISF to halt the operation on Alfredo

Prime Minister Horta asked the ISF to cease the operation to capture fugitive Reinado. By continuing the operation, the ISF would be challenging the decisions made by the president and the prime minister. (TP)

PDC calls for changing the president of the court of appeals

The Christian Democratic Party (PDC) proposed to replace the president of the court of appeals. PDC

said that the current president makes inappropriate decisions. The PDC president mentioned that no decisions have yet been made on 50 cases which had been presented to the court. (TP)

Alkatiri: Xanana and Ramos Horta should be removed

Fretilin's Secretary-General, Mari Alkatiri, said that removing Xanana and Horta would solve the country's crisis. "Xanana and Ramos Horta will not resolve the crisis, but rather will increase the crisis," said Alkatiri during Francisco Lu-Olo's campaign in Manatuto on Wednesday (25/4). (STL)

UNMIT: Political Parties should not involve children in politics

The UN Special Representative of Secretary-General in Timor-Leste, Atul Khare, appealed to all political parties not to involve children in political activities.

"I have met with the CNE and STAE and asked them to encourage all political parties and leaders to avoid involving children in political activities," said Khare at a press conference on Thursday (26/4) at the UNMIT HQ in Dili. (STL)

STAE and CNE asked to be credible

The Chairperson of Joint Commission of Monitoring for Election (KOME), Fr. Agostinho de Jesus Soares, at a press conference on Thursday (26/4) at the Elections Media Center (EMC) in Caicoli Dili, stated that STAE and CNE should be credible and impartial to avoid manipulation during the run-off presidential election.

KOME also identified some PNTL members involved in the counting process at the polling centers. "Some PNTL members in some districts did not show their professionalism and independence and some used their uniforms and weapons to vote," said Fr. Agostinho. (STL, DN and TP)

PNTL case in Viqueque is under investigation

The chief of the investigation commission for the Viqueque case, Clementino dos Reis Amaral, reportedly said that Committee B of the National Parliament will proceed to investigate the

involvement of PNTL members in cases of intimidation of the population in Uatolari, Viqueque. He stated that the commission consists of eight members. (STL)

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### **East Timor media monitoring**

UNMIT Public Information Unit - April 26, 2007

Horta has no principles, KOTA supports Lu-Olo

Klibur Oan Timor Asswa'in party (KOTA) decided to support the Fretilin candidate Lu-Olo, because "Jose Ramos Horta has no principles."

The president of KOTA, Manuel Tilman, on Wednesday (25/4) at the national parliament declared that even though KOTA supports Lu-Olo, he will not force his supporters to vote for Lu-Olo. (DN)

Rerden: "ISF has not halted the operation on Alfredo"

In response to Horta and President Gusmao's declaration to halt the operations to capture fugitive Reinado, the Commander of the ISF, Brigadier General Mal Rerden, said that the ISF will not halt the operation until it receives a clarification letter from the government. "ISF has not received any formal letter from the government requesting to halt the operation. Once ISF receives the letter, it will discuss the issue with the government," said Rerden on Wednesday (25/4) at the ISF office in Caicoli Dili.

In addition, Rerden said that the operation to capture Alfredo could be easily stopped, however a public declaration to so should first come from the government. (DN)

General Prosecutor does not want to mediate Alfredo's case

The Prosecutor General (GP), Longuinhos Monteiro, said that the GP would not mediate a dialogue but rather would take the case through a proper legal process.

"I don't want the youth or the public in general

to say that the GP intervened in some way. The GP will take the case through the proper legal process," said Longuinhos on Wednesday (25/4) at his office in Caicoli Dili. (DN)

Horta promises to be a president of peace

Presidential candidate Jose Ramos Horta's second round of campaigning began on Wednesday (25/4) in Manufahi, Dotik Village sub-district Alas.

Horta took this opportunity to affirm that if he is elected to be president, he will be a president for peace. He said his priority is to maintain peace and work on poverty reduction. (TP)

Seven members of government against Ramos Horta

Presidential candidate Jose Ramos Horta, who left his post as Prime Minister to run his campaign for the second round of elections, is now being challenged by other government officials.

At a press conference on 25/4 at the MTRC office in Caicoli Dili, the Minister of Labor and Solidarity, Arsenio Paixao Bano, accompanied by the Vice Minister, and the Ministers of Transportation and Telecommunication, Education, State, Finance, and the Vice Ministers of Education and Public Works, the Secretary of the State, and the Minister of the Presidential Council, said that Horta has no right to intervene in the government's duties until the second round of elections are complete. (TP)

Estanislau asks for an investigation on the case of rice distribution

At a press conference on Wednesday (25/4) at the Office of Ministry of Agriculture Dili, the Minister of Agriculture and Vice Prime Minister, Estanislau Aleixo da Silva, said that if Prime Minister Horta insists on an investigation, then the Minister of Labor and Solidarity and Community Reinsertion, Arsenio Paixao Bano, should be investigated.

He explained that the rice was distributed to the population in Balibo by MTRC as government assistance to the people.

"If the Prime Minister does not agree with it, then the case will be investigated. Arsenio is

being courageous," said Estanislau. (TP)

#### CNE held meeting with political parties

After attending a meeting with CNE Commissioners on Wednesday (25/4) at the CNE office in Kintal Boot Dili, the Secretary-General of the Democratic Party (PD), Osorio Mau Lequi, said that the CNE held a meeting with the political parties that have registered with the court of appeals and these parties will compete in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

He said the meeting focused on ways that the political parties could present their parliamentary candidates and on security matters. (STL)

#### Government ignoring CII recommendation

The Chief of Human Rights Assosiasaun Hak, Aniceto Neves, reportedly told journalists on Wednesday (25/4) at his office in Farol Dili, that the government is ignoring the recommendations made by the Commission of International Investigation (CII), which was formed by the United Nations to investigate and analyze the atmosphere of Timor-Leste during the crisis. He said that ignoring the recommendations is a way for the government to protect those involved in the crisis and who have not yet been arrested.

He said that the government has no intention of bringing these actors to court as recommended by CII. (STL)

#### Population in Hudi Laran flee from their homes to Hosana Church

In the past two days, at least 13 families from Hudi Laran moved to IDP camps due to confrontations between martial arts groups, 7-7 and PSHT in Bairro Pite.

On Tuesday night, some evacuated to Seminário Fatumeta IDP camp and others to Hotel Hong Kong then on Wednesday morning they moved to Cathedral Villa Verde.

Members of PSHT used homemade weapons, looted and damaged property and fired a man, who was immediately brought to a hospital in Dili by UNPol. (STL)



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## **East Timor media monitoring**

UNMIT Public Information Unit - April 25, 2007

**Alfredo demands Ramos Horta to contact him legally**

Alfredo Reinaldo said that he is ready to meet Ramos Horta. "If he wants to contact me, it should be done legally through my lawyers," said Alfredo. On the other hand, The President of General Prosecutor (GP), Longuinhos Monteiro, said that the GP would not mediate a dialogue but rather would take the case through the proper legal process. (TP)

**Lu-Olo: Horta should respect the existing constitution**

Fretilin's presidential candidate, Lu-Olo, said that the judicial body is an independent body and no one should interfere with it. This comment followed Ramos Horta's decision to reopen the case on weapons distribution if he is elected as president. Lu-Olo said that Horta should respect the existing constitution. (TP)

**Door-to-door campaigning may cause manipulation**

The Director of the East Timor Institute for Security Studies, Julio Thomas Pinto, said that it would be good for both candidates, Lu-Olo and Ramos Horta to conduct door-to-door campaigns, but should ensure dialogue. Julio said that they should avoid a monologue but ensure that the supporters are able to share their ideas. However, he said that if door-to-door campaigning is not controlled, the candidates may take advantage of this opportunity. (TP)

**Democratic Party's allegations are false**

Antero Bosco, Vice Commander of Border Police Unit, denied the Democratic Party's allegations of arms' threat in Suku Saburai, in Bobonaro district. He said that he never threatened anybody and never even campaigned in Suku Saburai as his duties were in Maliana. (STL)

**The Maputo Anger Dog Starts to Terrorize**

Former Fretilin Commander, Vicente da Conceicao or Railos, stated that the Maputo Anger Dog led by Lebo are planning to terrorize people in Liquica district, particularly in the remote areas. (STL)

No report on intimidation by government officers

The Chief of the Councils of Minister, Antoninho Bianco, declared that he has not received any reports regarding government officials terrorizing and intimidating people during the elections campaign and run-off presidential elections. (STL)

Horta should have the courage to fire the undisciplined Minister A National Parliament Member, Rui Menezes, said that it does not matter if the Prime Minister's decision to fire the Minister came late as long as he is able to fire all the undisciplined ministers. (STL)

Horta's Door-to-Door Campaign in Lautem

Considering the failure in first round of presidential elections in Lautem district, Ramos Horta's team is planning to conduct door-to-door campaigning in the area ahead of the run-off elections. (STL)

10 people arrested for spreading ethnic tensions in Uatolari

Fretilin's Party Deputy Coordinator in Viqueque, Manuel Gaspar, along with 9 others were arrested for creating ethnic tensions between the Makasae clan and Nauweti. Joao Ximenes Amaral escaped.

Stop making promises involving the justice system

Prosecutor General of the Republic, Longuinhos Monteiro, asked the presidential candidates to stop making promises regarding cases that fall under the justice realm. (STL, DN and TP)

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## **East Timor media monitoring**

UNMIT Public Information Unit - April 24, 2007

Alkatiri and Lu-Olo: "Ramos Horta has tendency of dictatorship"

The former Prime Minister and the Secretary-General of Fretilin, Mari Alkatiri, and the President of Fretilin, Francisco Lu-Olo, said that Ramos Horta's declaration clearly demonstrate his tendencies for dictatorship in Timor-Leste.

Ramos Horta declared on national television that he will reopen the case on the allegation of weapons distribution, which involved the country's Minister of Interior, Rogerio Lobato.

Rogerio was sentenced for seven and half years.

Joaquim dos Santos, a member of National Parliament from Fretilin, also said that Ramos Horta has no power to reopen the case.

"It's political language to gain votes for himself," said Joaquim. "To reopen or close a case is the competence of the Public Ministry, the president has no authority to do so," added Joaquim. (DN)

Horta gives no compensation to ASDT and PSD

After signing the joint declaration with ASDT and PSD at the ASDT office in Lecidere Dili, Ramos Horta declared that he gives no compensation to these parties or any other political parties that support him. (DN)

PD and PSD continue to reject the presidential election results

The president of the Court of Appeals, Claudio Ximenes, stated that the complaints submitted by the three candidates, Francisco Xavier Amaral (ASDT), Fernando Lasama (PD), and Lucia Lobato have no legal base for further investigation.

The complaints submitted indicated manipulation within the National Commission of Elections (CNE) and the Secretariat of Technical Administration of Elections (STAE) in the counting process.

"The presidential election of 2007-2012 is valid, Ramos Horta and Lu-Olo should go to the second round," said Claudio.

However, the spokesperson of the Democratic Party (PD), Rui Menezes, and the Representative Chief of the Democratic Socialist Party (PSD), Maria Paixco, still rejected the results even after the

announcement. (DN and TP)

Halting the operation on Alfredo; Monica Rodrigues: "I have no comment on this decision"

The spokesperson of United Nations Police (UNPol) in Timor-Leste, Monica Rodrigues, said that she could not comment on the decision made by President Xanana Gusmao to halt the operation on Alfredo.

Monica explained that the current function of UNPol and PNTL is to provide security and maintain law and order in order to create peace and calm in the country. "About the capture, it is being handled by ISF," Monica said. (DN)

Horta has no plans to meet Alfredo

Speaking to journalists after the graduation at the Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosae (UNTL), Ramos Horta said that he has no plans to meet Alfredo.

"It is up to the lawyers, the General Prosecutor and the Catholic Church to figure out what is best for the people," said Horta,

Ramos Horta also met Leandro Isaac, a run-away member of the National Parliament on Thursday (19/4) to discuss Leandro's situation. Horta said that even though Mr. Isaac is also pursued by the ISF, there is no mandate to capture him. (TP and STL)

Political Parties should guarantee the security of the elections Speaking to journalists on Monday (23/4) at the Palacio das Cinzas in Caicoli, Dili after meeting the President Gusmao, the Vice President of the Commission of Security and Defence of the National Parliament, Clementino dos Reis Amaral, said that all the political parties should have a joint declaration urging all supporters to avoid violence.

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## **East Timor media monitoring**

UNMIT Public Information Unit - April 23, 2007

## Oliveira: Sanction Free Access Cards

The Director of Hak Association, Jose Luis Oliveira, reportedly said that the free access cards used by government officials to access the polling centers violates the electoral law. He said that the director of STAE should get this case sanctioned. (TP)

Run-Off Campaign, Horta is off duty In a press conference on Friday (20/4) at the government palace, Prime Minister, Jose Ramos Horta, stated that he will leave his duties as chief of government from Monday (23/4) to Monday (07/5) in order to campaign for the run-off election.

Vice Prime Minister, Estanislau da Silva will be in charge of Horta's tasks as the Minister of Coordination and Defence Forces. (TP and STL)

A close distance between Fretilin 'Radicals' and Fretilin 'Reformist'

The Coordinator of Fretilin 'Reformist,' Victor da Costa, on Friday (20/4) at the Central Committee of Fretilin (CCF) Comoro, Dili, said that the Fretilin 'Reformists' and Fretilin 'Radicals' who are normally very separate are recently coming together.

Victor met the President of Fretilin, Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo, and the Secretary-General of Fretilin, Mari Alkatiri, in an atmosphere of friendship.

Fretilin broke into two, Fretilin 'Radicals' and Fretilin 'Reformist' in 2006, when the party held its second National Congress in CCF Comoro, Dili. (TP)

## Xanana Uses state power for his politics

The president of the national parliament and presidential candidate, Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo, said that the President of the Republic, Xanana Gusmao currently does not place himself as a neutral state figure and uses his position of power to influence politics. "The President of the Republic Xanana is not neutral, he uses power of the state to make politics," said Lu-Olo. (STL)

SOMET recommends PNTL and F-FDTL to be transparent

The spokesperson of the Solidarity Observation Mission in East Timor (SOMET), Catarina Maria, speaking to journalists at a press conference on Thursday (19/4) at the Elections Media Center (EMC) in Dili, observed that there was transparency during the election. SOMET urged the PNTL and F-FDTL to ensure transparency at the polling centers. (STL)

PST votes for Horta

The President of the Socialist Party of Timorese (PST), Nelson Thomas Correia, said that PST will vote for Ramos Horta in the upcoming run-off presidential election, since Horta will ensure the political obligation of the country.

"Because of such reason we are confident to vote for Horta in the run-off presidential election," said Nelson on Thursday (19/4) at the PST office in Dili. (STL)

The Court of Appeals approved: Lu-Olo and Horta enter 2<sup>nd</sup> round of elections

The Court of Appeals approved the results of the presidential election last 09 April. The proclamation letter, which was signed by the president of the Court of Appeals, Claudio Ximenes, on Saturday (21/4) said that presidential candidates Jose Ramos Horta and Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo will compete in the run-off presidential election for the reason that they got the top two ranks.

The Court of Appeals approved that presidential candidate Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo is in the first rank with 27, 89% of the votes, followed by Horta with 21,815. (TP)

Horta will reopen the allegation case of weapons distribution

Presidential candidate Jose Ramos Horta pledged that if he is elected he will reopen the case on the distribution of weapons. Horta said that as President of the Republic he would cooperate with the Prosecutor General and the UN to look into the matter and initiate the investigation. (TP)

Mari Alkatiri welcomes CNRT

At a press conference on Friday (20/4) in Farol Dili, the Secretary-General of Fretilin, Mari Alkatiri, declared that he welcomes CNRT to compete in the upcoming parliamentary elections this year. (DN)

ASDT-PSD-Horta Signing Agreement Presidential candidate Jose Ramos Horta reportedly, on Saturday (21/4) at the ASDT office in Dili, has signed an agreement with the president of Association Social Democratic Timor (ASDT), Francisco Xavier do Amaral and the president of Social Democratic Party (PSD) Mario Viegas Carrascalao. As the founder of ASDT and an international figure with the same political principles, the two parties will support Horta to be the president of the republic. (DN, STL and TP)

Claudio Ximenes: Complaints and Reclamation have no Fundamental

The court of appeals officially announced the result of the presidential election on Saturday (21/4).

In answering to the reclamations and complaints which were presented by some candidates, Ximenes said the court of appeals has decided that the complaints and reclamations were unfounded. (DN)

Juliao Mausiri: never believe in old leaders

In response to some leaders who used the media to accuse and blame one another, the Commissioner of National Political Commission (NPC) from Democratic Party (PD), Juliao Agosto Mausiri, urged people not to believe in old leaders as they have damaged the concept of national unity of the country.

"We reconstructed this nation. Do not give hope to the old leaders. Let the young generation run this country," said Mausiri at the national parliament. (DN)

Mari Alkatiri: Xanana starts to invent things

The Secretary-General of Fretilin, Mari Alkatiri, said that the President of Republic, Xanana Gusmao is inventing policies. Mari called for Xanana to present evidence to the court before accusing. (DN)

Horta: Arsenio Bano providing rice to Nuno KORKA

Presidential candidate, Jose Ramos Horta, said he was opposed to the attitude of some members of the government, specifically the Minister of Solidarity, Communitarian and Reinsertion, Arsenio Paixao Bano, who provided 30 tons of rice to Nuno, a Korta martial arts leader.

"I have witnesses from UNPol. This attitude has to be investigated," said Horta in a press conference on Saturday (21/4) when signing an accord with ASDT and PSD. (STL)

Xanana: better to obey God than leaders

In a message to all Timorese, the President of the Republic, Xanana Gusmao, said that it was better to obey God rather than leaders who provoke killing each other and damage the youths' future. (STL)

PD concerned about the efforts of the Court of Appeals

The member of national parliament from Democratic Party (PD), Juliao Mausiri, said that PD is concerned about the court of appeal's decision.

"The complaint we filed has not yet been examined but the results have been announced," said Mausiri on Friday (204) at the national parliament.

Mausiri said that both presidential candidates Lu-Olo and Horta will go to the run-off because of manipulation. (DN)

Osorio Florindo: who else will Horta bring to invade Timor-Leste

Responding to accusations of Fretilin being communist, the National Parliament member from Fretilin, Osorio Florindo, declared that Jose Ramos Horta was one of the founders of the party. They were blamed to be communists; so Indonesia invaded.

"By saying that Fretilin is communist, he is calling for others to invade Timor-Leste again," Florindo said. Furthermore, Osorio affirmed that Horta is playing a dirty game. (DN)

Rui Menezes: transparency is essential for the



nation

The member of national parliament from Democratic Party (PD), Rui Menezes, speaking to journalists said that both presidential candidates, Lu-Olo and Horta have to declare their well-being to the public and guarantee their transparency in ensuring that no private interests will be involved when either one becomes president of the republic. (DN)

Ramos Horta: "Ready to declare my well-being"

After signing an accord with ASDT and PSD on Saturday (21/4) at the ASDT office in Dili, presidential candidate, Jose Ramos Horta, said that he is ready to openly declare his well-being to the public.

Horta demanded that such declaration should be made not only by the presidential candidates but by all members of the government. (DN)

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### **East Timor media monitoring**

UNMIT Public Information Unit - April 20, 2007

Alfredo criticized Lian Maubere's pamphlet

Pamphlets with Fretilin's symbols spread widely throughout the country. Alfredo promised to bring those spreading the pamphlets to court. "I am disappointed with the suspect," he said. Alfredo confirmed that he knows the suspect but it is not the time to tell the truth. "It is a political game of certain people," Alfredo added. (STL)

Horta or Lu-Olo for president, the people will decide

Fretilin's presidential candidate, Francisco Guterres 'Lu-Olo', speaking to the journalist at a press conference yesterday, said that people will decide who will be the president of the republic in the second round of the elections.

Optimistically, Lu-Olo hopes to win the election. Should he lose, he plans to accept it with dignity. Lu-Olo was the only candidate who

competed with other 7 candidates, considered as opposition. He expressed that there was much pressure on him, even through the media, but he still won over other candidates in the first round election held in April 9. (STL)

Juliao Mausiri: Xanana and Horta seeking Alfredo's Votes

In response to President Gusmao and Prime Minister Horta's call to halt the operation on Alfredo, the member of the National Parliament from Democratic Party (PD), Juliao Agosto Mausiri, said that this was done in order to obtain Alfredo's votes for the run-off presidential election.

According to Mausiri, Horta knows that Alfredo is supported by many people in the western side of the country and could influence them to vote for Horta.

"Xanana and Horta know that if they do not use Alfredo's situation, they will not get enough votes in the run-off presidential election," explained Mausiri on Thursday (19/4) at the National Parliament. (DN and TP)

Joaquim dos Santos: "Watch out for the capitalist"

In response to the some declarations by youth moneylenders and political consumers, the member of national parliament and National Political Commission (NPC) of Fretilin, Joaquim dos Santos, said that the Timorese people have to watch out for capitalists who recently rose in Timor-Leste to occupy the country in the future.

"The self-interested never accept the realities. They bear capitalist principles, not socialist. We have to be careful of the capitalists in the country", said Joaquin dos Santos on Thursday (19/4) in the national parliament. (DN)

Antonio Ximenes: "I don't agree with Horta's Declaration"

The president of the Democratic Christen Party (PDC), Antonio Ximenes, speaking to journalists on Thursday (19/4) at the National Parliament, said that he does not accept Horta's declaration that Fretilin has been implementing a communist system. (DN)

Lu-Olo: "Fretilin resists and refuses to go along with communists"

Through a press conference on Thursday (19/4) at the National Parliament in Dili, the presidential candidate Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo reportedly said that Fretilin has resisted communism since 1975.

Lu-Olo said that Horta's comments indicating that Fretilin supported a communist system were only made to influence people to vote for Horta. "We are not supporting communism and we are not communist," said Lu-Olo.

On the other hand, Julio Pinto, a military and political observer said that by blaming each other, the presidential candidates are showing their weaknesses to their supporters and people of this country. (DN and STL)

The Lawyer of PD, PSD and ASDT Presents Proposal to the Court of Appeals Refusing the final results of the presidential election, three presidential candidates, Fernando Lasama (PD), Lucia Lobato (PSD) and Francisco Xavier (ASDT) on Thursday (19/4) sent their lawyer, Vital dos Santos, to submit a complaint letter to the CNE via the Court of Appeals.

Vital dos Santos said that the candidates do not agree with the results of the presidential election because of manipulation. (DN, TP and STL)

Weak election socialization, voters giving wrong votes

Observers from the Committee of General Elections Monitoring at the Faculty of Social Politics of Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosae (UNTL) said that insufficient civic education caused voters to cast their votes for candidates who they did not want to vote for. (STL)

PSD and PD questioned CNRT's instant victory in the parliamentary election

The member of the national parliament and vice president of Social Democratic Party (PD) Joao Mendes Goncalves and Jose Nominando from the Democratic Party (PD) reportedly questioned CNRT's victory in the parliamentary election.

"CNRT will become the great party in the country, however I still question its ability to win the elections," informed Joao on Thursday (19/4) at the national parliament. (TP)

The clash of gang violence continues, 9 injured

Gang violence continues in Dili, after it had settled for a couple of weeks during the campaign and presidential Election Day.

Yesterday (19/4), the disturbances between PSHT and 7-7 erupted in Hudi Laran and Quintal Boot. The incident resulted in 9 injured, 4 in Hudi Laran and 5 in Quintal Boot.

The ninth victims got stoned and others were shot. The victims were immediately hospitalized in HNGV Dili for intensive treatment.

UNPol and PNTL dispersed the clash successfully. No one was arrested. (DN and STL)

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## **East Timor media monitoring**

UNMIT Public Information Unit - April 19, 2007

Final Count, Lu-Olo 27.89% and Horta 21.81%

After six days of counting, the CNE President, Faustino Cardoso, announced the final preliminary results of presidential election on Wednesday (18/4) afternoon at the Election Media Center (EMC), Caicoli Dili.

The top ranking candidate is from Fretilin, Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo, with total number of votes 112.666 (27.89%). The second is Jose Ramos Horta with 88.102 (21.81%), third Fernando de Araujo Lasama with 77.459 (19.18%), fourth Francisco Xavier do Amaral with 58.125 (14.39%), fifth Lucia Lobato with 35.789 (8.86%), sixth Manuel Tilman 16.534 (4.09%), seventh Avelino Coelho with 8.338 total votes (2.06%) and the last finally Joao Carrascalao with 6.928 total votes (1.72%). (DN, STL, RTL, TVTL and TP)

Halting the operation on Alfredo is a political campaign

In response to the decision by President Xanana Gusmao to halt the operation on Alfredo, as declared by Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta, the President of National Parliament, Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo, said that this was a political move by Jose Ramos Horta to get more supporters for the second round of presidential elections.

"Things are all happening at this time. The decision (halting the operation) was made urgently. I will not do the same thing. I want to win or lose with dignity," said Lu-Olo.

Lu-Olo said that until now the National Parliament has not received any letter of declaration to halt the operation. (DN)

Jose Luis de Oliveira: "Halting the operation on Alfredo will create stability"

The Coordinator of Yayasan Hak (Human Rights), Jose Luis de Oliveira, speaking to journalists on Wednesday (18/4) at the office of Yayasan Hak Farol Dili, stated that President Xanana Gusmao's decision to halt the operation on Alfredo will restore the stability of the country, especially in Same, Manufahi district. (DN)

STAE stands on impartiality and transparency

Victor Belo and Umberto Fernandes, the District Coordinators of STAE Baucau and Viqueque districts, speaking to journalist in Caicoli, stated that STAE is a body that stands on its principle of impartiality and transparency to give technical, administrative and logistical assistance for the success of the elections.

Umberto said that there was no manipulation as published by the media, but rather technical shortcomings that would be addressed as lessons learnt for the second round.

STAE recognizes its failures but did not intend to manipulate the overall process of the elections in the interest of some candidates and parties. (DN, STL and TP)

Moneylenders in IDPs camps (TP)

Prime Minister Ramos Horta said that during the crisis some people gave money to the IDPs to continue provoking the situation.

The moneylenders thought that only Fretilin could resolve the crisis and therefore wanted them back to rule the country.

The State should have dialogues with F-FDTL and PNTL

The spokesperson of Front Mahasiswa Timor Leste (FMTL), Julio Soares, said that there should be preparations for dialogue with Alfredo and his group, as well as with F-FDTL, PNTL and petitioners for the sake of justice in the country.

He revealed that this crisis started within F-FDTL (petitioners) and PNTL then caused Alfredo and his members to leave their barracks and head to the mountains. (TP)

Alfredo's lawyer to be contacted by the state

Benevides Correia Barros, Alfredo Reinado's lawyer, confirmed that they are now waiting for the state to contact them to resolve his client's problem.

"Even though Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta wants to resolve this problem in a peaceful manner, we still have not been contacted by the state," said Barros. (TP)

Jose Luis Guterres to forward President's letter to UN

The Minister of Cooperation and Foreign Affairs, Jose Luis Guterres, accompanied by the Chief of the Cabinet, Agostinho de Deus, yesterday (18/4) traveled to the United States to pass the President's message to UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki Moon in New York. Jose Luis stated that he knows nothing about the content of the message. (TP)

The court decision on the results does not benefit anyone

The presidential candidate from the Social Democratic Party (PSD), Lucia Lobato, speaking to the journalists on Wednesday (18/4) at the PSD office in Bairro Formosa, Dili stated that everyone is waiting for the decision from the court on the results of the presidential election.

"If the court decides that the result is properly based on the facts and law and without any manipulation, I believe that all people will accept such decision," said Lucia. (STL)

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## **East Timor media monitoring**

UNMIT Public Information Unit - April 18, 2007

President asks the ISF to halt the operation on Alfredo

Prime Minister Ramos Horta said that the ISF will stop its pursuit of Alfredo Reinado and his men in order to resume dialogue.

He expects that within the month, President Xanana would meet Brigadier Mal Rerden, the commander of ISF to discuss the issue. TP

Horta: "UN stays 5 more years in TL"

Ramos Horta, at a press conference at the Government Palace yesterday, said that Timor-Leste needs the UN to remain for another 5 years in order to improve the professionalism of the PNTL and F-FDTL. (DN)

Barris: "Security policy in TL is not in a predicament"

The Minister of Interior, Alcino Barris, reportedly said that security management is not a problem as the PNTL's strategies continually progress in relation with the current situation. (DN)

Ximenes: "Court has not received election results from CNE"

After meeting with the President of the Republic, Kayrala Xanana Gusmao, on Tuesday (17/4) at the Palacio das Cinzas Caicoli Dili, the President of the Court of Appeals, Claudio Ximenes, said that Court of Appeals has not received the preliminary results of the election from CNE.

"I don't know anything about the preliminary results of the presidential election because CNE

is still working and the process is going on," said Ximenes. (DN)

Barris: "Paul Martins is a member of the PNTL" The Minister of Interior, Alcino Barris, told journalists on Tuesday (17/4) at the Ministry of Interior Villa Verde Dili, that Ex-General Commander Paul de Fatima Martins is considered by the Ministry as a member of the PNTL, so he has to be registered, interviewed and evaluated before returning to his previous tasks. (DN)

Xavier: "Vote for Lu-Olo means suicide"

One of the founders of Fretilin, Francisco Xavier do Amaral, who is also a presidential candidate said his coalition will not vote for Lu-Olo since it would be considered a "suicide."

"We tend to vote for a candidate who is capable to lead the country. Voting for Lu-Olo would mean suicide," said Xavier. (TP, STL, DN, TVTL, and RTL)

CNE has no Capacity

The presidential candidate Avelino Coelho said that the CNE is an independent body organizing the presidential election in the country and cannot blame STAE in relation with manipulation matters. He revealed that if the court of appeals legalizes the results of this election, this nation will face manipulation, corruption and injustice for next 5 years.

He said that the CNE has no capacity to resolve problems and if the party's observers present complaints to the CNE, they should be accompanied by evidence. (STL)

Horta accuses Fretilin of spreading Communist Propaganda

The presidential candidate, Ramos Horta, accused Fretilin of spreading propaganda to harm his reputation and Xanana Gusmao, the president of republic.

Horta claims that Fretilin engages in communist propaganda saying that Horta wants to sell Atauro, Oecusse and Jaco Island to the US after winning the presidential election. (STL and TP)



Lu-Olo confident of having capacity to run for presidency

In response to a statement by Jose Ramos Horta about international relations with neighboring countries, presidential candidate Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo said that he has the capacity to run for the republic's presidency.

Lu-Olo pledged that if he becomes president, Timor-Leste's interests would be the priority including maintaining relations with other nations. (TP)

Horta awarded Noble Peace Prize because of Fretilin

The member of national parliament from KOTA, Manuel Tilman, reportedly said that Jose Ramos Horta was awarded the noble peace prize because of Fretilin and he added that Horta would not have received it without Fretilin.

According to Tilman, Fretilin made it possible for Horta to go overseas and was sheltered by the resistance organization (CNRT) to help him to aid in the liberation of his people from Indonesian occupation 24 years ago. (TP)

Need to improve the working system of STAE and CNE

To minimize the errors in the process of the second round of the presidential election, improvements are needed in the technical departments of STAE and CNE.

According to the Dean of Social Politics at the National University of Timor Leste (UNTL), Jose Magno, improvements rather than restructuring would improve the system. (TP)

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## **East Timor media monitoring**

UNMIT Public Information Unit - April 7/9, 2007

Five messages for Timor-Leste from five countries

The New Zealand Ambassador in Timor-Leste, Ruth Nuttall said to journalists in a press conference

on Thursday (05/04) at the USA Embassy that the United States of America (USA), Portugal, New Zealand, Japan and the Special Representative of European Union call for people of Timor Leste to come to the polling center on 09 April 2007 to vote for the new president.

(STL)

Bishop Ricardo: Never vote for the criminals

The Bishops of Dili and Baucau Diocese, Mgr. Alberto Ricardo and Mgr.

Basilio do Nascimento appeal to East Timorese not to vote for the criminals.

"Vote for those who are good, loving people, who forfeit their lives for people away from violence and crime, bringing Timor-Leste to good," said the Bishops in Palacio das Cinzas on Friday (6/4) in their appeal to East Timorese on the presidential election on April 9.

Fretilin "Maputo" threatens CNE

Fr. Martinho Gusmao, the CNE spokesperson, told journalists through a press conference at CNE office on Thursday (5/4) in Kintal Boot Dili that Fretilin supporters did not destroy or damage materials. However, CNE considers their appearance as a crime. (STL)

Security Council Appeals to Political parties to avoid violence

To pledge that presidential election in Timor-Leste is free, fair and in a pacific manner, the Security Council appealed to political parties in Timor-Leste to avoid violence.

"The Security Council appeals to all political parties in Timor-Leste to secure themselves to the principles of using no violence along with the democratic and legal process to secure the upcoming presidential election ....," said the SRSR in a UNMIT press conference held in Obrigado Barracks Caicoli, Dili on Friday (6/4).

Fretilin 'Maputo' intimidates Father Henrique

The supporters of Fretilin "Maputo" intimidated Fr. Henrique ini Ermera, when they returned from

the last day of a political rally in Dili on Wednesday (4/4).

Fr. Henrique attempted to disperse the incident between Fretilin supporters and youths of Ermera Church, but was instead targeted. The militants hit him causing him to be hospitalized to treat the injuries. (STL)

Horta: Alkatiri considered Petitioners" problems a joke

Ramos Horta said on the Easter Eve that Mari Alkatiri was taking no initiative to solve the petitioners"problem." ...I told Alkatiri to foorm a committee to solve the problem. In March, Anna Pessoa contacted me and said she presented this issue to Mari Alkatiri but he just laughed and said he considered petitioners"problem as a joke," said Horta at a debate of presidential candidate in Delta Nova, Dili last Thursday (5/4). (STL)

Lasama concerned about UNPOL

The conflict between Fretilin and Partido Democratica (PD) supporters and sympathizers at the end of presidential campaign on last Wednesday (04/04) in Dili invited Lasama"s concern who said that UNPol did not anticipate the problem and let the conflict took place.

"I am very disappointed that UNPol does not anticipate and organize the campaign properly," said Lasama at the presidential debate in Delta Nova last Thursday (5/4). (STL)

FSI broaden its operation across the districts

The Commander of ISF, Brig. Gen. Mal Rerden told Journalists on Friday (6/4) at Phoenix Camp Caicoli Dili, that ISF and New Zealand Forces will broaden their operation across the districts to provide security for the success of the presidential election. (STL)

Xanana: people of Timor-Leste disappoint

The President of the Republic Xanana Gusmao reportedly said that all East Timorese are disappointed with economic development in the late five years.

People have become bored waiting for the good

things said Xanana on Wednesday (04/04) in Dili.

He said that a million dollars from Timor oil which might be useful to develop and improve education and health in Timor-Leste is instead saved in the US bank.

"The money is saved in one of the banks in New York, while East Timorese suffer," Xanana added. (STL)

Ballot papers and Boxes are deployed to Polling Centers across Dili district The ballot papers and boxes of presidential election all at once have been deployed yesterday morning to 50 polling centers in Dili districts.

Such materials are officially handed by a team responsible for the general election in Dili district to the team of polling centers in front of President of Republic Xanana who will accompanied by DSRSG UNMIT, Finn Riese Nielsen in the office of district Dili. It will be deployed by STAE along with observers of various nations. (STL)

2.000 observers of presidential election

The press release of UNMIT informed that the presidential election in Timor Leste today is observed by 2,000 national and international observers.

Fifty national organizations prepare 1.900, including the observers from Dili and Baucau diocese who have joined with KOMEG.

The National observers will observe the polling across 13 districts, 65 sub-districts and 504 polling centers. (STL)

Lu-Olo: Xanana and Horta Using TVTL to promote their presidential campaigns

The presidential candidates of Fretilin, Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo reportedly said that Ramos Horta and Xanana abused and manipulate TVTL (stated owned company) to promote their presidential campaigns.

Lu-Olo said that as a presidential candidate, Jose Ramos Horta has no right to put out any message before Election Day. He said it shows that Xanana

and the Catholic Church assisted Horta"s campaign.  
(STL)

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### **East Timor media monitoring**

UNMIT Public Information Unit - April 4, 2007

Horta: 'Ought to receive the result of the elections courageously'

After attending a swearing-in ceremony for Armindo Maia to be the Ambassador TL to the Philippines at Palacio das Cinzas on Tuesday 03/04, presidential candidate Ramos Horta appealed to all people of Timor Leste, especially militants and sympathizers of the parties, to take the result of the presidential election courageously and with no violence. (DN)

Lu-Olo believes that he will win presidential election

After campaigning in all districts, presidential candidate Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo campaigned in Oecusse on Monday (2/4) accompanied by Fretilin Secretary General Mari Alkatiri, Deputy of Secretary General Jose Reis, National Political Commission (NPC) and all members of Central Committee Fretilin (CCF).

In his speech, Lu-Olo said that told his militants and sympathizers in Nuno-heno Mota Tono, Cunha Village sub-district Pante Makassar Oecusse District, that he will win the presidential election on 09 April 2007.

Furthermore, Lu-Olo said he felt he would win the presidential election start, from the first campaigns in Ossu, Laclubar, Same, Maliana, Suai, Gleno, Liquica and Pante Makassar. In those places he believes that he has the support of people to become president of RDTL. (DN)

Horta: "some are hiding behind Symbols"

After attending a swearing-in ceremony for Armindo Maya to be an Ambassador TL to the Philippines at Palacio das Cinzas on Tuesday 03/04, the presidential candidate 2007-2012 period Jose Ramos

Horta reportedly said that some are hiding behind symbols.

"Does Fretilin hide behind the symbols, does Lu-Olo hide behind the symbols or do I myself hide behind the symbols. They reviewed a new law which said that the presidential candidates have to add symbols freely, so I want the national symbol not party's" Horta said. (DN)

Lucia in Dili: 'Youths have to confirm unity'

The presidential candidate Lucia Lobato called for youths to confirm unity and stop the violence. Lucia spoke to militants and sympathizers in her last campaign rally on Tuesday 03/04, in Kampu Demokrasia Dili.

She revealed that if she is elected, she will be a figure who can return love, peace and national unity which was destroyed during the crisis. (DN)

Horta will work hard with Church

Whilst campaigning in Baucau on Tuesday 03/04 the presidential candidate Jose Ramos Horta, told his militants and sympathizers that if he is elected he will collaborate with the Catholic Church for the reason that the Catholic Church works hard for people to develop this country. He added that State and Church are not separated, both institutions are very important. (DN)

Lasama: 'I will abolish Lorosae and Loromonu'

The presidential candidate Fernando de Araujo Lasama told journalists whilst campaigning in Oecusse on Monday 02/04, that if he is elected he will forge good relations with others sovereignty organs to build and develop Timor Leste.

He also said that if he is elected, he will form a law to regulate the people who use words Lorosae and Loromonu to divide people. (DN)

Lu-Olo gets 70,000 participants

There are 70,000 people who participated during the campaign of presidential election Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo. It is many compared with others presidential candidates.

A press communique received by DN from the Central

Committee of Fretilin (CCF) on Tuesday 03/04, said that there were 10.000 participants who participated in Lu-Olo's first campaign in Ossu, 2.000 in Laclubar, 6.000 in Gleno, 3.000 in Liquica, 7.000 in Maliana, 7.000 in Ainaro, 12.000 in Suai, 7.000 in Zumalai, 6.000 in Aileu and 8.000 in Same and it has not counted Dili and Oecusse yet. (DN)

CNE Receives data on the group that attacked candidate Lasama

The spokesperson of CNE, Father Martinho Gusmco declared to journalists in a press conference on Tuesday 03/04 at CNE office Kintal Boot Dili, that currently CNE has received data about the group who attacked presidential candidate Fernando Lasama in Viqueque in the last few days.

The data is received from international observers and it is broadcast by TV and News Papers which show that people from the government and national parliament attacked the rally of presidential candidate Lasama. (DN)

Afonso de Jesus: PNTL and UNPol will guarantee security

The Commander of PNTL Afonso de Jesus reportedly told DN on Tuesday 03/04 at PNTL HQ Caicoli Dili that PNTL and UNPol will work hard to guarantee security to all people during the presidential and legislative elections.

"Currently PNTL and UNPol are working hard to guarantee and support major security for the general elections, given people's preoccupation on security issues," Afonso said. (DN)

Mal Rerden: I don't forgive Fretilin

After meeting with President Republic Xanana Gusmco on Monday (2/4) at Palacio das Cinzas Caicoli Dili, Commander of ISF Brigadier General Mal Rerden told Journalists that he will not forgive Fretilin's leaders, especially Secretary General Mari Alkatiri in relation to the incident in Ermera-Gleno last Saturday. (TP) Electoral security needs to involve F-FDTL and PNTL

The spokesperson of CNE Father Martinho Gusmco asked that F-FDTL and PNTL be involved during the

campaign until the Election Day. He observed that ISF has no will and just observes the violence which occurs among Timorese, and he does not wish to compare, but it is clear that F-FDTL and PNTL would ensure the security of the electoral process. The Father spoke to journalists on Monday 02/04 at CNE office Kintal Boot Dili. (TP)

CNE has sent Non-Sensitive materials to Districts

The spokesperson of CNE, Father Martinho Gusmco, on Tuesday 03/04 at CNE's office Kintal Boot Dili informed Journalists that CNE has sent non sensitive materials to the polling center offices in 13 districts. He added that the material consisted of foods and inks to support the tasks in each polling center. (TP)

A member of UNPol dies

A member of United Nation Police (UNPol) died on Sunday 01/04 from a heart attack whilst on duty alongside PNTL of Bobonaro district.

UNPol reports from a few days ago mentioned that at about 8:30pm in Maliana a member of UNPol died of a heart attack after accompanying the commander of Bobonaro district to a mudslide.

However the report did not mentioned the identity of the officer. (TP)

CNE calls for candidates to educate

The CNE has called for all candidates to educate his/her militants and sympathizers to understand the atmosphere of a presidential election, the spokesperson of CNE Father Martinho Gusmco told Journalists on Tuesday 03/04 in a press conference at CNE office Kintal Boot Dili.

The Father said that in the presidential campaign, some of Fretilin's militants wanted to support Lu-Olo and others supported Horta and other opposition parties also supported Lu-Olo and Horta. He added that in this presidential election all Timorese have the right to vote and should count on their own mind. (STL)

Ministries support Lu-Olo's campaign

According to sources close to government, each ministry had to aid Lu-Olo's campaign with funds



of up to US\$50.000. In answer to this issue, the member of Central Committee of Fretilin (CCF) Constancia de Jesus said that CCF did not collect money or get financial support from each ministry to activate Lu-Olo's campaign.

Fretilin has its own money and each supporter who works for Fretilin put US\$0.50-US\$5.00 to the kitty every month, she explained to STL on Tuesday 03/04 in National Parliament. (STL)

Horta: Fretilin uses Nakroma for propaganda purposes

After receiving various statements from Fretilin's members, presidential candidate Jose Ramos Horta answered that now it is Fretilin's time to hear from him. Initially when Nakroma Boat arrived in Timor Leste, Fretilin used it for political propaganda in enclave Oecusse. Horta expressed his disappointment at the action. (STL)

PDHJ and PNTL investigating Makadique case

In relation to the assault on supporters of presidential candidate Jose Ramos Horta which resulted in 12 injured in Viqueque-Makadique, Provedoria Direitos Humanus Justica (PDHJ) is coordinating with the Commander of PNTL Afonso de Jesus to investigate this incident, the Deputy of PDHJ Silveiro Baptista told STL on Tuesday at PDHJ's office Caicoli Dili.

He explained that PDHJ was immediately sending its people to monitor this incident. (STL)

Railos: Fretilin manipulates information

The Ex Commander of the Secret armed Group of Fretilin, Vicente da Conceicao alias Railos, claimed that "Fretilin Maputo" manipulate public information saying that people damaged their campaign equipment.

The president of Fretilin Lu-Olo and Secretary General of Fretilin Mari Alkatiri said that Railos and his group damaged or destroyed their campaign equipment when campaigning in Liquica in last few days. In answer to this, Railos said that Fretilin manipulate public information. He added that he built a tent for presidential candidates Lasama's and Horta's campaign not for Lu-Olo so he has the

right to destroy it. (STL)

Horta deserves to be president

Vicente da Conceicao alias Railos from Liquica and Ernesto Fernandes alias Dudu from Ermera reportedly said that to presidential candidate Jose Ramos Horta most deserves to be the president of the republic and that they support him.

>From the 8 presidential candidates he prefers Horta. Horta is the world diplomat and the Nobel Laureate, the Ex Commander of Secret armed Group of Fretilin, Vicente da Conceicao alias Railos, told STL when attending a national conference of CNRT on last Wednesday in Xanana Reading Room, Lecidere, Dili. The Ex Commander of Falintil Dudu agrees. (STL)

Campaigns of presidential candidates deceive constitution

The member of National Parliament Pedro da Costa claimed the presidential campaigns have deviated away from the constitutional mandate of the President; and have been discussing executive programs too much.

"I observe that the programs of some presidential candidates deviate from the mandate of the constitutional powers given to the president".

Costa told STL in National Parliament on Tuesday 03/04.

Costa stated that in the mandate of the constitution, the President guarantees social and democratic institutions, the democratic functioning of the state, symbolizes National Unity, makes good relations with all neighbors and has two councils of state to declare emergency measures and laws. (STL)

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## **East Timor media monitoring**

UNMIT Public Information Unit - April 3, 2007

End of the presidential campaign in Dili, 39 injured

At the end of presidential campaign of presidential candidates Lu-Olo, Horta, Lasama, Francisco Xavier and Joao Carrascalao on Wednesday 04/04 in Dili, 39 supporters were injured, 2 motorcycles were burnt and 4 cars were damaged.

>From these 39 injured, 2 of them were heavily injured and in need of intensive treatment and 37 have returned home.

The majority of injured supporters were injured from Fretilin presidential candidate Lu-Olo, Joao Soares and Domingos da Silva said.

UNMIT spokesperson Allison Cooper said that the UN is still confirming information in relation to the incident at the end of the presidential campaign in Dili. The complete information will be announced publicly on Thursday 05/04.

The 2 motorcycles burnt in Colmera belonged to from Fernando Lasama's supporters and took place when they came with Lasama's poster to attack IDPs in Dili Jardim. And the 4 cars were damaged were from Lu-Olo's supports from Ermera district. (DN and TP)

Julio Pinto: Presidential candidates violate conduct code

The National Observer of the presidential election Julio Thomas Pinto reportedly said that 8 presidential candidates have violated the Conduct Code of the campaign. He added that during the electoral campaign in 12 districts, 8 presidential candidates did not discuss policy, instead choosing to insult one another.

He stated that in the Conduct Code the campaigns have to focus on campaign issues and are not for insulting other candidates. Otherwise candidates have violated the conduct that they themselves signed. (DN)

Xavier in Dili: 'I am ready to serve East Timor'

The presidential candidate Francisco Xavier told his supporters at the end of his electoral campaign on Thursday 04/04 at ASDT office in Lecidere Dili, that he is prepared to dedicate himself totally to govern and serve the people of Timor Leste.

He revealed that if he is elected he will totally dedicate himself to make all people of Timor Leste happy and free from suffering. (DN)

Lu-Olo in Dili: All of us obey the constitution

After campaigning in all districts, the presidential candidate Lu-Olo finished in Dili on Thursday 04/04 in Motor Cross Stadium Delta Circuit Manleuana, Dili. To his all his supporters he affirmed that whilst he is a presidential candidate he is also a simple person who comes from the East region and after long reflection he decided to be a candidate himself to guarantee peace and stability for the people of Timor Leste.

He also revealed that if he is elected he will obey and act within the constitution, and the laws which apply in this country. (DN)

Horta in Dili: 'I respect veterans and underground movement'

The presidential candidate Jose Ramos Horta told his supporters through his speech at the end of the electoral campaign on Thursday 04/04 at Municipal Stadium Dili, that he respects veterans and underground movements (DN)

Lasama in Dili: 'I approve a law to consolidate F-FDTL'

The presidential candidate Fernando Lasama told his supporters in his final speech at the end of electoral campaign on Thursday 04/04 in Democracy Field Dili, that if he is elected, he will approve a law to consolidate F-FDTL. (DN)

STAE hands ballot papers over to districts coordinators

STAE handed the ballot papers and signing boards over to the electoral coordinators of 13 districts to bring to each districts' polling centers.

After handing the items over, the Director of STAE, Thomas Cabral, told Journalists that the district Police and CNE accompanied him to bring the items to districts in anticipation of any trouble.

He mentioned that the ballot papers total 109.3950 and have been distributed to each district namely

Aileu 24750 with 21484 voters, Ainaro 32950 (28651 voters), Baucau 70950 (60552 voters), Bobonaro 54550 (47425 voters), Covalima 32900 (28581 voters), Dili 114150 (99260 voters), Ermera 62650 (54452 voters), Liquica 37400 (31191 voters), Lautem 35900 (32511 voters), Manufahi 27400 (23809 voters), Manatuto (22143 voters), Oecusse 38350 (33434 voter) and Viqueque 45500 (39529). In total 504 polling centers and 720 polling station. (DN, STL and TP)

PNTL is prepared to ensure the security of the elections

After handing the items over to the electoral coordinators of 13 districts the Commander of PNTL Inspector Afonso de Jesus reportedly said that PNTL is prepared to ensure security for the upcoming presidential election on 09 April 2007.

He added that presidential election is enormous so it will be the difficult for PNTL. PNTL is the national security of Timor Leste and it is prepared to ensure the security in election, in order the election could be well organized in the peaceful manners and calm. (DN)

Xanana participates in Horta's campaign

As a leader of CNRT, Xanana participated in the campaigning of presidential candidate Jose Ramos Horta on Thursday 04/04 at Stadium Municipal, Dili. Xanana did not comment on his participation. It shows that he gives major support to Horta to replace him in 2007-2012 period as President of RDTL. (TP)

Lasama will reassemble F-FDTL and PNTL The presidential candidate Fernando Lasama told his supporters in his speech at the end of his electoral campaign on Thursday 04/04 in Democracy Field Dili, that if he is elected, he will reassemble F-FDTL and PNTL. (TP)

Tilman: Ought to receive the result of the election

After finishing his campaign in 10 districts, the presidential candidate Manuel Tilman called for the people of Timor Leste, including the military to accept the results of the election.

He urged the Timorese in the spirit of democracy to receive the result of the election in the a peaceful manner. Tilman made the comments to journalists at the KOTA office in Kampung Alor om Dili. (TP)

Xanana votes to Horta

After presenting Horta's campaign on Thursday 04/04 in the Dili Stadium, President Republic Xanana Gusmao told Journalists that there is no option for him to vote for other candidates. He said that he wants to vote for Horta so he attends Horta's campaign.

"Presidential candidate Jose Ramos Horta is an excellent figure so I will choose Horta to reinstate me". Xanana declared. (STL)

Lu-Olo's supporters is thrown stones in Comoro-Aitarak Laran, 3 injured

The campaign schedule of presidential candidate Francisco Guterres alias Lu-Olo has coincided with other presidential candidates namely Xavier Amaral, Jose Ramos Horta and Joao Carrascalao.

In relation to the overlap schedule among the four candidates, the supporters of presidential candidate Lu-Olo threw stones in Comoro Aitarak Laran and the incident resulted in three injured Fretilin members. Lu-Olo's supporters threw stones when they yelled and shouted Lu-Olo's name, showed Lu-Olo's picture and displayed Fretilin's flag when passing through Aitarak Laran.

The incident happened yesterday and was closely guarded by UNPol (GNR) and Royal Malaysian Police (RMP). (STL)