

# NTA – Press Clippings on NTT

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*Note: All items appearing in this service have been abbreviated. Items from the Kupang Post and Kompas are synopses translated by the editor (Denis Fisher)..Any comments or suggestions welcome – please send to [d-dfisher@homemail.com.au](mailto:d-dfisher@homemail.com.au)*

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## **1 Young voices (infant deaths in NTT)**

*Jakarta Post 23/7/08, Editorial*

..today -- National Children's Day -- we're reminded once again that many children are happier than others, and that some are not around for the celebrations.

This year, seven-month-old Marcelina Sulla of West Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara, died. In the past six months, 21 other infants in the province have died of malnutrition combined with other diseases, including tuberculosis and diarrhea.

In the province's 2008 budget, an amount equal to about 40 US cents per child is allocated to fight malnutrition. Compare that to the billions of rupias allotted for the renovation of the governor's official residence.

This example offers only a glimpse into the country's failure to issue and uphold laws on children's welfare. Under the law on child protection, a parent is obligated "to ensure their child's health since pregnancy." But for regular moms and dads, the state's other obligation -- that children be allowed to "freely rest (and) play" -- raises questions as to whether parents should share the blame for exposing children to 12-hour-long school days, extra lessons, national exams -- not to mention homework.....

But what has gained little notice in this law, passed in October 2002, is a child's right "to express their opinions and have the right to have their opinions heard." This is perhaps an alien concept to many of us raised in a "father knows best" environment. However, we take extra notice when a gathering of children issues a statement.

In an ongoing congress themed "Saving Children From Injustice" being held in West Java, 10 child delegates are expected to issue a declaration today. Let's listen to what they have to say. Their statement might provide a clue to the needs and hopes of the next generation...

Whether it is families, neighborhoods, or the government listening, the children's voices will teach us what it means to consider children's best interests, as stated in international and national laws...*(more)*..

## **2 Special Protection for Children Needed**

*Kupang Post 23/7/08*

KUPANG: The Chairman of the Institute for the Protection of Children (LPA) of NTT, Prof Mia P Noach PhD, in remarks marking Children's Day on 23/7, said that the various well publicised acts of violence against children had to be seriously addressed. The government, NGOs and other stakeholders should champion a program of special protection for NTT's children. Dr Noach noted that young children (between 2 and 5 years) had recently been targets of sexual abuse. She called for the "children friendly schools" supported by UNICEF in Kupang to be replicated in other kabupatens in NTT so that children could feel safe at school. LPA monitoring, supported by UNICEF, had shown that much of the violence against children occurred in the home. All violence against children, whether it be in the home, at school or in public, should be brought before the courts. Dr Noach argued that a special space be set aside for legal proceedings involving children (from initial investigation though to judgement) in order to avoid putting children under stress.

LPA called on local governments to earmark funds for making parents and teachers aware of children's rights, hopefully leading to more caring treatment of children by parents and teachers. Dr Noach welcomed the declaration of Kupang as a "Children Friendly City" in 2008 and hoped it would lead to programs supporting children (e.g. special children's play centres and school transportation). LPA hoped that other kabupatens/cities in NTT would follow Kupang's lead.

LPA was also concerned that, although primary school (SD) numbers were quite high, the number going on to junior secondary school (SLTP) was falling either because of dropouts or for economic reasons. Local governments should work to reverse this trend, by encouraging and facilitating SD graduates to continue to SLTP, including by way of bursaries for the talented. In this way the level of people's education would rise in the next 5 years. Good and qualified teachers should be employed so that children enjoyed going to school. Notable teaching achievement should be given incentives.

In regard to health, serious attention needed to be paid to children's nutrition. Mothers had to be taught how to provide nourishing food from local products. Students should have a medical examination at the start of each new school year to detect health problems early and they should be provided with free medication....(*more*)

### **3 A Budget Responsive to Children** (Comment marking National Children's Day)

*Kupang Post 24/7/08*

Violation of children's rights is an almost daily occurrence in NTT – 55 cases, all involving female victims, have been in the hands of the Police's Child and Female Services Unit in 2008 (up to June). The law proscribes the employment of children under 15, but in 2005 child workers in NTT numbered 23 105, of whom 18.9% had never been to school, 40.4% had not finished primary school and only 1.35% had completed junior high school or equivalent. Social data is also disturbing. In December 2006 the number of deserted children in NTT was recorded as being 55 667 (11 669 being below 5 years old). 1 094 children had been subject to mistreatment or violence, while child delinquents numbered 7 454. There were also 11 889 street children in NTT in 2006 (of whom 2 000 were in Kupang). A further 24 803 were listed as handicapped. Of all these children only 5 509 (4.89% of the total) were being attended to in institutions – the rest (107 067) were at large. In respect of health, a poor child nutrition record has made NTT well known overseas. In 2006 as many as 77 malnourished children died. In 2007 the figure was 10 and in 2008 (up to 24 June) 24 (all children under 5 yrs for 07-08) .

From an analysis of NTT government documents (budget etc) we know for sure that it does not yet have the interests of children at heart. It is a straight out lie to claim children's rights are being met, without having a budget which is responsive to children. After all, a budget translates government policies into practicalities for the benefit of the people. And who are the people? 37.5% of Indonesians (80 508 900) are children – citizens who have rights equal to those of others. But what is happening? Most of our provincial budget is spent on physical development, with precious little of the money allocated for the empowerment of children having a direct impact on children's interests. For example, only 2.42% is allocated to health services (compared to 26.3% for Settlements and Regional Infrastructure). How can the health sector address the malnutrition of thousands of children (let alone issues relating to the health of mothers and the newly born) with such a small budget? The allocated amount is only 3% of the amount estimated to be needed to address malnutrition. It is thus a nonsense to say the budget is responsive to children. The NTT government is half-hearted about children, still regarding them as "little people" who can be passed over.

On National Children's Day, we should all ask ourselves what we have done for our children. The NTT executive and legislature should ask themselves how much of the budget is allocated to meet children's rights (e.g. education, health, freedom from conflict, decent housing) and for children who have HIV/AIDS or who are child-workers, homeless or victims of trafficking....(*more*).

### **4 Weekelo Pier to Make Sumba more Accessible**

*Kupang Post 24/7/08*

KUPANG: The construction of a pier at Weekelo for cargo/ferry boats, begun in 2003, will hopefully be completed and ready for use later this year, thereby reducing the isolation of West Southwest Sumba (SBD), West Sumba, Central Sumba and Sumba Island. The pier, which will be able to take delivery of large trucks and containers, will facilitate movement of people and cargo to and from Sumba both to the west (e.g. Sape) and to the east (Kupang). This national standard pier will be equipped to accommodate ships in any sea conditions, by rising with high tides and lowering with low tides...*(more)*.

## **5 Villagers of Wakaspir Timur Still Isolated**

*Kupang Post 24/7/08*

KALABAHI: People in the region of the village of Wakaspir Timur (Alor Kabupaten) are bemoaning their isolation because there is no road to the village, making it difficult for locals to market their produce (potentially kemiri nuts, coffee, coconuts and vanilla). Lack of a road is also claimed to be preventing potential mining in the area (e.g. for gold). Only sea transport is currently available to the villagers ...*(more)*

## **6 Oelbubuk NTT: Possible Wind Power Farm Site**

*The Jakarta Post, 25/7/08*

JAKARTA: ...At a workshop on wind-generated power sources here on Wednesday, experts said the government had been slow to provide initiatives for wind power industry players. This had led the public to doubt the government's commitment to adopt alternative energy sources to reduce its dependency on fossil fuels, they said. According to the Coordinating Ministry for the Economy, wind power currently contributes around 0.5 Megawatts to the national grid, but could potentially contribute up to 9.3 Megawatts, meaning only around 5.4 percent of the country's potential wind power is being utilized.

The workshop observed a wind power feasibility study of Oelbubuk village in NTT. The village had been noted for its potential to become a wind farm, with average wind speeds of 7.5 meters per second at 50 meters above the ground -- capable of generating an estimated 3.762 kWh per square meter. The village was "one of many potential wind farm sites in Indonesia". ....*(more)*

## **7 Development of Maize Sector Deserves Support**

*Kupang Post 25/7/08*

KUPANG: According to Dr Fred Benu, lecturer in agriculture, Nusa Cendana University (Undana), the NTT governor's proposal to develop maize production should be supported by all concerned (the legislature, local governments, the private sector and farmers). Maize had long since been NTT's most important commodity, but (unlike in Gorontalo province) its development had not been consistent. What was now needed was not talk/discussion, nor just political will but political commitment in terms of the budget. The development program should be carefully thought out covering production, processing and marketing.

A colleague of Dr Fred Benu's, Leta Rafael MSc, pointed to the numerous factors that would determine the success of a maize development program: the ecological and socio-

political environments, infrastructural support, institutional aspects especially agricultural extension services, human resources, agreement among the stakeholders on what needed to be done, support from the local parliament and budgetary resources. He thought that if all these factors worked in synergy, the program would succeed. Quoting Dept of Agriculture figures, he pointed out that the area planted with maize had fallen from 296 892 hectares in 2004 to 253 220 in 2007 and productivity per hectare had also fallen from 23.51 quintals in 2004 to 23.1 in 2006. He pointed to things that needed to be done: establish why maize acreage and productivity had declined; inventory maize plantation potential, resources to sustain it (human resources, infrastructure etc), organisms injurious to plants (e.g. insects) and socio-cultural issues; consider the availability of markets with good prices, the development of village industries using corn as inputs (corn based animal fodder etc.) and the framing of pre- and post-harvest support processes to forestall crop failure...(more).

## **8 NTT: the Most Comfortable Place to be Corrupt**

*Kupang Post 25/7/08*

Manila-based Fidel Hardjo (staff member of Trinity Broadcasting Network)

It is most comfortable to be corrupt in NTT because 90% of corrupt people go scot-free (to quote senior *Kompas* journalist Maria Margaretha Hartiningsih)

NTT has existed for almost 50 years but you can count on your fingers the number of corrupt people who have been caught. Between 2003 and 2007, according to findings of an audit of NTT by the Finance and Development Audit Agency (BPKP), losses to the state from 1 957 known corruption cases amounted to Rp17 trillion. Indonesian Corruption Watch (ICW) ranks NTT the fifth most corrupt and fourth poorest province in Indonesia (with 27.5% or 160 000 of its population being poor). Corruption statistics are a disappointment, but even more disappointing was the failure of the new governor to put corruption eradication on the agenda for his recent meeting with bupati etc. It is not that we are not able to eradicate corruption but rather that we lack the will to do so. But do we not have professional judges? And where are our clever policemen and prosecutors? They are state officials who go through a tough selection process and are chosen in the context of having checks and balances.....(more)

## **9 Kebamoto: Inspiring NTT students to succeed**

Emanuel Dapa Loka, *Jakarta Post 28/7/08*

*(Edited version)* His childhood was far from picture perfect. He had no school uniform, ate mangoes from the garden of his school friend when hungry, and often there was nothing but a few edible tubers for dinner. Studying was nearly impossible as he had no books; he relied solely on his hearing and memory during classes. As his parents were poor and illiterate, there were limited avenues for him to pursue intellectual activities. Kebamoto, one of five siblings, was born in West Sumba on Jan. 25, 1963, and is now a lecturer at the University of Indonesia (UI)'s School of Mathematics and Natural Sciences.

"To be honest, when I was a child I witnessed poverty in my village and I wanted to make up for this poverty. We never had a nice meal. That's why I was prompted to read

diligently." Kebamoto said in those days newspapers and books were very scarce. To satisfy his love of reading, Kebamoto would read old newspaper scraps to "broaden his horizons" and found that there was another world outside his village. He also read books the school received as part of an educational package from the government.

Despite the odds, Kebamoto maintained excellent marks in school; his teachers advised his parents to send him to university. Luckily, his parents agreed and Kebamoto was able to continue his studies. His three elder siblings were school dropouts. As soon as he earned his bachelor's degree, he began working as a physics lecturer at his former university. He completed his master's degree at UI and graduated in 1992. Through another scholarship, he earned his PhD at Munchen University's School of Chemistry, West Germany, in 2001.

Today, aside from teaching, Kebamoto writes books and articles for both local and international publications, and conducts research. He also devotes part of his time, energy and spirit to empowering the youth of NTT. Since 2004, he has personally involved himself with schools in NTT through cooperation with the local administration. He has been involved in coaching both teachers and students from elementary to secondary school levels on how to teach and study physics. Several of his students have received awards in national and international science competitions. In 2005, four of his students from Manggarai regency (West Flores) and one from Ende regency, were accepted into UI. Several other high school students from East Sumba he has groomed have gone on to study at other universities around the country.

Kebamoto said he felt happy when he heard success stories from the teachers and students he has coached. He would like to be involved in the economic development of NTT

## **10 Heading for an NTT of Excellence**

*Kupang Post 26/7/08*

NTT's poor image is legendary and jokes about it are manifold. People variously say NTT stands for Nusa Terus Terbelakang (Nusa Ever Backward) or Nanti Tuhan Tolong (God will Soon Help) or Nikmat Tiada Tara (Pleasure Without Equal). We cannot put limits on the "meaning" of NTT, but we can work together to show that NTT is not like that, but rather an area of potential, rich in resources and able to meet the needs of its people. Important in this regard is the new governor's call to put poverty and backwardness behind us. We need to start fighting that battle from right now through excellent programs being planned. Among those programs is the proposal to develop maize production. The full details are as yet unknown but everyone welcomes the idea. Maize is the mainstay of the people of NTT, so its development will have a direct impact on the community....*(more)*

## **11 Four Star Hotel to be Built in Labuan Bajo**

*Kupang Post 26/7/08*

LABUAN BAJO: According to the Bupati of Manggarai Barat, Drs W F Pranda, an eight storey 4 star international standard hotel – to be named Hotel Bintang Jayakarta Flores –

will soon be built in a beach area in Labuan Bajo by a Jakarta businessman. It would supplement the already existing 6 storey hotel in the town and would hopefully increase the flow of tourists to the area...*(more)*

## **12 Villagers of Kodi Consume Stream Water**

*Kupang Post 26/7/08*

WAIBUBAK: -- The population of Kodi (Kabupaten of Sumba Barat Daya) still have as their main source of water the Bondo river, which is also used for bathing, doing washing and watering animals as well as by fishermen's motor boats. The Camat of Kodi told *KP* that the government had put in a 7 km long pipe to bring water from Waike but it provided water for only a few months because there was no satisfactory water reservoir. When the pipeline was no longer supplying water, local people started to dismantle it to sell the pipes. Another project to supply water was being developed...*(more)*

## **13 Fifth Anniversary of Manggarai Barat: Water still a Hurdle**

**Kupang Post 26/7/08**

Labuan Bajo is a well known tourist destination, but a continuing problem there is fresh water supply, especially in the dry season. Some people (in Ujung village) say they have not had running water since 2006, but they still pay local Water Authority (PDAM) bills every month and their taps are simply ornaments. ...A citizen of the Village of Papagarang Island (Komodo) relates how his village has to buy water from Labuan Bajo. The water arrives by boat and villagers have to pay Rp2 500-3 000 for a 20 litre jerry can full. The 1 995 inhabitants of Pasir Putih village (embracing Kanawa and the islands of Mesa and Seraya) also have no sources of drinkable water and have to pay a lot for water. The local government water engineer admits that surface water facilities servicing Labuan Bajo require upgrading. The city's existing water pipe system also needs repairing at an estimated cost of R10 billion.

## **14 Let's Hope Medical Faculty at Undana is Not too Ambitious**

**Kupang Post 29/7/08**

Hard work for over a year on the part of the leadership of Nusa Cendana University (Undana) finally paid off when, in a decision dated 11/7/08, the Department of National Education approved the establishment of a Faculty of Medicine (FK) at Undana. According to the Rector of Undana (Frans U Datta) the purpose of the FK will be meet the need for doctors in NTT. At present there is one doctor for every 14 000 people in NTT and the gap continues to grow (by comparison, Australia has 1 doctor per every 800 people). Another problem is that doctors graduating out of Java who are sent to NTT tend not to stay long, which is also the case with specialists. We should be grateful for this development but hope that it is not an overly ambitious program, as the cost per student will be very high and the laboratory facilities are not yet up to par. There are other difficulties ahead as well, so it will need sustained effort by Undana to produce, in 5 or 6 years time, fully competent doctors who are accepted by the local community.

## **15 Stop Blaming Teachers**

*Kupang Post 31/7/08*

KUPANG: NTT Governor Frans Lebu hopes that all concerned will stop blaming

teachers for the poor quality of education and low percentage of graduates from school in NTT. Education was the responsibility of many parties, from the government (provincial and local) to educational units, parents and society. Greater attention needed to be paid to teachers – their competence, their professionalism and their welfare – and government had to put in place programs to upgrade their qualifications, training and professionalism...*(more)*.

#### **16 43 Suffering From Leprosy**

*Kupang Post 31/7/08*

Information from the Health Service indicates that 43 people are still suffering from leprosy, mainly in the Komodo area of the Kabupaten of Manggarai Barat. An infectious diseases spokesperson has commented that the cases in question go back several years and have all been treated (and are thus no longer infectious). Another spokesperson said the disease was being constantly monitored and those with symptoms were urged to seek medical treatment at a community health centre (puskesmas).

#### **17 Oxfam helps Uprooted People in West Timor**

*Kupang Post 2/8/08*

KUPANG: Aid to Uprooted People (ATUP) together with its partners including Oxfam has implemented several successful aid projects for the people of West Timor in the form of reservoirs, water reticulation pipes, bathrooms and toilets (as well as goats and packets of garden tools). According to Oxfam coordinator Frans Pantur, the programs had helped 2 000 newly arrived families and 500 local families in the kabupatens of Kupang and Belu. The programs had been running for 18 months..

#### **18 378 HIV/AIDS Sufferes in NTT**

*Kupang Post 2/8/08*

KUPANG: To June 2008 the number of people who have contracted HIV/AIDS in NTT, since its first detection in East Flores in 1997, reached 378, of whom 103 have reportedly died. 50% of current sufferers were in their productive years, according to NTT's Deputy Governor, and thus the disease was affecting the quality of NTT's human resources. Control of the disease, he argued, fell not just to the government but to all sectors of society including NGOs concerned about the disease.

#### **19 UNICEF Helps with Clean Water in Desa Kuneman**

*Kupang Post 2/8/08*

KALABAHIL: Projects supported by UNICEF and the Kecamatan Development Program (PPK) will mean that by December 2008 the inhabitants of Kuneman will no longer have to travel around three kms to collect water from a stream. The programs will see the installation of water pipes throughout the village. There is said to be an adequate source of the constant water (Magoinanmang) even in the dry season. A committee of villagers has gathered together local materials and manpower in support of the two programs.