



**NTA**  
East Indonesia Aid

*Note: All the following items from the Pos Kupang, the Pos Flores and the Timor Express are synopses translated from the Indonesian by the editor (Denis Fisher). Thus they should not be regarded as literal translations of the original articles, though the translator takes pains not to go beyond the meaning and nuances in the original articles. The items from the Jakarta Post are only slightly edited versions of the originals. Any comments, suggestions or feedback on this clipping service are welcome and should be sent to [d-dfisher@homemail.com.au](mailto:d-dfisher@homemail.com.au).*

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**Glossary of Indonesian terms/acronyms:**

*puskesmas:* community health centre (usually at *kecamatan* or *kabupaten* level).

*pustu:* auxiliary *puskesmas* (usually at village level).

*posyandu:* integrated health service post

*(anak) balita:* children under 5 years old

**1 Hospital in Sabu an Abode for Goats and Horses**

*Timor Express, 25/3/09*

Sabu: The Sabu Raijua regional hospital (RSUD) in Menia village, constructed in 2006 at a cost of billions of rupiahs (= \$US tens of thousands), has so far not provided any health services to the local people, according to the *camat* of West Sabu (Wempy Immanuel Riwu). Instead, it is an abode for goats and horses. Wempy said that one of its rooms had been prepared as an office for the acting *bupati* for the new Sabu Raijua *Kabupaten* to be inaugurated on 26/5/09. Local residents complained to *TE* about the government's half-hearted approach to the RSUD, as it wouldn't even build a fence to keep animals out of the building. More importantly, the health needs of the local people were not being

met. People requiring intensive treatment had to travel to Kupang – ironically there were cases of people dying *en route*.....(more)...

## **2 Pustu in Kotenwalang Abandoned**

*Flores Post*, 31/3/09

Larantuka: The Kotenwalang *pustu* in Latonliwo village, Tanjung Bunga *Kecamatan*, West Flores (Flotim) *Kabupaten*, built in 2005, has had no medical staff except for its first year of existence and since then has effectively not been providing health services, according to a local resident speaking to *FP* on 28/3. For now the *pustu* was an empty building. Thus sick people had to walk up to 30 kms to be treated in the Waklibang *Puskesmas* or visit a local private nurse at a cost of Rp50 000 ( $\pm$ US\$5) per adult visit (too expensive for local residents). The *pustu*'s lack of staff had been flagged with the Flotim *Bupati*, when he visited the village in Oct '08. He had promised to pursue the issue with the *Kabupaten*'s health service but nothing had yet happened... (more)

## **3 54 Pustu in Kupang Kabupaten Not Yet Functioning**

*Kupang Post* 8/4/09

Kupang: According to the head of Kupang *Kabupaten*'s Health Service (Dr I Wayan Ari Wijana), as many as 54 of the *kabupaten*'s *pustu*, in place since 2007, are not yet functioning because they do not have village midwives and 11 *kabupaten puskesmas* do not have doctors. Ari Wijana was speaking at an event marking the arrival of 7 doctors and 7 midwives just assigned to work in Kupang *Kabupaten*. He said the new arrivals would be placed in *pustu* and *puskesmas* needing doctors and midwives. For the rest, he was working with the Kupang Health Polytechnic to get details of final year nursing and midwifery students (originating from Kupang *Kabupaten*) so that he could suggest to the Department of Health that they be contracted to work in the *kabupaten* for two years (and hopefully longer). He would adopt a similar approach in respect of doctors. The *Kabupaten*'s aim was to have 80% of its *pustu* fully activated by 2015.....(more).

## **4 Best Efforts Should be Made for NTT's Children**

*Kupang Post*, 8/4/09

Kupang: The head of UNICEF's Kupang office, Dr Virginia W Kadarsan, told a workshop on alternative childcare programs in Kupang on 6/4 that she hoped NTT would do all it possibly could to maximize the welfare of children. She commented that the security and welfare of children were under daily threat from violence, harassment and sexual exploitation. They also lived with the threat of being caught up in the trafficking of children, being left alone or held in confinement. In addition there was a low level of understanding of the system of justice in respect of children. All this was aggravated by poverty, social mores, a lack of government services and poor quality education, which combined to make for an unsatisfactory environment for the protection of children. Preventing and taking action against violence, exploitation and harassment were key steps in efforts to preserve and develop children's lives and enable them to enjoy the dignity befitting human beings....(more)...

## **5 Water: Panite's Main Worry**

*Kupang Post*, 8/4/09

Kupang: Water continues to be the main problem for the residents of Panite and

surrounding region of South Amanuban, South Central Timor *Kabupaten*. The area has polluted water in the rainy season and serious fresh water shortages in the dry season. The diarrhoea which plagues local residents each year occurs because of the water problem. Most recently 2 people died and 216 others became ill from diarrhoea which they are thought to have contracted from consuming ice blocks made from polluted water mixed with coconut milk. In a meeting on 4/4 with the doctor servicing Panite's *Puskesmas*, NTT's deputy governor Esthon commented that the provincial government had succeeded in convincing Jakarta to allocate to NTT one of Indonesia's three water desalination trucks so that safe water could be provided to places like Panite (the truck was parked outside Panite's *puskesmas* at the time Esthon was speaking)....(more).....

## **6 East Sumba Cattle and Horse Production Declines**

*Kupang Post*, 8/4/09

Waingapu: Over the two years 2006-08 the number of cattle and horses owned by the people of East Sumba (Sumtim) *Kabupaten*, declined by 7.9% and 6.8% respectively, according to the head of the *kabupaten's* Livestock Service, Robert Gana (though buffalo numbers increased by 8.2%). Thus cattle numbers were down from 42 032 head in 2006 to 35.872 in 2008. Gana attributed the declining stock levels to increased population (locally and nationally) leading to ever increasing demand for Sumtim's cattle outside NTT (given that Sumtim was one of the mainstays of meat production nationally). Gana told *KP* that, in an effort to reverse the declining numbers of cattle, the local government was urging people to intensify their production techniques by using the *paron* system (i.e. tethering animals for a period before sale in order to feed them by hand and fatten them up). Using the *paron* system could double the weight of an animal (from 300-400 kgs to 700-800kgs) which would mean that the number of animals being sold would decrease without any diminution of the quality or weight of sale shipments. The Livestock Service was also tightening up on the export of livestock, trying to ensure that only steers/stallions and non-productive cows/mares were shipped out of NTT. Also animal health workers were being trained and placed in villages/*kelurahan*....(more)..

## **7 Much Land Still Uncultivated in Alor**

*Timor Express*, 8/4/09

Kalabahi: According to the *Bupati*, Simeon Th Pally, the *Kabupaten* of Alor has quite extensive land for dry and wetland farming, but much of the land is still not being fully utilized. Th Pally was speaking at a gathering in the village of Nailang (Northeast Alor *Kecamatan*) marking the successful harvesting of an experimental plot planted with the N35 hybrid variety of maize (which produced 6.5 tonnes per ha.). He stressed the nutritional value of maize as a food and its saleability as a commodity, urging the villagers to plant more maize (ideally 2 ha per farmer) including on land so far uncultivated. In that context the government stood ready to provide all possible assistance in respect of production and marketing. Efforts would also be made to attract investors to help lift production. The villagers told the *Bupati* of their problems in respect of agricultural equipment, extension services and transportation. Th Pally undertook to address those issues....(more).....

## **8 Anthrax-tainted meat sends residents to hospital**

*Jakarta Post*, 11/4/09

Kupang: At least 47 villagers in Timor Tengah Selatan regency in NTT were hospitalized after consuming meat from a cow carcass believed to be tainted with anthrax. The residents of Tetaf village in West Amanuban district complained of diarrhea, vomiting and high fever. Head of the veterinary health at the provincial animal husbandry agency, Benyamin Bili, confirmed Thursday the incident in which dozens of villagers had to be treated after consuming meat from the dead cow. "There are no fatalities in the incident," he said. "Such food poisoning cases after consuming beef often occur in the area." He added 19 people were being treated at the Niki-niki community health center while the other residents were receiving outpatient treatment.

Another food poisoning case occurred at Takari district in Kupang regency, where 28 residents had to be treated after consuming pork. "The residents ate the pork at a mourning house," said provincial health agency head Stefanus Bria Seran.

## **9 WFP's "Disastrous" Biscuits**

*Kupang Post* 14/4/09 by Julianus Akoit

On 14 April, despite the current ban on the further distribution of biscuits under WFP's biscuits for schools program, the State Primary School in Naiola (North Central Timor (TTU) *Kabupaten*) was found to be still handing out the biscuits to its pupils, who were happily them. In response to a *KP* journalist, the headmaster said he had not received advice from the *Kabupaten* that distribution of the biscuits should be put on hold. He said the school had distributed the biscuits on four occasions without incident. He was shocked and afraid when *KP* informed him of the ban and the reasons for it.

In fact, the "disastrous biscuits" issue already raised its head in Belu *Kabupaten* in November 2008, when some primary school pupils almost swallowed foreign matter when eating the biscuits. The facts of that case were kept under wraps by WFP and Care International to prevent them becoming public or appearing in the media. If parents asked about the issue, it was explained away as an ordinary technical error. Indeed Care International went on to lobby schools in support of the dependability of the biscuits.

This conduct on the part of these two international institutions is regrettable and deserves universal criticism. Why push for the continued distribution of these disastrous biscuits? Was the intention to wreak misfortune on *balita*, school pupils and expectant mothers? Why were the biscuits distributed in NTT only (and not NTB)? Was all this deliberate? This could turn out to be a criminal case and it is incumbent on law enforcement agencies to investigate it. There are aspects of the case smacking of criminal activity, viz the deliberateness and planning involved in distributing food endangering the health and safety of children.

WFP and Care International have knowingly violated the provisions the Convention of the Rights of the Child, which provides *inter alia* that any food or other assistance given to children should accord top priority to their health and should not endanger their lives. Indonesian Law No 23/1992 on Health *inter alia* proscribes (in Section 21)

the distribution of food and drink which is a danger to health and provides that those found guilty of doing so shall be punishable with a prison term or 15 years and a fine of Rp.300m (±US\$30 000).

As for the manufacturer of the biscuits, PT Tiga Pilar Sejati, the provisions of Law No. 8/1999 on Consumer Protection are relevant. That law provides *inter alia* that consumers are entitled to security and safety when consuming goods (and services) and to replacements or compensation in the case of faulty products.

What about the police investigations? So far they seem to be at a standstill. The police may even be afraid to interrogate staff from WFP and Care International. Even the Director of PT Tiga Pilar Sejati has not been questioned. Is TTU's police chief waiting for his own child to swallow a pin while eating one of the biscuits before taking action? Let him answer that....(*more*)....

## **10 Whither the Poor in NTT?**

*Kupang Post*, 17/4/09 opinion piece by M A Therik SE, MSi, a member of the *Forum Academia of NTT* and a PhD candidate (Development Studies) at Satya Wacana Christian University (UKSW) Salatiga.

When NTT is branded as one of the poorest provinces in Indonesia, our reaction is not one of concern and of wanting to be proactive on the issue, but rather we question the statistics used, express doubts about the pollsters involved or even argue over the definition of poverty. It seems that what we are taking issue with is the use of the qualifier “most” before the words “poor” and “corrupt” when applied to NTT.

Moreover we always seem to have an alibi (e.g. central and regional governments have always had programs aimed at overcoming the problem). My answer to all that is that, if poverty is on the increase, the government's development strategies have failed and we clearly need to do more.

Taking our cue from the approach of the Bangladeshi 2006 Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus and his Grameen Bank, and from the ideas contained in Graham Hancock's book, *Lord of Poverty, the Power, Prestige and Corruption of the International Aid Business*, we should own up to past “sins” and proactively seek solutions, avoiding sensitive reactions and playing the blame game.

The international economic crisis is seriously affecting Indonesia's economic growth, trade and employment. Of most concern is the fact that poverty is expected to grow. Imperceptibly an economic and poverty tsunami has hit Indonesia. Jakarta is preparing a response in the form of a stimulus package and the provincial governments of East Java, Gorontalo and the like are developing innovative action programs to meet the situation. But what of NTT? No one knows, but there are no obvious signs that NTT's government (either at the provincial or *kabupaten* level) is on the job or at the ready. In the face of the current economic crisis, people everywhere, not just NTT, are turning to government for answers. What strategies can we now use?

I suggest that, given the urgency of the crisis, immediate measures should include: as rapid as possible expenditure of the 2009 budget (with rewards being given for quick action and penalties for tardiness); no new government vehicles (unless of specific service to the public) should be purchased and no new development of official residences should be undertaken in 2009; and travel by officials should also be limited. The money saved by these measures should be re-directed into projects empowering the people. A special meeting of all district heads should be held immediately to encourage them to compete with each other in adopting innovative strategies for the expenditure of 2009's budget. Managers must be absolutely professional in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. True synergy, not just coordination, of various activities undertaken must be developed. Above all no corruption!

We must eschew looking at the poor as passive and static but look more to what the poor have already. All of them have potential and upon that we must build. Javanese farmers are poor because of lack of land, but in NTT there is plenty of land. Given our farmers' fixation on maize and rice, dry land is too quickly dismissed as unproductive. But the Ambonese hardly grow maize, rice or edible root crops, concentrating rather on tree crops (cloves, nutmeg and various fruits) and horticulture. Why not in NTT? Dry land can become a plantation of cajuput and teak trees. *Think globally, act locally, start now or never...(more)*

## **11 Farmers of Central Sumba Face Substantial Rice Crop Failure**

*Kupang Post, 17/4/09*

Waibakul: The unusually low rainfall this year in Central Sumba *Kabupaten* looks set to almost halve rain fed rice production from 4 000 ha. in Katikutana *Kecamatan*, especially around Anakalang. The government is moving to assist affected farmers by urging them to plant horticultural plants (nuts, tubers etc) as replacements for the failed crops and providing them with assistance to do so (in the form of seedlings and extension services)...*(more)*

## **12 UNWFP Humanitarian Aid Sabotaged: Investigation**

*The Jakarta Post, 18/4/09*

An independent investigation has found that humanitarian aid sent by the United Nations' World Food Programme (UNWFP) to malnourished people in East Nusa Tenggara was sabotaged, but could not determine who was responsible. The investigation was carried out by the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) after sewing and injection needles, pins and pieces of broken glass were found inside packets of biscuits distributed to elementary students in North Timor Tengah between Feb. 23 and March 20.

The deputy country director of the UNWFP, Brasly Bussefe, said in a press conference here on Friday that, according to the results of the investigation, the sabotage occurred neither in the factory where the biscuits were produced nor during their distribution, conducted by Care International. "We assure the WFP's biscuit aid is 100 percent safe for consumption. We have also conducted our own investigation in the factory [in Jakarta] and in the way it is distributed to recipients," he said, adding that no problems

were found with similar aid distributed to people suffering from malnutrition in Madura, East Java, West Nusa Tenggara and Aceh.

Meanwhile, the deputy of the coordinating ministry for people's welfare and social protection, Anang Setiana, said he himself had paid a visit to the biscuit factory and assured that security checks on packing systems there are safe. "The security check would certainly detect the presence of any alien things in the biscuit packs."

The main obstacle to finding the culprit was that the dangerous objects were only found in biscuits packs which were distributed during a particular period since the aid was first distributed early last year. Sources, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said the sabotage might have taken place while the biscuits were in Care International's stores. Governor Frans Leburaya has called on the UNWFP and Care International to continue distributing the food to help alleviate malnutrition, which has claimed the lives of dozens of toddlers and infants during a prolonged drought in 2007 and 2008. He said the police were investigating the case and had been asked to bring it to court if they found evidence of sabotage while the food was stored in the province.

### **13 Belu Allocated Seven More Doctors**

*Kupang Post, 20/4/09*

Atambua: In April Belu *Kabupaten* was provided with 7 more doctors (4 generalists and 3 dentists), who will shortly be placed in health centres throughout the *Kabupaten*, according to Lau Fabianus, head of Belu's Health Service. He told *KP* the Belu now had enough dentists, but would be asking for another 10 doctors which were needed to meet the *Kabupaten's* needs....(more)..

### **14 East Flores Health Centre Helped to Reduce Infant Malnourishment**

*Kupang Post, 20/4/09*

Larartuka: East Flores' Family Welfare Empowerment Team (TP-PKK) visited the *posyandu* of Wailebe village in East Flores (*Flotim*) *Kabupaten* on 16/4 to provide encouragement to the staff and supply them with uniforms and cooking utensils (pots, pans, rice steamers etc) to support their efforts to increase the level of nutrition of the *balita* of the village.

Speaking at the occasion, the deputy chairperson of *Flotim's* TP-PKK, Mrs Theresia Sabu Hajon Herin, stressed the import of all TP-PKK cadres going into villages to underline the importance of nourishing children properly, given the need for a healthy younger generation for NTT's future development and welfare....(more)

### **15 Oxfam Launches the NTT Policy Forum**

**Kupang Post, 21/4/09**

Kupang: On 20/4 Oxfam, in cooperation with a number of community groups in NTT, launched the NTT Policy Forum which aims to encourage the community to be more active in improving living standards. The launch was held in conjunction with a seminar entitled "Development of Strategies to Empower Households and Women in NTT". The seminar focused on the various elements of the strategy that would be required to increase NTT's maize production and the importance of such a development for food

supplies and the alleviation of poverty in NTT.

In a written message marking the launch of the Policy Forum, NTT Governor Frans Lebu Raya said that the government was committed to improving public welfare through its *Anggur Merah*<sup>1</sup> (people's welfare budget) program and in key areas such as maize production, livestock, horticulture and tourism. In real terms NTT received block grants (DAU) of more than Rp 1 trillion (±US\$100m): 60% of that amount was allocated to public programs and 40% to civil service expenditure. ....(more)...

## **16 25 Ende Residents Struck by Dengue Fever: One dead**

*Kupang Post*, 21/4/09

Ende: Between January and April 2009 25 citizens of Ende have contracted dengue fever, with one male dying on 12 April. To reduce the dengue threat the local government has fumigated the danger areas, advised people of the problem and distributed the anti-mosquito liquid abate to residents of the affected areas. ..(more)...

## **17 Output of Horticultural Sector Less than Pleasing**

*Kupang Post*, 23/4/09

The chairperson of a recent coordination meeting of officials dealing with NTT's agricultural and horticultural sectors, Agnes Bolen, admitted that the performance of the horticultural sector was still less than pleasing. Among the reasons for this were: first, the incidence of disease/pests in the key cocoa and coconut production areas; second, the use of poor quality seedlings in the planting process; third, the need to rejuvenate ageing plants; and the need to apply latest technology to land management, water use, and crop cultivation. Bolen gave details of the acreage of various crops in NTT in 2009: maize (32 224 ha.), rice (56 700 ha.), soybeans (1 160 ha.), cocoa (800 ha.), ginger (50 ha.), cashews (7 706 ha. + 60 ha. of seedling nurseries), coconuts (1 750 ha.), coffee (1 272 ha.) and cotton (990 ha.).

## **18 Child Welfare Group Seeks Guarantees re Biscuits from WFP & Care International**

*Kupang Post*, 23/4/09

Kefamenanu: The Chairman of the Child Protection Agency of North Central Timor (TTU) *Kabupaten*, Rev Fr Marianus Koba SVD, has called on WFP and Care International to give guarantees to the government, the people and the children of NTT that they will take responsibility for any harm done, if their school biscuit program recommences in TTU. He said that the pressure being applied on the governor of NTT by WFP and Care International for a resumption of the program amounted to pitting the government and the people of NTT against each other. While both organizations were outstanding and had highly regarded records of achievement, those now running the organizations were not professional, but were operating in a shoddy way. How could they simply deflect responsibility for the biscuit saga on to others (unidentified)? Fr Koba went on to say that pressuring the governor before the completion of an investigation into who sabotaged the program was improper and immoral. He added that he had written to the head of TTU's police on the issue. For his part, the *bupati* of TTU told *KP* that he had not yet received a report on the biscuit affair nor had WFP and Care International given him any guarantees in respect of a resumption of the program. (more)...

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<sup>1</sup> *Anggur merah* translates as "red wine" but in the NTT context is an acronym for *anggaran untuk rakyat menuju sejahtera* (budget allocations to promote public welfare)