



**NTA**  
East Indonesia Aid

**NTA – Press Clippings on NTT**

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*Note: All the items from the Pos Kupang below are summary translations from the Indonesian by the editor (Denis Fisher). Thus they should not be regarded as literal translations, though the editor takes pains not to go beyond the meaning and nuances in the original articles. Items from the Jakarta Post are edited versions of the originals. Any comments, suggestions or feedback on this clipping service are most welcome and should be sent to [d-dfisher@homemail.com.au](mailto:d-dfisher@homemail.com.au). Further information on the Nusa Tenggara Association (NTA) and its development assistance activities in NTT can be found at [www.nta.org.au](http://www.nta.org.au). Back issues of this press clipping service can be found on the NTA website.*

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## Glossary of Indonesian Acronyms in This Edition

BPS	Badan Pusat Statistik (Bureau of Statistics)
puskesmas	community health centre (usually at kecamatan or kabupaten level).
posyandu	integrated (health) service post (for pre- and post-natal and infant care/information)
balita	child/ren under five years old
DPRD	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah: Regional Legislative Assembly
raskin	beras untuk rakyat miskin: rice for the poor

1. **Items of General Interest** (Nil this issue)

2. **General Economic and Development Issues**

2.1 **NTT Residents Could Face Food Shortages This Year**

*Kupang Post, 21/2/10*

Kupang: An NTT provincial government food security spokesman, Petrus Langoday, said in Kupang on 21/2 that residents of NTT's 2 836 villages could face food shortages this year because of the variability of rainfall during the wet season just passed and diseases affecting crops. These two factors had damaged crops and would adversely affect harvesting. Langoday said that he had discussed the situation with relevant government agencies so that preventive measures could be put in place in anticipation of possible food shortages. Many people mistakenly equated food shortages with lack of rice, he said, whereas villagers had other sources of food (bananas, edible tubers, nuts, livestock etc), depending on local conditions. To have food security in NTT, the food sector needed to be further developed with food security in mind, giving people greater access to the sector and enabling them to derive income from it... (*more*)..

2.2 **Don't Hesitate to Lend a Helping Hand**

*Kupang Post, Editorial, 21/2/10*

In any given year NTT is never free of food problems. As soon as the rainy season ends, stories of impending food shortages come to the fore. It is the same story this year. The main factor causing this situation is the variability or relative lack of rain which NTT receives. The government is trying to make its mark with various agricultural projects, but the people are noticing odd things happening on the ground. The rumour mills are currently working overtime spreading the story of maize farmers who recently used maize seed (distributed by a government agency for planting) as fodder for their livestock. Would this happen if the government, bent on making NTT a granary province, was providing the right sort of support to village farmers? The facts behind this story should be investigated by law enforcement agencies. If wrongdoing has occurred it should be brought into the open.

As for food shortages, this year looks like being quite bad. Because of inadequate rain, some hoped for crops (e.g. maize) have not grown as they should have and thus are in danger of being unable to be harvested. The government needs to move decisively in this situation, by demarcating areas likely to suffer food shortages and identifying households affected by crop failure. Specific solutions have to be devised: e.g. increasing the *raskin* rice allocation; employing people in labour intensive projects; and ensuring that Bulog has all its warehouses full and intervenes in the marketplace, where necessary.

Government leaders, from the governor down to the *bupatis*, should not hesitate to lend a helping hand to those in need...(*more*)...

2.3 **Focus Should be on Key Projects**

*Kupang Post, 18/2/10 Editorial*

The *Bupati* of Central Sumba *Kabupaten*, Umbu Sapi Pateduk, spoke recently of his desire to achieve progress in his *kabupaten* during his term of government. Pateduk has explained that for him the essence of achieving progress is to stir the people into action and motivate them to work with the government to do what is needed for progress to be achieved. Central Sumba certainly has the potential (cattle, agricultural land, tourist

attractions etc) to achieve progress. But, as Pateduk clearly understands, the development process very much depends on how the leader manages the process. His focus is on developing the structure of the grassroots economy. In 2009 and again this year his government has worked with the banking sector to provide micro-financing (with loans of less than Rp.10m (±US\$1 000) needing no collateral), thereby enabling people to start pursuing some activity in the real economy.

We endorse the provincial government's current development of 400 ha of cotton in support of a national cotton production program. The move will see a transfer of new technology to NTT and increase local income. But in general we believe that we should focus on key programs and avoid a multiple choice approach. Multiplicity tends to confuse the people and cause problems for government administration. Governor Lebu Raya's three "iconic" programs are maize production, cattle raising and development of cooperatives. We should concentrate on those. What NTT really needs is to sharpen its management of these key programs. Up to now we have been very weak on that score. So much money has been disbursed to promote people's welfare, but the benefits have not been felt. Poverty statistics are not declining – indeed they are on the rise. As we know, Gorontalo province has been a success story. Its former governor, now a central government minister, Fadel Muhammad, recently told a *Golkar* meeting in Kupang that, to succeed, a government needed to be very focused, thoroughly addressing every aspect of the program being developed. Marketing produce was an especially difficult aspect in Gorontalo (as it is in NTT), so he set up a special team to thoroughly address that issue. We could usefully adopt Fadel's approach. We shouldn't let enthusiasm lead us to overlook important issues. Failure should motivate us to think more deeply and come up the right solution. And above all else we must never blame ordinary people for our failures..(more)....

#### **2.4 Care International to Focus on Food and Water in West Timor**

*Kupang Post*, 4/3/10

Kupang: The leader of Care International in NTT, Fachturasi, to a food security workshop in Kupang on 4/3 that Care would continue to focus on the management of the problems of food and water in West Timor, given that these were the fundamental problems facing that area...(more)..

#### **2.5 Governor Talks of Damage to NTT from Australian Oil Spill**

*Kupang Post*, 15/2/10

Kupang: Speaking in Kupang on 15/2 NTT Governor Lebu Raya commented, *inter alia*, on the damage suffered by NTT from the oil leak from a Australian drilling site in the Timor Sea several months ago. He said that the spill had penetrated NTT's waters to a point 51 nautical miles south east of Rote Island. As a result a lot of marine life including fish had died and seaweed grown by farmers from Rote and Kupang *Kabupatens* had been threatened. Mangrove forests in South Central Timor *Kabupaten* were also withering. A lot of other damage had also been caused. The governor called upon the central government to join with NTT in managing the various issues confronting NTT along the border with East Timor and Australia. (more).

### **3. Health Issues**

#### **3.1 Two Infants Die of Dengue on Flores**

*Kupang Post*, 13/2/10

Larantuka: Over the past week two *balita* have died of dengue fever in East Flores *Kabupaten*. Steps are being taken in the affected areas to prevent others from contracting the disease...*(more)*..

### **3.2 Dengue Fever: What are we waiting for?**

*Kupang Post*, 8/2/10 Editorial

In NTT dengue fever outbreaks are as common as rainy seasons. It strikes all comers, young and old, rich and poor, villagers and city dwellers. And it can kill: in this season 6 have died in Sikka *Kabupaten* on Flores. Although dengue is preventable, government agencies do not move into action (fogging and distribution of *Abate*) until the disease has already broken out. We should be able to do better than that, given that dengue outbreaks occur every rainy season. Of course, it is not just the government's responsibility to control dengue. It falls on every citizen to keep their living environment clean so that mosquitoes which spread dengue cannot breed. With the right strategy in place, we can hope that the next rainy season will not see dengue recur. *(more)*

### **3.3 Not All Leprosy Sufferers Receiving Treatment**

*Kupang Post*, 17/2/10

Kupang: Some 16 people suffering from leprosy are receiving treatment in the Alak *puskesmas*, Municipality of Kupang. This emerged during a visit to the centre by members of Committee C of the Kupang Municipal DPRD. Quoting provincial health sources, the Committee's chairman Niko Frans noted that there were many other leprosy sufferers in and around Kupang who were not receiving treatment for their disease. *(more)*..

### **3.4 Malnourished Children on the Increase in Kupang**

*Kupang Post*, 11/2/10

Kupang: The Deputy Mayor of Kupang said on 10/2 that the number of malnourished *balita* in Kupang was more now than last year, with 53 *balita* recorded as malnourished and a further 499 as undernourished. To address the problem the city would provide milk sustenance for three months to the affected children and pregnant mothers. Poverty was an exacerbating factor, as many in Kupang had difficulty eking out a living. In addition, couples with more than two children or who married young were more prone to have undernourished children. Against that background the municipal government would be seeking to motivate couples to practise family planning. *(more)*

### **3.5 Teenagers Help to Fight Malnutrition in Belu**

*Jakarta Post*, 19/2/10 (abridged and edited version of original – Ed.)

Yohanes Bere is an 18-year-old *ojek* motorcycle taxi driver. But he is often busy assisting mothers who take their babies and toddlers (*balita*) to a *posyandu* in Kekirence village in Belu *Kabupaten* (West Timor)..... He helps weigh babies and toddlers, and provides breastfeeding mothers with knowledge about healthy lifestyles...Yohanes learned to do the job through teaching himself and training from health officials and a medical team. "Now we no longer have malnourished *balita*," he said proudly.

Another teenager, 17-year-old Maria Bere, decided to sign up as a volunteer two years ago after graduating from junior high school in Atambua. Although still unmarried, she visits breastfeeding mothers and offers counseling on how to nurse babies. She said her biggest challenge had been the mothers' lack of knowledge – many pregnant and breastfeeding mothers just eat rice and do not make use of their resourceful yards where many nutritious plants grow. "Sometimes, they just leave ripe pawpaws in the yard to rot

on the trees and be eaten by birds or simply fall to the ground while their children do not consume any fruits,” she said.

With the teenage volunteers’ help, Belu is now registered as one of the most successful regions in the province in reducing the malnutrition rate of *balita*. Belu’s administration records that up to the end of last year, the rate of people’s use of its 756 *posyandu* has risen to 81.6 percent, a huge increase over 2008 usage. A local health spokesman said that half of Belu’s *posyandu* were still providing their services in simple places – under trees or in a villager’s house – due to lack of permanent building for holding its activities. Up to 2007, half of Belu’s *balita* were suffering from malnutrition. With the revitalization of the *posyandus* under the auspices of UNICEF, the number of malnutrition cases in Belu has drastically decreased.

A UNICEF Indonesia representative, Lely Djuhari, said Belu was deliberately chosen as a recipient for the program since 2007 mainly because it was a region with the highest number of malnutrition cases in the country. “The project is funded by the Australian government and is aimed at improving the health service capacity and providing nutritious foods,” she said.

### **3.6 Kupang Offers Incentives for Specialist Doctors**

*The Jakarta Post*, 17/2/10 (An edited version of original – Ed.)

Kupang’s Municipal Government is offering Rp. 5m (±US\$535) in cash, a rented house and a car as incentives for specialist medical practitioners to work in a city-owned hospital. “The hospital will be operational in May. Hopefully, the incentives will encourage specialist doctors to work here,” Kupang Mayor Daniel Adoe said on 17/2. Few specialist doctors were willing to work in eastern Indonesia hospitals, including those in East Nusa Tenggara, he added. Adoel said the Kupang city-owned hospital had job vacancies especially for pediatricians, obstetricians and gynecologists, and radiologists.

## **4. Education Issues (Nil this issue)**

## **5. Primary Industries (Agriculture, Fisheries, Livestock, Mining)**

### **5.1 Locusts Destroy Crops in East Manggarai**

*Kupang Post*, 23/2/10

Borong: Around 670 ha of maize and rice crops have been destroyed by a plague of locusts in a number of villages in Kota Komba *Kecamatan*, East Manggarai *Kabupaten* (Eastern Flores). The locusts struck in one particular area, but quickly spread to others. According to locals contacted by *KP*, this attack is much worse than the most recent previous attack two years ago. Not having the wherewithal to spray the locusts, villagers have tried to scare the locusts away manually, by making noise with plates and other kitchen utensils. But the locusts have simply increased in numbers and spread to other areas. The affected farmers have little prospect of replanting their destroyed crops (as the rainy season is virtually over and they have very little seed). They are also worried about food stocks which are already dwindling. They have basically given up, hoping that the government will come to their rescue. East Manggarai *Bupati* is scheduled to visit the affected areas shortly...(more)..

## 5.2 Drought in Parts of East Flores

*Kupang Post*, 19/2/10

Larantuka: Four *kecamatan* (Solor Barat, Ile Boleng, Solor Timur and Ile Bura) in East Flores *Kabupaten*, have had virtually no rain and are facing maize and rice crop failure. The Deputy *Bupati* (Lagadoni) told *KP* on 16/2 that, in anticipation of the drought (which happened almost every year in this particular area), the *kabupaten* had the practice of having reserves of 100 tonnes of rice to make good food shortages in the affected *kecamatan*...*(more)*...

## 5.3 Unused Maize Seeds Rot in Storage in Sikka

*Kupang Post*, 19/2/10

A consignment of hybrid maize seed meant to be planted this season in Koting *Kecamatan*, Sikka *Kabupaten*, arrived too late to be planted and has gone off while "parked" in the office of head of Koting D village. The *camat* of Koting told *KP* that he was forced to accept the consignment because no other *kecamatan* in Sikka wanted it. No one seems to know whether the consignment originated from the provincial or *kabupaten* government. According to local officials, the seed could not be used because it arrived at the end of December, whereas planting was done at the beginning of December. Some of the seed was used by villagers as fodder for their livestock... *(more)*

## 5.4 Unmet Demand for Maize in NTT

*Kupang Post*, 14/2/10

Kupang: According to Governor Lebu Raya, maize farmers in NTT should not have doubts about marketing their product, as demand for maize in NTT was currently exceeding local production levels. Data from the provincial government indicates that NTT's maize production has risen steadily in recent years, from 500 000 tonnes in 2007, to 670 000 in 2008 and 900 000 in 2009.<sup>1</sup> It is hoped that production in 2010 will exceed 1 m tonnes. As for demand, Lebu Raya said that local production was not satisfying local demand, and in addition a national company had expressed a desire to purchase 250 000 tonnes of maize per month from NTT. The head of the provincial Agricultural Service told *KP* that the increased production had resulted from more extensive planting and an increase in yield per ha from 2.3 tonnes to between 3.5 and 4. While in 2008 most of NTT's maize was produced in just 10 *kabupatens*, 20 were now involved in the effort to increase maize production. .. *(more)*

## 5.5 Jatropha: No Longer the Wonder Crop<sup>2</sup>

*Jakarta Post*, 21/2/10

It was dubbed a "miracle" crop by scientists the world over. In 2007, biofuel enthusiasts were selling it as the answer to the looming energy crisis and human dependence on fossil fuels. As a tough, drought-resistant weed thriving on marginal land and a vast producer of usable oils, *jatropha curcus* seemed too good to be true..... Nowhere has this transition from hero to villain been more evident than in Indonesia, the nation touted by experts in 2006 as the most likely to grow and produce *jatropha*-based biodiesels commercially on a large, global scale. ....

<sup>1</sup> These figures are not as certain as this report implies. Contrary information from the local BPS (which *inter alia* put 2009 production at 676 112 tonnes) was reported in *NTT News Clippings Edition No.32 item 5.3 (Ed.)*.

<sup>2</sup> This item is included because a year ago NTT was being touted as a key area for the cultivation of *jatropha* in Indonesia. See *NTT News Clippings, edition No12 dated 15/3/09 (Ed.)*

In 2006, nobody would have believed that growth estimates for the jatropha market in Indonesia would have dropped off so suddenly a few years down the track. A year earlier, Indonesia - Southeast Asia's biggest oil producer and user - was facing renewed pressure from the international community to reduce its carbon footprint and make attempts to mitigate the impacts of climate change. With global oil prices skyrocketing, President Yudhoyono was forced to cut the oil subsidy in October 2005. Indonesian scientists working in the biofuels industry immediately recognized the possibilities jatropha had in store for the archipelago. With 22 million hectares of unused, marginal and critical land, varied climate, massive labor market and diverse investment channels, the potential for Indonesia was enormous. For Yudhoyono, the chance to invest in a renewable "green" energy could not have come at a better time. The government announced plans to spend US\$22 billion by 2010 to promote biofuels, with presidential regulations promising the inclusion of biofuels in the primary energy sector by 2025. Research into jatropha skyrocketed, as did unprecedented interest from the business sector, which dreamed of the profits to be made from cashing in on this wonder crop and developing an export market for its products. ....

Government officials and business investors were fascinated by jatropha's unique ability to adapt to its environment, with very little assistance, and produce 30 to 40 percent oil content from its seeds. Virtually the entire plant is used, with the oil processed for biofuels, the trunk manufactured for fertilizer and the by-product forming glycerine for organic soaps. However, by April 2008, only 120,000 hectares of land had been cultivated for jatropha across Indonesia. With global oil prices dropping significantly in 2009, and with the onset of the financial crisis, business groups and the government lost interest, or at least the economic desire, to continue pushing for the advancement of alternative fuel sources. As Brazil, Europe and the Philippines surged ahead in biofuel development throughout 2009, Indonesia was left with a sector lacking the profits, structure and political will to survive. .... (*more*)....

## **6 Infrastructure (Water, Communications, Roads, Electricity)**

### **6.1 No More Water Problems: KP Visits Ende Island**

*Kupang Post*, 12-13/2/10 Report of a visit to Pulau Ende by KP journalist Romualdus Pius.

In years gone by, Ende Island *Kecamatan*, Ende *Kabupaten* (central Flores) was synonymous with water shortages, unsanitary living conditions and sicknesses such as diarrhoea. Much to the delight of the islanders, 2007 saw the completion of a project which equipped 75-80% of the households on the island with their own rainwater supply tank. Rainwater had to be harnessed to fill these tanks, as the quality of the island's groundwater (still used when non-potable water will do) is almost invariably bad (but see below). As *KP* found in a recent fact-finding visit, the community's newfound ready access to water via the tanks has changed people's lives, encouraging them to use more sanitary toiletry practices and making them less susceptible to diarrhoea. The water project, sponsored by UNICEF, saw the installation of 1 480 tanks in households and 106 tanks for general community use. In recent months there has been cause for particular joy in one area of the island (Rendoraterua village), following the sinking of a bore hole which produced not the brackish groundwater usually found on Ende Island, but safe drinking water of the

kind generally found on Flores. It is hoped that this water source, if cared for properly by the local people, will provide a reliable supply of fresh water for surrounding villagers. *(more)*.....

### **6.2 Water Facilities in Ruins After Just Three Years**

*Kupang Post, 22/2/10*

Oemasi: According to a spokesman of Oemasi village, Nekamese *Kecamatan*, Kupang *Kabupaten*, a water project in place since 2007 comprising a water tower, two reservoir tanks and 17 water tanks providing water to parts of Oemasi village, was operational for only 6 months and has been in ruins for over two years. The villagers concerned now depended on water from 30 m deep wells which dried up in the dry season. According to a village spokesman, the solar power motor which pumped water into the two tanks on the water tower broke down after only 6 months and has never been repaired (no one seems to know who is responsible for repairing the pump). Many requests have been made for the system to be made operational again, but so far nothing has happened...*(more)*..

### **6.3 World Bank to Co-Fund Bridge Reconstruction**

*Kupang Post, 19/2/10*

Kupang: The World Bank has agreed to co-fund the Rp10 billion ( $\pm$ US\$1.1m) reconstruction of the Loho bridge (destroyed in flooding in 2008) which is located on a strategic trans-Timor road in Belu *Kabupaten* (West Timor). The amount includes a Rp3 billion ( $\pm$ US\$320 000) contribution from Jakarta. It is hoped the bridge will be rebuilt by the end of 2010. *(more)*.....