



NTA
East Indonesia Aid

NTA – Press Clippings on NTT **Edition No. 34**
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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. Further information on the Nusa Tenggara Association (NTA) and its development assistance activities in NTT can be found at 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

BMKG

Badan Meteorologi, Klimatologi dan Geofisika: Bureau of Meteorology, Climate & Geophysics

Undana
raskin

*University of Nusa Cendana, Kupang
beras untuk rakyat miskin: rice for the poor*

PDAM

Perusahaan Daerah Air Minum: Local Water Authority

DPRD

Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah: Regional Assembly

balita

child/ren under five years old

1 Items of General Interest

1.1 Dry season coming between March and June

Jakarta Post, 10/3/10 (edited version of the original)

Jakarta: BMKG Chief Harijono said on 9/3 that the dry season had just begun in East Nusa Tenggara, while in Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Maluku it would only arrive in June. Some regions might face drought because of relatively low rainfalls during the past wet season, he said. These regions included Bali, East Java, West Nusa Tenggara and part of Central Java. Based on past experiences of El Niño, Indonesia would not experience extreme droughts.

1.2 20 wounded in East Flores clash

Jakarta Post, 9/3/20 (edited version of a report by Yemris Fointuna. Similar reports carried in *The Kupang Post*)(Ed.)

More than 20 residents of East Flores *Kabupaten* are reportedly in a critical condition following a conflict over farmland. Villagers from Lamahala and Horowura, East Adonara *Kecamatan*, have been fighting each other with firearms and sharp weapons, paralyzing people's daily activities since 8/3. East Flores deputy *bupati* has told *JP* that the conflict started when Lamahala residents took over land which Horowura villagers regarded as theirs. Security personnel have gone to the region to restore calm.

2 General Economic and Development Issues

2.1 Parts of West Timor Facing Crop Failure

Kupang Post, 10/3/10

Soe: As at the beginning of March some 3 000 ha of farmland in 38 villages in the southern part of South Central Timor *Kabupaten* were facing crop failure due to insufficient rainfall. According to a *kabupaten* spokesman, seven *kecamatan* had been affected (viz. Noebeba, Kuanfatu, Amanuban Selatan, Kualin, Nunkolo, Kot'olin and Kolbano). Worst hit was Kolbano, with 1 250 ha across 11 villages under threat. The fear was that, if rain did not fall in early March, other areas could face a similar situation. The *kabupaten* government was working with relevant agencies to provide relief supplies to affected households (some 9 500), an effort which would require around 94 tonnes of rice). *KP* spoke to several villagers in Oebelo village in Amanuban Selatan who had for some time been surviving on *putak*¹. (more)

2.2 Areas on Flores Facing Food Shortages

Kupang Post, 9/3/10

Kalabahi: Three *kecamatan* in Alor *Kabupaten* (on Flores) – viz. West Pantar, Southwest Pantar and Central Pantar – are threatened by food shortages, following crop failure. A *kabupaten* spokesman told *KP* on 9/3 that rice and maize crops in those areas had withered because of lack of rain and protracted heat. As a result there was a real danger of food shortages occurring. (more)...

2.3 52 Villages in East Sumba Facing Food Shortages

Kupang Post, 17/3/10

Waingapu: 52 of the 121 villages in East Sumba *Kabupaten* are suffering food shortages,

¹ A gruel made from the bark or branches of certain types of trees which are pulped and boiled (Ed.)

while another 69 villages are in danger of facing the same fate. The *Bupati* told journalists on 12/3 that the situation had arisen mainly because of lack of rain, which had led to crop failure in many areas (of the 23 000 ha of farmland in his area only 8 000 ha had irrigation). His government had 100 tonnes of rice at the ready to meet immediate needs in the 52 villages concerned, but in the longer term 1 000 tonnes of rice would be needed. He had already requested the NTT Government to provide 500 tonnes, but had not yet had a response. He also hoped some help would be provided by Jakarta. In one village *KP* was told that the situation was already impacting on young children, with several *balita* being identified as under-nourished. (*more*).

2.4 Reflecting on World Water Day

Kupang Post, 24/3/10 Editorial

The observance of World Water Day on 22/3 gives us cause to pause and reflect. Water is of course crucially important to us all. Residents of Kupang should have lots of it, but we don't – in fact, many face water shortages. Elsewhere in NTT people are crying out that they have not one drop of water. Many have to walk up to 5 or 6 km to fetch their daily needs, often from a hole they have to dig beside a meager stream. How sad it that? And, yet, in almost every village NGOs are active on the issue of water. So where lies the problem? One problem is that donors and NGOs work to defined timeframes, like firemen putting out fires. They talk of empowering the people, but when a project is done and the NGO leaves, the people revert to the previous status quo, no longer empowered. We need a new paradigm. We need to look at every aspect of water supply. We are making efforts to conserve nature, but the result is not what it should be. We lack sustainable management, focusing instead on the activity at hand. We need to figure out whose role it is to ensure sustainability. If we don't, we will continue as we are now. Another point is that we do are not really protecting what nature gives us. All year long using fire to clear land is in evidence. If we continue thus, the law of the jungle will apply and the strongest will prevail. And our fear of losing water sources will become reality. Let World Water Day remind us all that from daylight till dark, in everything we do, we need water to live and to work...(*more*)...

2.5 AusAID to Cooperate with Kupang Kabupaten

Kupang Post, 8/3/10

The Director of the Australian Community Development and Civil Society Strengthening Scheme (ACCESS)², Paul Boon, and the *Bupati* of Kupang Kabupaten, Ayub Titu Eki, signed an MOU on 8/3 covering a program of cooperation to alleviate poverty. The three basic elements of the program and the NGOs with which ACCESS will work are: planning and participative budgeting (with NGOs Bengkel APEK³ and PIAR⁴);

² ACCESS is a continuation of AusAID's Indonesia-Australia Small Activities Scheme (IASAS), which was an integral part of Australia's official bilateral assistance to Indonesia from 1989. Like IASAS, ACCESS supports community development through grants, capacity building, planning and collective learning. Its goal is to contribute to the alleviation of poverty and strengthen civil society, particularly in Eastern Indonesia. Press Clippings Ed.(Ed.)

³ No information is readily available on this NGO, which is a member of ASSPUK NTT (*Asosiasi Pendamping Perempuan Usaha Kecil*): Association for the Support of Womens Micro-businesses (Ed.)

development of a network of small business women to encourage the growth of local self-supporting economies (with JARPUK⁵); and a program of public health service (with Incriase⁶).

2.6 Sabu Raijua in Difficulties

Kupang Post, 22/3/10

Kupang: Sabu Raijua *Kabupaten* currently has no doctor and the people are crying out for one. A Balinese doctor who has worked on the islands for some ten years left about a month ago, for reasons unknown. The health service is now in the hands of midwives and nurses. Apart from that, a recent visitor to the islands has told *KP* that fuel has become scarce and people are finding it rather hard to move around. Electricity and fresh drinking water are also in short supply...*(more)*...

2.7 IWD: Violence Against Women Unabated

The Jakarta Post, 8/3/10 & 9/3/10

(Following is an edited version of two reports on International Womens Day (IWD) celebrations in Jakarta on 8/3. The summary highlights information on Eastern Indonesia. Ed.)

A grim report on the plight of women in Indonesia was released by the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) to mark IWD. The report indicates that the number of reported cases of violence against women in Indonesia in 2009 soared by 263 percent to 140 000 cases (up from 54 000 in 2008). Most of the reported cases occurred in Java (123,774), followed by Sumatra (8,987), Kalimantan (4,632), Sulawesi (2,301) and NTT (954 cases). 90% of the cases involved domestic violence.

Included in the report was a reference to the villages of Polo and Linamutu, South Central Timor *Kabupaten*, where women have been badly affected by the burning of 6,000 hectares of traditional forest for a land rehabilitation program. The women's livelihood had depended on tamarind trees grown in the forest...

In a speech marking IWD, a representative of *Solidaritas Perempuan (Female Solidarity)* noted that women were prone to losing their roles in agriculture when a community's land was taken over by companies. She gave the example of Sumbawa in NTB, 50% of which had been turned over to mining, damaging ecosystems. Women who previously managed the land had become paid workers for the mining companies, or had simply lost their jobs to men. The result was a high incidence of acute respiratory and reproductive diseases among the women concerned, who were also reportedly experiencing more violence since the mining began.

2.8 NTT's Handicapped Receive International Support

The Kupang Post, 12/3/10

The France-based non-profit organisation, Handicap International (HI), is to become an advocate for NTT's handicapped beginning this year. A senior representative of HI, Marie Pierre Guicherd, said this in Kupang on 10/3 after visiting South Central Timor

⁴ *Perkumpulan Pengembangan Inisiatif Advokasi Rakyat*: Association for the Development of Community Advocacy: a Kupang-based NGO set up in 2003, concentrating on activities relating to advocacy on behalf of the common people (*Ed.*)

⁵ *Jaringan Perempuan Usaha Kecil*: Network of Womens Micro-businesses – part of the ASSPUK umbrella organization (*Ed.*)

⁶ Or “Increase”? No information readily available on this group. (*Ed.*)

Kabupaten and meetings a key local advocacy group for the handicapped. One point made during the visit was that care of the handicapped was not just the responsibility of educational institutions. Parents of handicapped children needed to be supported as well and this was an area on which the government should concentrate....(more)...

3 Health Issues

3.1 Additional Midwives Being Assigned Throughout NTT

Kupang Post, 20/3/10

Kupang: To help further the objectives of the AusAID-supported *Revolusi KIA*⁷, the NTT government is dispatching an additional 145 midwives to work in villages and *kecamatan* health centres throughout NTT. They will initially be on 3 year contracts, starting duty on 1 April. In announcing the appointments, Dr Stef Bria Seran, head of NTT's Health Service, said that having additional midwives and doctors in health centres was essential to efforts to reduce deaths occurring during childbirth. ..(more).

3.2 Joint Health Survey by Flinders Uni and Undana

Kupang Post, 20/3/10

Seven medical researchers from Flinders University (South Australia) lead by Professor Lynne Cobiac (and including two nutritionists, two pediatricians, a gastroenterologist, an internist and a specialist in parasitology) have been working for a week with staff of the Undana's medical faculty surveying the health of residents of Manusak village, East Kupang *Kecamatan*, Kupang *Kabupaten*. A Cendana spokesperson told *KP* that the aim of the work was to assess the nutritional health of *balita* and the infections which people were liable to in the wet and dry seasons. The week provided an opportunity for junior medical staff and senior students at Undana to learn how to effectively conduct such research work especially in respect of nutrition. The survey found that most of children and adults examined were suffering from skin diseases and upper respiratory tract infections.(more)

3.3 Free Cataract Operations for the Poor on Sumba

Kupang Post, 23/3/10

Waingapu: Free cataract operations are to be provided for around 1 000 very poor people in Immanuel Hospital Waingapu (Sumba) from 17 to 22 May. According to the director of the hospital, Dr Danny Christian, the operations will be performed in cooperation with Christofel Blindenmission International Jakarta. In preparation for the operations a special upgrading course would be held for the nurses of the hospital (and other interested nurses from elsewhere in NTT) from 19-24 April. That training would be sponsored by the Indonesian Surgeons Association⁸ and the Jakarta-based Yayasan 118⁹..(more)..

4 Education Issues

4.1 National Exam System Important

The Kupang Post, 12/3/10

⁷ = a revolution in respect of the death rate among birthing mother and newborns.

⁸ *Ikatan Ahli Bedah Indonesia* (IKABI)

⁹ Possibly referring to *Yayasan Ambulance Gawat Darurat 118* (an ambulance service organization) (*Ed.*)

Kupang: The Rector of *Undana*, Frans Umbu Datta, has underlined the importance of the national exam (UN) and the role played by *Undana* in conducting it in NTT. He said that ideally schools should be able to oversee the UN but for now they could not do so. In that regard he called on the provincial Education Service to upgrade the facilities and infrastructure of NTT's schools to lift the quality of education in the province and NTT's success rate in the UN. Independent monitoring teams from *Undana* would for now remain responsible for the proper conduct of the UN throughout NTT. To those who criticized the relevance of the UN process, he argued that the UN remained relevant and was an important tool for measuring education standards and for identifying areas where extra effort needed to be made to improve education standards.*(more)*

4.2 Levies Damage Image of Education in NTT

Kupang Post, Editorial, 10/3/10

Coming out of *Belu Kabupaten* is news that a high school there has required candidates for the National Examination (UN) to each contribute Rp. 150 000 (\pm US\$16) and a chicken to be used to cater for supervisors, visitors and other involved in the exams. Not entirely clear is whether a candidate declining to make the contributions will be barred from sitting the exam. What is very clear, however, is that such levies are being imposed, to the detriment of education's image in NTT. The contributions do not amount to much for children of well-off families, but for poor families (e.g. *raskin* recipients) they will be a huge burden. And they are being imposed in a situation where many areas are facing possible crop failure after a patchy rainy season, and NTT continues to be plagued by stories about malnourished children. The imposts on the candidates could be much better used to feed hungry little mouths at home. Let the schools approach the government if support is needed to conduct the UN. Or, better still, let the supervisors, teachers etc involved in the UN draw on their own incomes to provide for what they need. The already struggling image of education in NTT can only be harmed further by ill-conceived measures like this....*(more)*.

4.3 Primary School on Sumba in Need of Class Rooms

The Kupang Post, 13/3/10

Tambolaka: The *Inpres*¹⁰ Primary School in Wai Mangura village, Wewewa Barat *Kecamatan*, Southwest Sumba *Kabupaten*, needs additional classrooms. According to the school's teachers, the school was last upgraded to six classrooms in 2006, but the space can no longer cater for the student population. Each classroom now accommodates over 30 pupils, with one having over 40 and three others than 50 pupils....*(more)*..

4.4 Kupang Kabupaten Short of Classrooms and Teachers

Kupang Post, 24/3/10

Kupang: According to Kupang *Kabupaten* officials, 30 primary schools in the *kabupaten* urgently need new class room space. The officials told a visiting national MP (Yakoba Anita Gah) on 22/3 that even existing school facilities needed to be upgraded, as many were simple homegrown structures with earthen floors. There was also a shortage of

¹⁰ =*Instruksi Presiden*. *Inpres* primary schools were originally constructed under a program put in place, at the instruction of President Soeharto, in 1973. Over 61 000 *Inpres* primary schools (each catering for around 120 pupils) were constructed throughout the '70s all over Indonesia. One of the aims of the *Inpres* primary school program was to spread the benefits of oil revenues and development more evenly across the country (*Ed.*).

teachers. The situation was far from ideal and limited schools ability to provide the education that was needed. The *kabupaten* lacked the necessary funds to address the many problems faced and would welcome any funding Jakarta could provide... *(more)*...

5 Primary Industries (Agriculture, Fisheries, Livestock, Mining)

5.1 Manganese Should Promote Community Welfare Not Strife

Kupang Post, Editorial 9/3/10

Manganese is again causing conflict! In North Central Timor *Kabupaten* people are in conflict with police taking action against the illegal mining of manganese. This is a regrettable situation which should be addressed by decisive government action. As one of NTT's precious resources, manganese should boost to people's welfare, not be a source of division and conflict. According to *KP's* records, in just two years since the rush of foreign investors to exploit the resource, manganese mining has killed 13 people in 6 separate incidents. People are becoming mesmerized by manganese, which is taking on the guise of a new currency. Landowners see manganese as a potentially long term source of instant money – all they have to do is collect it and sell to one of the many who are ready to buy and on sell it (legally or illegally) it to others at a profit.

Let's hope that the exploitation of our manganese resources does not go the way of our efforts to intensify the production of sandalwood some years back. People did all sorts of things to grow sandalwood and a lot of money was made by many, but the program was not well managed and eventually petered out, leaving ordinary people stranded and as poor as ever.

It is true that government regulations already exist (in Kupang *Kabupaten*, for example), but these have not been well explained to the people at large. Nor have people been educated on the importance of manganese for NTT and how it should be exploited, without damaging the environment, for the true benefit of the people. But above all government officials should be neutral advocates of the right way to exploit the resource and not play games or, worse, seek personal gain from its exploitation...*(more)*

6 Infrastructure (Water, Roads, Electricity)

6.1 Rundown Water Supply System in West Sumba's Capital

Kupang Post, 10-12/3/10 (Following is a very brief summary of a series of three log articles (totaling ±2 500 words) by Petrus Piter (not further identified) on the woes of the virtually non-functioning water reticulation system in Waikabubak, the capital of West Sumba Kabupaten. Ed.)

Waikabubak's water supply has been in disarray for years. The system was supposed to supply water to every household in the town, but it currently reaches just a few hundred people. Whole areas of the town have no reticulated water at all. As a result many residents have to walk miles to bathe, do laundry and collect drinking water. Or they buy trucked in water. One acknowledged problem is that the town's water system relies on just one water source which flows less generously in the dry season. But of much greater concern is the degradation of the pipe system which PDAM staff are clearly at a loss to repair. They don't even seem to know precisely where the pipes are laid and when a leak is evident, they as often as not try to plug it with rubber tyres.

The government and local DPRD should become seized of this problem and work together to allocate the funds needed to right this situation. The head of West Sumba's PDAM, Beny B. Lendu, acknowledges the problems but says he lacks the resources to fix them. But why can't the money be found and why can't expertise be brought in from outside? And why can't the local government copy successful water supply systems in more developed areas like Java and Bali? The residents of Waikabubak do not have an endless shopping list of demands. They simply want an adequate supply of water and electricity, security and enough facilities and infrastructure for a reasonable life. *(more)*