



NTA
East Indonesia Aid

NTA – Press Clippings on NTT Edition No. 40
3 July 2010

Note: All the items from the Pos Kupang and Kampas 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. All items from the Jakarta Post are abridged and edited versions of the original. 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 Acronyms in This Edition

DPRD
PLN
Undana
puskesmas

Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah: Regional Assembly
Perusahaan Listrik Negara: State Electricity Authority
Universitas Nusa Cendana: University of Nusa Cendana, Kupang
pusat kesehatan masyarakat: community health centre (usually at *kecamatan* or *kabupaten* level).

1. Items of General Interest

1.1 **Former East Timorese Refugees in NTT Air Grievances**

(Editor's note: There were numerous reports throughout June in both the regional and national press, including three front page articles in Kompas on successive days, dealing with grievances of former refugees from East Timor now resident in NTT. These reports prompted a detailed response (published on the front page of Kompas) from officials in Jakarta, who basically said that Indonesia had over the years already spent many billions of rupiah helping the refugees and, having done all that it could, it now regarded the case as closed. Managing issues relating to former East Timorese refugees in NTT was now a matter for the provincial government.

The reports concluded that the former refugees' grievances were a time bomb waiting to explode. Following is a summary of those grievances, as reported in Kompas and KP. Kompas, 13/6/10 and 21/6/10; Kupang Post, 2/6/10, 20/6/10 and 23/6/10

According to NTT Government statistics 132 000 East Timorese took refuge in NTT in 1999. Many of them returned to East Timor, but around 60 000 stayed in NTT and chose to become Indonesian citizens. But the precise number is debated. A group calling itself East Timorese Political Victims (Kokpit¹) believes that there are still 15 000 families of former East Timorese refugees in NTT (totaling around 75 000 people). Because of the debate over numbers, some elders in the former East Timorese community are calling for an updated census to be held to verify the number of those in NTT who are truly former East Timorese refugees.

Of those refugees who stayed in NTT, those who could afford to gradually integrated into the local community, while those without means were accommodated in camps. Later, between 2006 and 2009, the government built housing complexes (in the *kabupatens* of Belu, Kupang, South Central Timor and North Central Timor) to accommodate former refugees. The program saw the construction of 11 000 very simple houses (RSS²) designed to house 55 000 people.

The former refugees air three main issues of concern re the RSS: (i) their poor quality; (ii) the inadequacy of supporting infrastructure (roads, electricity and water) and (iii) ownership of the land on which they are built. The claim is that many of the RSS were of such poor quality that they started to fall apart within a year or so. According to one senior former East Timorese, Armindo Suares Mariano, 70% of the 11 000 RSS are no longer habitable and lack adequate infrastructure (roads, electricity, water).

As for the land issue, many who moved into the RSS thought that the land had already been paid for by the government and were later surprised to learn that this was not the case. Others moved in with the expectation of receiving government support of several million rupiahs per family which they could put towards paying for the land. But, according to the East Timorese, those promised support payments never arrived. Thus some now find that they are being badgered by landowners to pay up and, because they can't, they would prefer to return to the former refugee camps.

¹ =Korban Politik Timtim.

² =rumah sangat sederhana

Hundreds of former refugees still live in camps. In Kupang *Kabupaten*, three such camps remain: Tuapukan, Noelbaki and Naibonat. Tuapukan camp, just 20 kms east of Kupang, still houses 250 families. Camp Coordinator Marcelino Lopez has told the press that the residents have had to stay put because they have nowhere else to go. They have received no government assistance since their refugee status was withdrawn in 2003, though they recently received a shipment of free food, clothing and medicines from a welfare group. As none of the camp's residents owns or can afford to buy land, they have little alternative but to work as farm labourers, sharing 50:50 any of their produce with the owners of the land. Lopez says that people are struggling to feed themselves and education of children is problematic. Water is a real issue, with residents relying on a 30 meter deep well they dug for themselves.

Many former East Timorese remain concerned about the non-receipt of support payments allegedly promised by the government. Kokpit is pressing the government to honour those promises (Rp5 m (±US\$550) per family) and are pushing for Rp75 billion (±US\$8.25 m) to be allocated for that purpose.

The hardship of some East Timorese is such that they claim to be considering leaving to seek refuge in other countries (Japan, Germany, England and The Netherlands were mentioned as possible destinations).

According to one prominent former East Timorese, the East Timorese in NTT is to hold a congress in September to discuss the range of issues affecting their community.

1.2 Seminar on Indonesia-Australia Relations

Kupang Post, 5/6/10

Undana hosted a seminar on Indonesia-Australia relations on 4/6. A representative of the Indonesian Consulate-General in Perth addressed the meeting. Issues covered were terrorism, people smuggling, illegal fishing and the quickly growing economic and socio-cultural links between the two countries. It was noted that the WA, which was visited by over 20 000 Indonesians each year, gave high priority to economic relations with Indonesia....(*more*).

2. General Economic and Development Issues

2.1 Thousands Of Poor Face High Risk of Food Shortages in West Timor

Kompas 15/6/10

The deputy head of NTT's Food Security Agency, Vincentius Loy, told *Kompas* on 15/6 that just under 13 500 people in the *kecamatan*s of Weliman, Malaka Barat, Malaka Tengah, Raihat and Lamaknen, Belu *Kabupaten* were categorized as facing a "high risk" of food shortages, because of crop failure. In 9 of the affected villages (in Malaka Tengah, Weliman and Malaka Barat), flooding had destroyed 1 000 ha of crops, while in other areas failure of both the first and second plantings had occurred because of insufficient rain. Loy said the *Kabupaten* government was doing a detailed assessment and would distribute rice from government reserves to high risk families.....(*more*).

2.2 NTT Aims to Overcome Emerging Food Crisis

Jakarta Post, 30/6/10 (edited version of original)

Most villages in NTT are unable to produce enough food to sustain themselves, and could suffer severe food shortages in the event of unfavorable weather conditions, a government study shows. The province's administration declared that 74 out of 2,836

villages and sub-districts in the province's 20 regencies and municipalities were self-sufficient in terms of food production. The study, part of the provincial administration's Village Food Reliance program (PDMP)³, aimed to equip farmers and poor residents in rural areas with the know-how and equipment needed to deal with the potential negative impacts of the El Nino weather phenomenon and climate change on farmland.

The head of NTT's Food Security Agency, Nico B Nuhan, said the PDMP was an effort to increase awareness about the importance of food self-sufficiency and to alleviate poverty. "This year, more than 1.6 million people in NTT are at risk of a severe food shortages due to harvest and crop failures", Nuhan said. The PDMP was part of the government's efforts to solve the problem and would be carried out over four years. A number of smaller programs would be introduced to support the PDMP, including a community empowerment program, infrastructure development and a food self-sufficiency system. A food-reliant village, he continued, was one that could locate its own natural resources and develop them to support the needs of the community. The head of NTT's Social Services Office, Emanuel Kara, said that more than 1.6 million residents of NTT were nearing a severe food shortage due to failed harvests. "The affected farmland spans 94,395 hectares or half the total area of the people's farmland...*(more)*

2.3 UN helps NTT Deal with Poverty

Jakarta Post, 18/6/10 (edited version of original)

KUPANG: The UN is committed to assisting NTT address poverty problems, UN Resident Coordinator for Indonesia, El Mostafa Ben Lamlah, said in Kupang on 15/6 at the unveiling of a five-year cooperation scheme involving eight UN organizations, including the UNDP, UNICEF and the UNHCR. Apart from poverty, he added, the UN was also ready to partner with local administrations to address problems in the fields of health, education, economy, infrastructure, the judicial system and the environment. NTT Governor Frans Leburaya said he hoped UN aid would ease the province's poverty, which affected almost half of the population of 4.6 million.

2.4 Bank NTT: Good Performance; But Could Help People More

Kupang Post, 9/6/10 Editorial

Bank NTT is in the news because of the great progress and creditable profit it is making under its dynamic CEO Tagu Dedo. We congratulate the bank on its success. The reason for Bank NTT's recent success has been its emphasis on professionalism, which is making it more popular within the community. Profit is the yardstick for a bank's success and Bank NTT is right to set future profit targets for itself. The bank has already brought great benefits to NTT-ites, but its main clientele has up to now been government officials. There are high hopes that the bank can play an increasingly important role in NTT's future development. To do that it will need to reach out to the lower and middle echelons of our community, by providing straightforward low interest loans to enable ordinary people to take up opportunities for small-scale ventures which continue to emerge in NTT.....*(more)*.

³ = Program Desa Mandiri Pangan, part of NTT Government's its follow up to the NTT Summits held by Governor Leburaya in 2008 and 2009 (*Ed.*)

3. Health Issues

3.1 Infant Dies of Malnutrition

Kupang Post, 21/6/10

A 1 year old baby died of malnutrition Kalabahi district hospital, Alor *Kabupaten* (east of Flores), on 18/6. Hospital staff told *KP* that the child's condition was already critical when it was admitted to hospital from a *puskesmas*. Everything possible was done to save the child but to no avail. Two other infants had also been treated for malnutrition, but their condition had improved and they were now being cared for at home...*(more)*.

3.2 National Program of Cooperation to Reduce Deaths of Mothers and Babies

The Jakarta Post, 26/6/10 (an abridged and edited version of the original – *Ed.*)

NGOs and 10 regional administrations have agreed to implement joint initiatives to reduce high maternal and child mortality rates. The programs, part of the Maternal and Child Health Movement (GKIA⁴) launched by the Coordinating Minister for Community Welfare (*Menkokesra*) on 23/6⁵, will focus on ten high-risk provinces: West Sulawesi, Central Sulawesi, NTB, NTT, Maluku, North Maluku, Bengkulu, Gorontalo, South Kalimantan and Papua. "This program provides momentum for the government, the UN, religious organizations and the private sector to improve child and maternal health by working together," World Vision Indonesia representative Asteria Aritonang said on 23/6. *Menkokesra* identified several factors contributing to the problem: uneven access to proper healthy care facilities, a lack of human resources in the health sector and uneven distribution of doctors in some regions. The Indonesian Doctors Association has indicated that it is planning to train more general practitioners to help decrease maternal and child mortality rates, concentrating on NTT, West Java and Papua where maternal and child deaths are high. The Association would also work with local governments to help improve health care infrastructure...*more..*

3.3 144 Cases Rabies in West Flores

Kupang Post, 22/6/10

Labuan Bajo: Rabies has flared up again in West Manggarai *Kabupaten* (west Flores), with 144 cases of the disease recorded between January and May, including one death. The incidence of the disease is lower than last year's figure (216 cases). (*The article provides a detailed breakdown of affected areas and an outline of steps being taken by the local government to control the disease –Ed.*)

3.4 Strategic Plan Needed to Fight Malaria Endemic in NTT

Kupang Post, 30/6/10

Kupang: Speaking at an anti-malaria planning meeting of relevant officials and health sector workers (attended also by UNICEF and WHO representatives) in Kupang on 28/6, the head of NTT's Health Service, Dr Stef Brian, said that, as one the ten Indonesian provinces most affected by malaria, NTT needed to have a strategic plan to control the disease. In order to reduce illness and deaths caused by malaria, the plan should involve every element of the community (government, professional groups and NGOs (both local and international). He called on the meeting to formulate such a plan...*(more)*.

⁴ =Gerakan Kesehatan Ibu dan Anak.

⁵ See press release at www.menkokesra.go.id/content/menko-kesra-luncurkan-gerakan-nasional-kesehatan-ibu-dan-anak (*Ed*)

4. Education Issues (Nil this edition)

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

5.1 Hydrocarbons around Rote Island to be Exploited

Kompas, 14/6/10

The *Bupati* of Rote Ndao, Lens Haning, told *Kompas* on 14/6 that exploration of exploitable hydrocarbon reserves around Rote Island would begin shortly. As the issuance of permits for such activity was the responsibility of the central government, he could not name the foreign company involved. He expected any operations base set up on Rote to benefit local people in terms of jobs and as a market for local produce.*(more)*.

5.2 West Timor Seaweed Farmers Suffer Great Losses

Kompas, 13/6/10

Seaweed farming in the waters around Tablolong (the western most tip of Timor Island), Kupang Municipality, has fallen dramatically in the wake of degradation of the sea thought to be the result of oil contamination from the Timor Sea. According to a local farmer, so far this year seaweed production has been close to zero, whereas in previous years local farmers had shipped thousands of tonnes of their produce to Surabaya. Catching bottom fish was also difficult, he said. He could not explain the situation, but there was clearly a problem.

Ferdi Tanomi, Director of the West Timor Care Foundation, believes the problem stems from the oil slick caused by the explosion at the Montara oil rig off Australia in August 2009.... *(more)*

5.3 Fall in Horticultural and Seaweed Production on Semau

Kupang Post, 23/6/10

Kupang: Yoppi Pasllo, head of the village of Batuinan, Semau *Kecamatan*, Kupang *Kabupaten*, told *KP* on 18/6 that the production of vegetables, horticultural produce and seaweed had fallen markedly this year and locals were at a loss to reverse the trend. Pallo suspected the weather was the cause, but the government had been asked to send an official to help local farmers correct the situation. For example, he said, up to now Batuinan had, each week, sent over 3 tonnes of red peppers and chilies to market in Kupang, but the amount had now dropped to below 3 tonnes. Elsewhere on Semau, a decline in seaweed production was also in evidence. All this was having a significant impact on local incomes and potentially local food supplies...*(more)*

6. Infrastructure (Water, Roads, Electricity)

6.1 NTT Needs 4 000 Dams to Overcome Its Water Problems

Kupang Post, 23/6/10

The head of NTT's Public Works Service, Andre Koreh, said in Kupang on 23/6 that to meet its water requirements in the 9 month long dry season (March-November), thereby obviating widespread crop failure and water shortages, NTT needed 4 000 dams. Up to now the province had only been able to afford to build 445 dams, 245 of which were in poor condition. The immediate priority was thus to repair those 245 dams before the arrival of the next rainy season. In addition new dams were being developed. But construction of 4 000 dams would need to be done in stages, as the costs involved were prohibitive.

Meanwhile the speaker of NTT's DPRD, Ibrahim A Medah, commenting on recent crop failures, has underlined the primacy of water supply for NTT. He said the government's development priorities such as maize, cattle, sandalwood and cooperatives had been put in place without sufficient forethought. Water supply had to be the government's top priority.....(*more*)

6.2 Villagers Have Water Tanks But No Water

Kupang Post, 21/6/10

Five water tanks (the largest with a capacity of 10 000 liters), built under the Pansimas⁶ program to service 60 households in two areas of Alak *Kecamatan*, Kupang Municipality, have been empty for a year now because the diesel pump used to pump bore water to fill the tanks has not been working. When the breakdown occurred, the villagers informed the *lurah* and also approached PLN to ask that electricity be supplied to operate the pump, obviating the need to buy fuel to run it. A technician had quoted Rp2 m (±US220) to repair the unit, but this was a prohibitive amount for small-scale farmers and cattle growers. (*more*)

⁶ *Water and Sanitation for Low Income Communities Scheme*: a national Department of Health program (*air bersih dan sanitasi berbasis masyarakat*) in place since 2004 aimed at funding, on a needs basis, self-help (DIY) efforts by poor communities to build or upgrade their fresh water and sanitation facilities (*Ed*)