

East Timor News Digest No 8 - Aug 1-31, 2006

Sunday 8 October 2006 (Date first published: 31 August 2006).

Contents

- [TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)
- [NEWS & ISSUES](#)
- [POLITICAL/SOCIAL CRISIS](#)
- [POLITICS/POLITICAL PARTIES](#)
- [ECONOMY & INVESTMENT](#)
- [DAILY MEDIA REVIEWS](#)
- [OPINION & ANALYSIS](#)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NEWS & ISSUES

- * Timor officer cleared by inquiries
- * UN acts at last on sex crimes in Timor
- * AFP made me strip, says Timor officer

POLITICAL/SOCIAL CRISIS

- * Alkatiri says foreigners plotted coup against him
- * Officer at centre of Timor violence in mass jailbreak
- * East Timor - Downfall of a prime minister
- * Police, military liaison officers authorised for Timor
- * Even in camps, East Timorese fear for their lives
- * Timor government 'saddened' over latest violence
- * Houses burnt down as gangs of youths terrorise Dili

- * Darkness brings fear in East Timor
- * Youths arrested in wave of violence across Dili
- * Despite peacekeepers, Timor's refugees stay in squalid camps

INDONESIA

- * Official admits mistakes in Timor
- * Former Indonesian official speaks out on East Timor
- * Jakarta-Dili ties on the mend

POLITICS/POLITICAL PARTIES

- * Alkatiri's ouster sought through extraordinary party congress
- * Show-of-hands vote to endorse Alkatiri 'legal'

ECONOMY & INVESTMENT

- * East Timor doubles security spending
- * Horta says confident gas pact will get OK
- * Timor parliament passes delayed US\$315 million budget

DAILY MEDIA REVIEWS

East Timor daily media review - August 1-29, 2006

OPINION & ANALYSIS

- * East Timor's story, lessons for Indonesia
- * Timor Leste: Present problems, future strategies
- * East Timor's blighted independence

NEWS & ISSUES

Timor officer cleared by inquiries

Sydney Morning Herald - August 30, 2006

Lindsay Murdoch, Dili — The Australian Federal Police has defended an officer accused of ordering

a senior East Timorese policeman to take off his uniform in public, saying two inquiries had found the officer had acted appropriately.

But in a statement released by East Timor's parliament, the country's powerful Interior Minister, Alcino Barris, disputed the agency's interpretation of regulations governing Timorese police and said he would lodge a formal protest about the incident with the Australian embassy in Dili.

"The Australian police did not respect either the dignity of the Timorese police institution or the dignity of Timor-Leste [East Timor] as a sovereign country," Dr Barris said. The statement said Dr Barris told MPs there was no instruction by the Timorese Government that directed Timorese police not to wear their uniforms in public. "The minister defined the event unacceptable," it said.

The confrontation between an unidentified Australian Federal Police officer and the chief of East Timor's police academy, Julio Hornai, on a main road in Dili on Saturday prompted an angry response from East Timorese MPs, several of whom argued that the Government should retaliate by asking the Australian police to leave the country.

The commander of the 200-strong Australian police contingent in Dili, Steve Lancaster, told reporters late yesterday that Inspector Hornai became "agitated" and took off his uniform shirt and handed it to the Australian officer, who had explained to him that there was an agreement in place that Timorese police should not wear their uniforms in public. Commander Lancaster said the Australian asked Inspector Hornai to put the uniform back on.

But Inspector Hornai has given a different version of the incident, saying that the Australian repeatedly demanded that he take off the uniform. He said he was "humiliated" by doing so in front of about 40 onlookers.

Inspector Hornai said he and his men were ordered to wear their uniforms to an official briefing at police headquarters that was attended by dignitaries including the head of the UN's Dili mission, Sukehiro Hasegawa, and Dr Barris.

Commander Lancaster said an inquiry conducted by UN police had supported his own findings that at no time did any Australian police officer direct East Timorese police to take off their uniforms in public.

Commander Lancaster said the Australian police had acted in good faith in the incident. It was for the safety and wellbeing of the East Timorese police that they had been directed not to wear their uniforms in public because of "mixed community feelings" towards them, he said.

Inspector Hornai is one of the most senior officers still serving in the Timorese police after the 3200-strong force disintegrated when violence erupted in Dili in late April. The academy he runs will be at the centre of UN efforts to rebuild the force.

UN acts at last on sex crimes in Timor

Sydney Morning Herald - August 30, 2006

Lindsay Murdoch, Dili — For years the United Nations tried to cover up perverted and outrageous behaviour by uniformed and civilian personnel who have served in East Timor since 1999.

But as a new wave of more than 2000 UN-employed police and staff prepare to travel to the capital Dili, Sukehiro Hasegawa, the top UN official in East Timor, has acknowledged for the first time that the UN system failed to bring anybody to justice for crimes that included sexual abuse of children and bestiality.

Dr Hasegawa declared that the UN's Integrated Mission in East Timor, which officially became operational on Monday, would enforce a "zero tolerance" policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse committed by uniformed and civilian UN personnel.

He said several UN staff would be employed solely to enforce the policy, which will include briefings for all staff at which "they will be made aware of the consequences of any activity

they may carry out that could blacken the authority of the United Nations".

Dr Hasegawa, a special representative of the Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, said the UN "places a great deal of importance" on the efforts to prevent the abuse of East Timorese. The latest mission will be made up of 1608 international police, including 130 Australians, 34 military liaison officers and about 500 civilian staff.

Among deeply religious East Timorese, the behaviour of a small number of the 18,000 UN personnel from 113 countries who have served in the country in the past was spoken about only in whispers.

But the UN establishment in New York was shocked when it received an internal report last month exposing a culture that covered up behaviour that enraged many UN staff, several of whom resigned in disgust.

The report revealed that peacekeepers left behind at least 20 babies they had fathered to poverty-stricken Timorese women who are now "stigmatised" and in some cases "ostracised" by their communities.

It revealed that one UN peacekeeper from an unnamed country sexually abused two boys and two girls in the enclave of Oecussi. In early 2001, two Jordanian soldiers were evacuated home with injured penises after attempting sexual intercourse with goats.

The report warned that the UN's credibility can be "seriously compromised" by its inability to ensure prosecutions of UN personnel who commit sex crimes.

A resolution passed last Friday by the UN Security Council, which established the integrated mission, urged countries sending personnel to East Timor to conduct pre-deployment awareness training about sexual exploitation and abuse of the local population.

It also urged countries to "take disciplinary action and other action to ensure full accountability in cases of such conduct involving their personnel".

AFP made me strip, says Timor officer

Sydney Morning Herald - August 29, 2006

Lindsay Murdoch, Dili — An Australian federal policeman allegedly demanded that a senior East Timorese police officer take off his uniform in public in an incident that has angered Timorese MPs and may lead to a diplomatic protest.

The president of the East Timorese parliament, Francisco Guterres, said yesterday that the alleged behaviour of the unidentified policeman was an abuse of East Timor's rights as an independent country.

Mr Guterres has summoned the Interior Minister, Alcino Barris, to appear in parliament today to explain to MPs what happened. "All members of parliament want to complain about this," Mr Guterres said.

The head of the East Timorese police academy, Julio Hornai, told the Herald yesterday that he was humiliated by the incident, which, he said, "violated the dignity of East Timor". "I don't have a problem with the Australian police who came to help solve our problems," Inspector Hornai said. "But it doesn't mean that they can come here and not respect us."

Inspector Hornai said that on Saturday afternoon the police vehicle he was driving along a main street in Dili was stopped by an Australian Federal Police vehicle with two Australian policemen and two Malaysian soldiers on board.

One of the Australians confronted him, saying that the seven other Timorese police in the vehicle should not be wearing police uniforms. Inspector Hornai said that he tried to explain that he and his men were returning to the academy after attending briefings at police headquarters.

Inspector Hornai said that Mr Barris, who was also present, had ordered him and his men to attend the briefing in uniform. Inspector Hornai said the Australian demanded that he take off his uniform

even though he had made a call on his mobile telephone to Mr Barris to confirm that he had been ordered to wear it.

As a crowd of about 40 on-lookers gathered, Inspector Hornai said, he took the top part of his uniform off. "I felt humiliated ... people were watching," he said. "The Australian then said, 'Put the uniform in the vehicle', and they would escort us to the academy."

Inspector Hornai said that before they reached the academy one of the Timorese policemen in his vehicle got out near his home. "The Australian called out and demanded that the policeman take his uniform off before he went home," Inspector Hornai said. "The agent took it off in the middle of the road ... in full view of the public."

An AFP spokesman in Dili could not provide any information about the incident. However, Antero Lopes, head of the international police in East Timor, said the AFP commander "assured me that no AFP officer under his command has stripped a [Timorese police] officer of their uniform".

POLITICAL/SOCIAL CRISIS

Alkatiri says foreigners plotted coup against him

Associated Press - August 30, 2006

Canberra — Former East Timor Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri said in an Australian television interview that unidentified foreigners had approached army commanders in a failed bid to organize a coup against him.

He also said in the interview, aired Wednesday by public broadcaster SBS, that Australian Prime Minister John Howard had pressured him to step down.

Alkatiri was forced to quit in June over allegations that he had recruited a secret hit squad to target his political opponents. He has denied the allegations.

He had also been under intense political pressure for weeks because his decision to dismiss 600 rebellious soldiers triggered a wave of violence

in the capital, Dili, that killed at least 30 people and forced 150,000 to flee their homes.

Alkatiri told SBS that "foreign nationals" tried to organize a coup against him because he was "too independent" and threatened Australian interests in oil and gas fields in the seabed between the two countries.

"I was informed by the commanders of the (East Timorese) army of the situation," Alkatiri told SBS. "They (the army chiefs) were approached by some Timorese and some foreign nationals but I was fully aware and confident in the command of the army that I didn't think it was an issue that could worry me and it was nothing," he added.

Alkatiri said the commanders were not certain of the foreigners' nationalities, but they were either Australian or American.

Asked if he had any evidence that Australia was involved in the alleged coup attempt, he said he did not. "Evidence? No. But the only prime minister in the world that was really 'advising me' — quote, unquote — to step down was the prime minister of Australia during... these difficult days," Alkatiri said.

Howard was not immediately available for comment. Howard had blamed a failure of leadership in East Timor for the worst violence the country had experienced since the bloody aftermath of its 1999 vote for independence from Indonesia.

But Howard was always careful not to publicly single out Alkatiri for criticism, saying the political crisis was a matter for the East Timorese to resolve.

Alkatiri has long complained of foreign interests attempting to destabilize his leadership but has never before suggested alleged Australian involvement in a plot to violently overthrow him.

Officer at centre of Timor violence in mass jailbreak

Sydney Morning Herald - August 31, 2006

Lindsay Murdoch, Dili — Alfredo Reinado, the swaggering military police officer blamed for plunging East Timor into chaos, has escaped from Dili's main jail with 55 other prisoners, including police accused of serious crimes during the violence in May.

Scores of Australian and Portuguese police rushed to the jail in the suburb of Becora after the dramatic mass breakout late yesterday. The escape has created a new crisis for international security forces in East Timor, who have been struggling to curb gang violence.

Reinado has become a cult hero for some East Timor youth since the 39-year-old Australian-trained major ordered his men to open fire on government troops on Dili's outskirts on May 23.

No one was hurt in the escape. A Timorese security guard at the jail said "they walked out through the front door". An Australian policeman refused to give details. "It's still sketchy — its mayhem in there," he said.

East Timor's Prime Minister, Jose Ramos Horta, said two weeks ago after visiting the jail — where New Zealand forces have been deployed — that security should be improved.

Reinado had been detained by Australian soldiers in Dili on July 26 on charges of illegally possessing weapons. He was angered by his arrest and refused to sign court papers. A judge ordered that he be remanded in custody with eight of his men.

Paulo Remedios, one of Reinado's lawyers, said last night that he had raised the subject of security at the jail, which houses about 200 inmates, with authorities on Monday at Reinado's request.

"Threats have been made against Alfredo and he was taking them seriously," Mr Remedios said. "He told me of a plan to snatch him from the jail and to take him out of Dili on a boat — that was the rumour that my client heard," he said. Mr Remedios said Reinado's concerns about being kidnapped had been recorded in court documents.

Mr Remedios said he was shocked and surprised Reinado, who earlier yesterday was visited by members of his family, had arranged his own escape without being forced. "He was settled, his case was coming up," he said.

Another Dili lawyer, Benevidos Barros, also said last night that he had seen Reinado on Tuesday. "He never said anything about planning to escape, but I can confirm he is no longer in Becora prison," Mr Barros said, adding that Reinado should give himself up to the President, Xanana Gusmao, who he respects, so he could pursue a claim for wrongful arrest.

Mr Barros said the arrest warrant used by the Australian soldiers to detain Reinado was not properly executed under existing laws in East Timor.

At the height of East Timor's crisis in May, Reinado declared war on the then prime minister, the embattled Mari Alkatiri, saying: "I don't care if I die tomorrow."

A charismatic braggard, Reinado was hailed as a hero, particularly in the west of the country, from where comes, for helping to bring about the Mr Alkatiri's downfall.

East Timor - Downfall of a prime minister

SBS Dateline - August 30, 2006

Two months back, when East Timor's then Prime Minister, Mari Alkatiri, was dramatically forced to resign after weeks of violence and chaos, from many quarters, there was an audible sigh of relief. Gone was the man variously described as undemocratic, alleged to have armed a hit squad to eliminate his political opponents and a crypto-bloody-Marxist to boot! Alkatiri, of course, maintains he was the victim of a concerted effort to oust him. Meanwhile, Australia has spent millions of dollars supporting the idea of constitutional democracy in East Timor and has hundreds of troops there maintaining the fragile peace.

But, post the violence, there are key strategic and security issues at stake for both countries. Indeed, as we'll see in a moment, new information is coming to light that demands scrutiny. Dateline sent David O'Shea and John Martinkus, two Dateline reporters with a long history of covering East Timor, back to the troubled fledgling nation to our near North.

Reporters: David O'Shea and John Martinkus

David O'Shea: Although he is putting on a brave face, 2006 will go down as a bad year for Rogerio Lobato. Even the cake-maker got his birthday wrong.

Rogerio Labato (Translation): The birth date is 25-7-2016.

Following the violence in May, the former interior minister resigned. Tainted by allegations he'd armed a hit squad and under intense pressure, Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri was forced to resign one month later. According to Rogerio Lobato, a great injustice has occurred.

Labato (Translation): The prime minister, who was democratically elected, was shamelessly discredited because of a film.

The film Lobato refers to is the ABC 'Four Corners' program broadcast in June containing the damning hit squad allegations. Lobato has been charged but despite the very public crucifixion of Alkatiri, there have never been any charges laid against him.

Mari Alkatiri, former prime minister: I am fully confident because I have said I have nothing to do with these kinds of things.

Major Alfredo Reinado, (Translation): This is your last warning young men!

On 23 May, Major Alfredo Reinado fired the first shots of the crisis. He was Australian army-trained and was leading a group of rebel soldiers who had split from the army and, along with some policemen, were now firing on their former colleagues. Reinado insisted that he had fired in self-defence but I was there and I clearly saw and heard him shoot first. The soldiers who were fired

on that day said the attack against them came out of the blue.

Soldier (Translation): He counted up to seven, I heard him. Seven, yes, I heard that. I didn't hear anything after seven. I only heard gunshots. I thought they were allies so why were they firing at us? As an officer I had to respond.

Curiously, just days before, politician Leandro Isaac, a staunch opponent of prime minister Alkatiri, told me that something big was about to happen, 'I didn't realise how big it was going to get.' So why did Major Reinado attack? The former prime minister insists that what happened here at Fatu Ahi was the launch of a premeditated campaign to oust him.

Alkatiri: I think Alfredo Reinado was instructed to come down to Fatu Ahi and to restart everything with violence because this is the only way they can provoke everything — to start violence to justify everything.

This was the beginning of four days of chaos in the capital, Dili, before the arrival of Australian forces. As a witness to that upheaval, I have come back with colleague John Martinkus, who has covered East Timor for 10 years. Following Reinado's opening volley, the second major attack of the crisis was led by a man called Rai Los. He told 'Four Corners' that he was the leader of the so-called 'hit squad' and was supposed to be killing people on behalf of Alkatiri.

Well, how then does he explain this amateur footage? The man that filmed it told Dateline these are Rai Los's men and they were fighting alongside the forces they are meant to be killing. They are all fighting the national army and, by extension, the government of Mari Alkatiri. But Rai Los is adamant he didn't join the forces rebelling against Alkatiri.

Rai Los, hit squad leader, (Translation): I didn't go there to join them, I went to stop them. I talked to them, I'd been told to stop them by force, but I had other ideas. I wanted to stop them by using negotiation and dialogue.

You would have to say that taking up arms and firing at the army is an unusual method of

dialogue. East Timor's Prosecutor-General is still investigating the incident and confirms Rai Los's role in the fighting in Taci Tolu, on the outskirts of Dili.

Reporter: So it was confirmed that Rai Los was involved in the fighting in Taci Tolu, they led the attack, and they began the shooting?

Longuinos: Yes, thank you very much.

Just as Alfredo Reinado had started the battle and then withdrawn, so did Rai Los. All that's left today of this crucial event in May is a pile of empty cartridge shells. Rai Los's claims about his role in the attack raise serious questions about his credibility and his damning allegations against Alkatiri.

Over the days that followed it seemed everyone had a gun. And many of them were handed out by this man — Police Commissioner and Alkatiri critic, Paulo Martins. The Commissioner admits to emptying the police armoury and distributing the weapons just before the violence began, a fact confirmed by former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri.

Alkatiri: The Police Commander, Paulo Martins, said the weapons were not in storage and they had been allocated to different police units. He was saying one of the units was in Ailieu and in Dili and in Liquica.

By coincidence or otherwise, the anti-Alkatiri forces were concentrated in precisely the areas named by Alkatiri.

Reporter (Translation): The weapons you sent to Ailieu, where are they now?

Paulo Martins, Police Commander (Translation): The guns that were transferred from Ailieu are now back in Ailieu.

Reporter (Translation): Where?

Martins (Translation): The Police Reserve Unit.

It's common knowledge that members of the police reserve unit had joined the rebels, along with many civilians.

Martins (Translation): The fact is that no one has

proved that the civilians used police guns.

If that is the case, how did this police weapon end up in the hands of Leandro Isaac? He is a member of East Timor's Parliament and he's carrying a police issue Steyr rifle.

Leandro Isaac, independent member of parliament (Translation): Because East Timor, especially Dili was in a state of war! WAR! And if I had nuclear bombs, I'd use them.

Reporter (Translation): Some people might be asking why a member of parliament is using a gun?

Isaac, (Translation): There's a difference between using and owning.

Reporter (Translation): And now the gun is?

Isaac, (Translation): It is back with the owner. I am not the owner.

Reporter (Translation): Who is the owner?

Isaac, (Translation): A policeman that was here at the time.

The most horrific incident of the four days was the massacre of unarmed police on 25 May. It was carnage. 9 police were shot dead and 27 were wounded, all of this done by three soldiers, so the story goes.

The UN is investigating the incident. We can offer a dramatically different scenario. This footage suggests there were many more than three soldiers firing. One eyewitness we spoke to claims he saw civilians shooting at the police from these palm trees. And this group of armed men, some of them in civilian clothes, were among many unidentified gunmen at the scene. Who were they and does the presence of groups like this cast doubt on the accepted version of events?

Dateline was told the UN has video evidence supporting the version we have offered. Was this deadly confrontation part of a pattern to discredit the army and further undermine the prime minister? With security spiralling out of control in East Timor, Australian troops arrived to more damaging allegations against Alkatiri, which were big news in Australia.

SBS news story: East Timor's Prime Minister, Mari Alkatiri has today dismissed a string of serious allegations and repeated his claim that he is being forced from power.

Forces loyal to Mr Alkatiri have also been accused of massacring 60 unarmed protesters and dumping their bodies in a mass grave. Mr Alkatiri also stands accused of trying to kill opposition leader Fernando Araujo.

Alkatiri: It is just completely false. I think this kind of accusations and allegations is part of the whole plan trying to demonise me but nothing is true, it is completely false.

True or false, Australia apparently took the threat against opposition leader Fernando Araujo very seriously. They flew his wife and son to Darwin on two Black Hawk helicopters from this isolated airport in the south-west of the country. She arrived just in time to make the Australian news bulletins.

Mrs Araujo: In Australia where you can speak and you can debate and your house will not be burned down and be threatened to be killed.

It's worth noting that neither the death threats nor the allegations of mass graves have ever been proved. While Australia protected Araujo's family, many East Timorese say his Democratic Party, or PD, is actually responsible for coordinating the anti-Alkatiri mobs.

Reporter: You provide the trucks to bring them in to town. PD is involved in organising the transport to bring these people into town.

Fernando Araujo, opposition leader: For demonstrations this is the people's right. If they burn house, this is a crime, they should be arrested. It's not my responsibility.

And Araujo had plenty of help stirring up anti-Alkatiri sentiment. Take for instance Rui Lopes — a man made wealthy through his close connection with Kopassus, the notorious Indonesian Special Forces.

Rui Lopes (Translation): We are ready to die, we're ready to defend, and ready to kill.

When Dateline went looking for Rui Lopes, we found he had crossed the border into Indonesia.

Martinkus: It's a shame. Rui Lopes is not at home. He has had lots of meetings with those people and has provided money and logistics to the PD party. And what we wanted to ask him was — where was the money coming from?

Araujo: I, er, I never get any money from Rui Lopes. Actually we have the same view that Mari is threatening this country, is destroying this country. We organise the demonstration together.

Another of Araujo's associates and supporters is Nemecio de Carvalho. He's a former leader of one of the most bloodthirsty militia that terrorised Timor during 1999. De Carvalho is under house arrest for his militia activities.

Nemecio de Carvalho: So Rui Lopes, I and other people and, according to me, now most Timorese are against Fretilin because they are undemocratic.

Another influential player in this drama is the Catholic Church. The church was openly opposed to Alkatiri and his government, as this April 2005 letter shows.

Church letter: 'The citizens of this country don't identify with the model that this government wants to impose on Timorese society. It's completely alien and cut off from the roots of our cultural, social and historic realities.'

Both of East Timor's bishops signed it and sent it to the president of parliament, asking that

Church letter: 'they decide on the immediate removal of the current prime minister, Dr Alkatiri and his government, and the appointment of a new prime minister who would immediately form a government.'

The letter was ignored. But the church has apparently been involved in more than letter writing. Reliable sources in the army high command told Dateline that two priests personally urged them to oust Alkatiri. Father Apolinario was one of them.

Reporter: Is that true?

Father Apolinario: I can't say anything.

Reporter: Is it true you went to visit, to talk or not?

Bishop Ricardo da Silva, a co-signatory of the letter, also wasn't keen to discuss the church's alleged approaches to the army or FFDTL.

Bishop Ricardo: Not true — people want to extend everything — not true.

Reporter: Thank you, Bishop.

Alkatiri: It means what they couldn't do at that time they decided to plan it better and to do it in a different way. I don't think we can really blame the church as an institution.

And there was more. According to top level army sources, in late 2005, armed forces chief Brigadier-General Taur Matan Ruak and Lt-Colonel Falur Rate Laek were approached by two Timorese leaders accompanied by two foreigners on two separate occasions. The four also asked the army, or FFDTL, to remove Prime Minister Alkatiri. Again the FFDTL refused.

Alkatiri: I was aware. I was informed by the commanders of the FFDTL of the situation, that they were approached by some Timorese and some foreign nationals, but I was fully aware and confident in the command of the army that I didn't think that it was an issue that could worry me and for me it was nothing.

Martinkus: The two foreign nationals who were involved with approaching the military here to convince them to mount a coup against you, Were they Australian?

Alkatiri: Even the commanders were not clear on this, if they were Australian or American — between these two. But I still have no clear information from the command if they were Australian or American but surely they were English-speaking.

So who would want to mount a coup in East Timor? And why? Mari Alkatiri says it's simply because he was too independent and threatened Australian interests in the oil and gas fields of the Timor Sea.

Alkatiri: What I was doing in my term was to defend the interests of my people in having the resources to develop this country, independently. Not to be dependent. I was fully aware we have our right and we still have our right on the Timor Sea and we have to defend it. Not because I am anti-Australian. I like very much Australia as a country, as a nation, as a people. I would never be anti-Australia.

Martinkus: Do you have any evidence that Australia was involved at some level in the effort to seek your resignation?

Alkatiri: Evidence, no. But the only prime minister in the world that was really "advising me" quote-unquote, to step down, was the Prime Minister of Australia during these days, these difficult days.

John Howard, on the other hand, is far more disposed to Alkatiri's replacement as prime minister Jose Ramos Horta. Just days after being sworn in, new PM Ramos Horta presided over the historic signing of the first oil production sharing contract between the two countries.

Jose Ramos-Horta: When you deal with oil and gas and economics, well, you have to be fair and realistic and pragmatic. Australia cannot always be philanthropic with everything it does for East Timor.

I asked Horta's Energy Minister, Jose Texiera, whether he thought East Timor was getting a fair deal in the lucrative oil and gas agreements.

Jose Texiera, energy minister: It's not the ideal outcome but it's the pragmatic outcome — to give us an outcome.

It seems pragmatism has won the day but the former prime minister says he wanted to ensure East Timor had greater control over its natural resources, particularly the Greater Sunrise oil and gas field.

Alkatiri: What I have been doing up until now is to really get some independent feasibility study of getting the pipeline to Timor Leste and an LNG plant in Timor Leste. And this is very important. What Australia is trying to achieve is having

Sunrise sent to Darwin. This is Australia's interests. But my interests can't be always coinciding with Australian interests and vice versa, and this is the reality.

In the midst of the crisis today, there's a media event being staged at President Xanana Gusmao's house. He's taking local journalists on a tour of his much loved garden.

Reporter: Is gardening one way you can forget the troubles?

Xanana Gusmao: Yes.

Xanana Gusmao is the man who holds the greatest moral influence in East Timor and is often portrayed as staying above the political fray, but this murky affair — with its many unanswered questions — has seen him at the very centre of events. In March this year, in a nationally televised address, he responded to the recent split in the country's army, speaking out about discrimination against recruits from the west of the country.

Whatever the President's intentions, his words had immediate effect. That very night the first easterner's houses were burned down and the first refugees fled their homes. Many felt that the President had taken sides with East Timorese from the west of the country, who are mostly anti-Alkatiri.

And again today he is very proactive. On his front doorstep, literally, two guns and a man who said he got them off the former interior minister.

Man: (Translation): In the name of the government, they distributed weapons. Coming from the mountains as we do, how can we afford to buy these weapons?

This media event draws an intriguing cast of characters, including Rai Los, whose hit squad allegations brought down the prime minister. Rai Los is warmly received by the President, but as we pointed out earlier, Rai Los attacked the national army, which under the constitution is headed by President Gusmao.

Kirsty Sword Gusmao is East Timor's Australian-

born first lady. In May she was quoted in the 'Australian' newspaper saying that Alkatiri should resign. Many here regarded her comments as symbolic of Australian meddling.

Kirsty Sward-Gusmao, East Timorese First Lady: There was some rather mischievous reporting going on by the 'Australian' newspaper. I did not call for his resignation. I said there were increasing demands for him to resign but I didn't make any forceful demands for him to resign but I did express an opinion on that issue.

Reporter: It's been picked up here as meddling Australian intervention in the internal affairs of East Timor.

Sward: No, it was a misquote.

Reporter: Some people are suggesting what happened was Australia's first coup. What do you say to that?

Gusmao: No, I already told people that we are aware of our own mistakes, our own wrongdoings. We are very aware of this.

Reporter: So the coup is...?

Gusmao: No, no.

Reporter: Thank you.

Dateline made multiple requests for an extended interview with President Gusmao, but he declined.

Nemecio de Carvalho: He is the boss in the struggle. Now he get nothing. Just a symbolic role according to our constitution.

Whatever his motivations, Nemecio de Carvalho, the former militiaman is prepared to say what many East Timorese now believe but are afraid to spell out — that the President and/or others wanted Alkatiri removed and the only way to achieve it was through drastic means.

Carvalho: There must be a crisis and instability, including war. So he can play in such a situation. Without conflict, without instability, without anarchy, war, maybe he will never get more power.

Reporter: There are also a lot of people — much

of it is whispers — saying the President is behind all this stuff?

Kirsty Sward-Gusmao: There are bound to be comments like that made, I can say with absolute confidence, as an insider and someone who has accompanied very closely this whole situation, that it's nothing but a load of codswallop.

Meanwhile, 150,000 East Timorese sit in refugee camps, waiting for their leaders to sort out the mess.

George Negus: The question marks still hanging over our troubled northern neighbour. And with Australia and the East Timorese committed to constitutional democracy in the fledgling nation, Xanana Gusmao as President may find it impossible to remain silent and aloof about these violent events.

And in a dramatic, late-breaking development, Alfredo Reinado, the Australian-trained rebel leader David O'Shea was with when he got caught in the crossfire that started the May hostilities, earlier today escaped with 55 other prisoners being held in Dili's Becora jail. Reinado had been arrested and charged with murder and firearm offences.

Reporter/Camera — David O'Shea, John Martinkus
Editors — Wayne Love, Scott Fergusson
Subtitling — Robyn Fallick, Silvia Lemos
Producer — Mike Carey

Police, military liaison officers authorised for Timor

Associated Press - August 25, 2006

United Nations — The UN Security Council voted unanimously Friday to authorize 1,600 international police and 34 military liaison officers for a follow-on mission in East Timor — but no troops.

A UN political mission had been scheduled to shut down on May 20 of this year. But violence erupted

in East Timor in March after then-Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri fired about 600 soldiers, sparking clashes between rival security forces in the capital that later spilled into gang warfare, looting and arson.

The Security Council decided to extend the mandate of the political mission until Aug. 20, and then for another week because of division among council members over whether the foreign troops helping to restore security at the government's request should become part of a new UN peacekeeping mission or operate without a UN umbrella.

Australia, which is leading a multinational task force that includes troops from New Zealand, Portugal and Malaysia, told the council it was prepared to continue the current arrangement and finance it, an offer supported by the United States, Britain and Japan. Other council members backed East Timor's call for a UN military contingent.

Ghana's UN Ambassador Nana Effah-Apenteng, the current council president, said including a military contingent in the new UN Integrated Mission in East Timor, which will be known as UNMIT, was dropped because of the differences.

"We think that stability is a reflection of underlying forces, social and economic, and I think those issues should be addressed, but ideally it would have been better to have a military component, but this was not acceptable to all the members of the council," he said.

The resolution notes that "while the manifestations of the current crisis... are political and institutional, poverty and its associated deprivations, including high urban unemployment, especially for youth, also contributed to the crisis." "The council expressed support" for the deployment of international security forces" by Portugal, Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia "and their activities aiming to restore and maintain security" in East Timor. It called on all parties in East Timor to cooperate fully with the deployment and operations of the UN mission and international security forces.

The council authorized the new mission to deploy "an appropriate civilian component, including up

to 1,608 police personnel, and an initial component of up to 34 military liaison and staff officers. "Effah-Apenteng said the resolution shows "the UN is still engaged there... the UN is not abandoning them, and there are a whole lot of things that should be done."

Indonesia invaded the former Portuguese colony in 1975 and ruled the tiny half-island territory until 1999, when a UN-organized plebiscite resulted in an overwhelming vote for independence. Withdrawing Indonesian troops and their militia auxiliaries destroyed much of the country's infrastructure and killed at least 1,500 people.

The United Nations sent a UN peacekeeping force and administered the territory for 2 1/2 years, then handed it to the Timorese on May 20, 2002.

The resolution, sponsored by Japan, establishes the new mission for six months "to support the government and relevant institutions, with a view to consolidating stability, enhancing a culture of democratic governance, and facilitating political dialogue among Timorese stakeholders, in their efforts to bring about a process of national reconciliation and to foster social cohesion. "The UN mission will also support the government" in all aspects" of its first presidential and parliamentary elections since independence, scheduled for 2007. The council said the elections "will be a significant step forward in the process of strengthening the fragile democracy in East Timor."

Even in camps, East Timorese fear for their lives

Agence France Presse - August 23, 2006

Nelson da Cruz, Dili — At this makeshift camp, thousands of East Timor's displaced people fear for their safety as youths intermittently hurl rocks at their temporary homes and rumours swirl of more serious attacks.

"United we are, in peace and building our country!" reads a banner in the local Tetum language stretching above the gate to the high-walled Obrigado Barracks in the East Timorese

capital.

Those remaining at the camp — a motley array of yellow, white and blue tents — feel however that permanent peace is still a distant hope.

"We are often pelted with stones. Even this morning, stones were thrown here," said Dominggos Gomes, a 34-year-old father of six. "I am constantly worried and on guard," he added.

Despite the presence of some 3,000 international peacekeepers deployed to East Timor in May, when violence rocked Dili and led to 21 deaths, sporadic bouts of low-level unrest have continued to plague the capital.

The original fighting between factions of East Timor's security forces — triggered by the sacking of 600 deserting soldiers — degenerated into communal violence on the streets.

Gangs played up previously unimportant differences between ordinary people from the east and west of the tiny nation.

This gang activity appears to have persisted, with few of the 150,000 people estimated to have fled to makeshift camps returning home.

Last weekend around 200 youths — some wielding spears, knives, darts or slingshots — torched six homes and assaulted an Australian police officer over the weekend. Twenty-five people were detained.

On Tuesday two Australian police officers were slightly injured and three of their vehicles destroyed as they attempted to break up a battle between two groups of rock-throwing youths in an area near another camp.

Australian police fired live rounds into the air after coming under attack and called in Portuguese police reinforcements who fired rubber bullets to disperse the crowd, the Lusa news agency reported.

Last week petrol bombs were thrown into this tent camp, which provides shelter to some 3,700 people — even though the United Nations headquarters in East Timor is just across the road.

The UN expressed alarm over security at the

temporary shelters last week, with a security advisor saying they appeared to have been singled out for attacks. At Obrigado Barracks, most people hail from the east.

Liberio dos Santos, a camp coordinator, said that just over 3,300 people have left the camp as rumours of attacks flared in recent weeks. "The main reason for their departure is that they heard that the Obrigado Barracks camp will be burned down and people from eastern East Timor eradicated," he said.

Many of those who have left shifted to other camps not seen as being under threat, he said, rather than returning home.

Camp-dweller Gomes said he believed dozens of local youths were behind the stone-throwing, adding that he and others here were now too afraid to leave the camp after dark. "If I venture out of the gate, I could be the target of the stones or even killed by those outside," he said.

A small security post at the entrance gate is manned by four uniformed security guards provided by UN headquarters, armed only with walkie-talkies.

Before it was turned into a camp UN staff parked their cars at the barracks. It was used by peacekeepers sent to restore calm in 1999, when the East Timorese voted for independence from neighbouring Indonesia.

Militias backed by the retreating Indonesian military launched bloody retaliatory attacks, leaving some 1,400 people dead.

Zita Maria Soares, 24, is another at the camp living fretfully. "I am constantly worried. Stones and fuel bombs are still being thrown at us. It is only a matter of time before someone throws a hand-grenade," she said, clutching her four-month-old son.

Coordinator dos Santos said demands for better security have fallen on deaf ears.

International police have defended their decision not to place troops at each of the refugee camps. "It's not part of the plan. It's never been the

case that police and military are positioned at the camps," Tim Dodd, a spokesman for the Australian police contingent, said on Saturday.

Timor government 'saddened' over latest violence

Agence France Presse - August 23, 2006

Dili — East Timor expressed regret Wednesday over two Australian policemen injured in a mob attack by youths overnight, the latest unrest to hit the tiny nation.

"The government is very saddened that violence is still ongoing," second deputy prime minister Rui Maria de Araujo told a press conference in Dili. He confirmed that three youths had been arrested by international police for the attack near Dili's Comoro neighbourhood on Tuesday.

Portuguese police told the Lusa news agency that the clash took place after Australian police tried to break up a battle between two groups of around 30 rock-throwing youths in an area located near a refugee camp.

Australian police fired live rounds into the air after coming under attack and called in Portuguese police reinforcements who fired rubber bullets to disperse the crowd, Lusa reported. The mob also destroyed three patrol cars used by the Australian police.

Some 82,000 people are living at camps set up in Dili for those who were displaced by a wave of violence by machete-wielding gangs which swept the former Portuguese colony in May, killing at least 21 people.

East Timor invited a 3,200-strong international peacekeeping force to the country of around one million people in the wake of the unrest, which was sparked by infighting among factions in the military and police.

Houses burnt down as gangs of youths terrorise Dili

Sydney Morning Herald - August 20, 2006

Youths burnt several houses to the ground in the East Timorese capital yesterday in the latest outbreak of unrest to hit the strife-torn country, eyewitnesses and international peacekeepers said.

"There were around 50 houses burnt," said Marito, a 46-year-old resident of the Comoro neighbourhood where gang battles raged earlier this year.

He said about 1000 people came from the Comoro market area and Lurumata. However, he said it wasn't clear if the attacks were targeting a particular ethnic group.

A Portuguese policeman who declined to give his name said only a handful of houses had been burnt. "Only four to five houses were burnt this morning, so maybe there were 10 houses burnt since yesterday," he said.

Hundreds of houses in Dili have been unoccupied since May when 150,000 people fled to refugee camps to escape violence which wracked the capital.

Infighting among factions in the military and police sparked the violence, which killed at least 21 people and degenerated into ethnic warfare on the streets, prompting the deployment of peacekeepers.

The ethnic violence pitched youths from East Timor's eastern districts against those from the west.

Darkness brings fear in East Timor

Reuters - August 17, 2006

Jerry Norton, Dili — During the day, Fernanda

Gomez stands at her tiny roadside kiosk selling canned goods and sundries in front of the blackened remains of burned-out houses in her village near Dili.

At night, the 25-year-old mother of two retreats to a refugee camp near the city's airport. "It's difficult to return home in the evening," she tells Reuters, because people were still fighting.

Nearly three months after an international force of soldiers and police arrived in this tiny country — which had been racked by violence for weeks — calm has returned during the day.

But some Timorese say in their home neighbourhoods night still belongs to gangs who fight one another with stones and homemade weapons, looting and harassing those brave enough to stay.

Such fears are sometimes exaggerated, Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta told reporters on Thursday. "Here we deal with a traumatised society. There is a collective problem that goes back many, many years," and even rumours or youth with fireworks scare people away, he said.

East Timor suffered decades of conflict and brutality in 24 years of Indonesian rule that ended with a 1999 vote for independence marked by bloodshed and chaos.

Justified or not, many Timorese remain worried. "The situation is not safe in the evening. Last night, there were people throwing rocks at each other... so we don't feel good to sleep at our house," says Jubelina Gusmao, 36, at the small jewellery store she owns in Dili.

Her shop was closed for two months during the height of the violence, which was sparked by protests from sacked soldiers.

The protests spiralled into fighting that split East Timor's own security forces, and brought the deaths of more than 20 people as well as widespread burning and looting. More than 100,000 of the country's one million people fled their homes for camps.

East-West divide

Why things got out of control is a matter of

debate but differences between the eastern and western regions of the tiny country half the size of Belgium are most often cited.

Holding a fidgety grandchild in one arm and setting down a water jug with the other, Pasquela Pereia tells Reuters: "We don't feel safe to go home because the people from the western part during the night are still looking for the people from (the east) to fight against them and ask them to move out from the village."

Some from the west say easterners did not help in the independence struggle against Indonesian forces.

Pereia, at 45 already a grandmother of 12, says her home in a village amidst banana trees and rice paddies was burned even though she is from the east and her husband is from the west.

Jobs are scarce in East Timor, and the country is full of young men with little to do who make up most of the gangs.

More than a dozen unemployed youths materialised when this correspondent stopped to ask questions near Tasitolu village, but they said they banded together to protect their homes.

"During the day it's O.K. but during the night we have to organise ourselves to control our village," says one, Janurio Braz, 25. He says Malaysian troops from the international force are visible during the day but stay in their camps after dark.

Similar complaints are heard over and over about the 2,000-plus foreign troops and police led by Australia and also comprising forces from Portugal and New Zealand.

"...police and the military better not stay in just one place, but have to stay in each village and walk in the evening so people can feel safe," says Carla Carvalho dos Santos, 22.

Business is slow at the hardware store where she works because people are too worried to repair and rebuild, she says.

Steve Lancaster, commander of the international forces' near 600-strong police component, said

this week plans were almost set to begin returning East Timorese police to Dili streets, after they were removed because some took sides in the fighting. But it could be weeks or months before a significant Timorese police presence will bolster international forces.

Ramos-Horta said a new mission of 1,600 international police the UN Security Council is expected to approve would make a big difference, enabling creation of "permanent 24-hour police posts in some of the more sensitive areas of the city".

The government believes a variety of measures will get a majority of people out of camps by the end of September, he said.

Meanwhile, Timorese like Fernanda Gomez remain scared. "We are the innocent people. We don't know anything. We have to save ourselves and our children and family because we're afraid," she says.

Youths arrested in wave of violence across Dili

Sydney Morning Herald - August 8, 2006

Violence erupted again in Dili at the weekend as gang members armed with slingshots and rocks roamed the streets. Several people are believed injured and up to six houses burnt down in the worst attacks in the city since the prime minister, Mari Alkatiri, was forced from office in June.

In one incident, young gang members pushed their way into a church screaming "Kill all easterners". Australian and other international police dispersed between 300 and 400 people on Friday, days after Australia announced it was preparing to reduce further the number of its troops and amount of equipment in the country.

The acting commander of Australia's 200-strong police contingent, Tim Dahlstrom, said last night that police had made more than 40 arrests in three days. He said police were investigating what had

prompted the violence after weeks of calm.

Some of the gang members were believed to be supporters of the rebel military officer Alfredo Reinado, who was recently arrested on firearms charges by Australian peacekeepers, observers in Dili said.

Others are believed to be western East Timorese who have vowed to force easterners from the city. Several Australians living in Dili said yesterday that sporadic violence had broken out since Friday, with gangs of up to 100 people seen in different locations. Extra police were called to disperse rock-throwing youths in the Comoro district and near the Australian embassy in the early hours of yesterday.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, has backed attempts to bring to justice hundreds of people, most of them Indonesians, responsible for atrocities committed in East Timor in 1999. He recommended the establishment of a new UN program to help the country achieve justice and reconciliation. It would include a UN-funded serious crimes unit that had its funding withdrawn in May last year.

East Timor's Prime Minister, Jose Ramos Horta, and President, Xanana Gusmao, have said prosecuting Indonesians would not be in the best interests of their country.

Despite peacekeepers, Timor's refugees stay in squalid camps

Agence France Presse - August 5, 2006

Nelson da Cruz, Dili — More than two months after battalions of foreign troops arrived in East Timor to restore calm, tens of thousands of refugees are still living in grim camps, saying they are too terrified to return home.

Sitting under a plastic tarpaulin offering scant protection from rain and mosquitoes, Paolo Soares says he prefers to stay at this crowded convent, even though his youngest daughter contracted

diarrhoea and died here.

"Last Sunday, after I went past my house on a motorbike, I was hit by a rock thrown by my neighbour," said Soares, who originally hails from Baucau in the country's east.

Usually non-existent divisions between east and west were tapped into during the violence that rocked Asia's poorest nation in May, leaving at least 21 people dead.

"I and my family still want to stay here because there is no security guarantee for us," added the 43-year-old father of nine, whose gaunt face shows the strain of losing his child.

Soares and his family fled to the Canossian convent on April 28, when a demonstration by deserting military troops erupted into violence that left two dead and triggered thousands to initially flee their homes.

That demonstration was followed in May by fighting between rival factions of East Timor's security forces, which degenerated into ethnic warfare. Some 3,200 international peacekeepers were rapidly deployed while an estimated 150,000 people left their homes. Barely any have returned.

Some 72,000 people in Dili are still receiving food aid, while about 80,000 people are displaced outside the capital, UN Humanitarian Coordinator Finn Reske-Nielsen said, adding that it was fear keeping them there.

"There's no doubt that the international forces have reestablished peace and security in Dili, but I think there's a perception among many of the IDPs (internally displaced people) that the fundamental issues have not been resolved," he told AFP.

Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta said Thursday he was confident the camps would be emptied within the next two months, promising to set up security posts in each of Dili's suburbs.

"We are certain that within a maximum of two months, the problems of the refugees will be resolved. In the opinion of the president and the government, in September, everyone will go home to

their houses," he told reporters.

But refugee Soares said he was tired of politicians pressuring them to leave. "In my opinion, if the leaders can't lead, it's better we surrender this country to foreigners to lead. They urge us to go home, but they don't know what the reality of our lives here is," he snapped.

Soares and his family are among some 17,000 refugees living cheek-by-jowl inside the thick walls of the convent in Balide, on the outskirts of the seaside capital. Just four unarmed guards patrol the single entrance but refugees say they are safe at such revered religious institutions in the predominantly Catholic nation.

A sharp, foul smell oozes from the emergency toilets. At least 2,000 people shelter under makeshift tarpaulin covers, with the remainder in aid-agency tents or inside the convent. Since May, four children and one adult have died of preventable disease here, said camp director Sister Gueilhermina Marcal.

The convent courtyard has been turned into an informal market, with a dozen vegetable, fruit and noodle sellers vying for space. Nearby mothers bathe their children in an open shower, while adults doze on tarpaulins.

Another refugee, Hipolito Marques, a slim 40-year-old security guard for a Chinese-owned company who heads out to work each day, said he was also staying as the security remained uncertain.

"I want to stay here because I see that the country's leaders haven't sat down together to discuss and resolve the problems in the military, and problems between the military and national police," said Marques.

Director Marcal said the sisters had tried to send some of the refugees back to their villages and Dili's suburbs.

"We have tried to advise them to return to their houses, but three to four days after they return home, the results are not good. People throw rocks at them, threaten them," said the 47-year-old nun. "They all want to go home, but the problem is there is no security."

INDONESIA

Official admits mistakes in Timor

The Australian - August 10, 2006

Stephen Fitzpatrick, Jakarta — One of Indonesia's most senior officials has admitted that his country was directly responsible for failing to stop the murderous chaos that accompanied its withdrawal from East Timor in 1998.

Dino Patti Djalal, a senior Foreign Ministry staffer at the time, said the withdrawal was conducted in an "irrational" manner and that Jakarta never displayed the "heart and will to rein in" Indonesian-backed militia groups who slaughtered thousands after East Timor's independence referendum in 1999.

Speaking at the launch of an analysis of the period by former foreign minister Ali Alatas, Mr Djalal — now President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's official spokesman — made an impassioned plea for Indonesia to learn from its mistakes in East Timor.

He said that if those lessons were not learned "by political officials and security officials, it will not be possible to solve the problems of Aceh, Poso and Papua" — all regions that have experienced extreme ethnic and nationalist revolt. Aceh has recently come under a new autonomy law after a decades-long independence struggle.

Launching his book, *The Pebble in the Shoe: The Diplomatic Struggle for East Timor*, Mr Alatas claimed that the Suharto regime's 24-year occupation of the tiny country had been more benign than was generally recognised and that it was Suharto's erratic successor, BJ Habibie, who was responsible for the poor decisions.

Speaking from the floor during a question-and-answer session afterwards, Mr Djalal went further, saying Indonesia had misruled East Timor but laying the blame for the chaos that accompanied its withdrawal squarely at Dr Habibie's feet.

Dr Habibie, who had replaced the dictator Suharto in 1998, responded petulantly to a letter from John Howard at the end of the same year suggesting

an autonomy option for East Timor. His offer of a referendum proposing independence or integration with Indonesia was made in haste and without regard to "the situation on the ground", Mr Djalal said.

"When you sent me to East Timor to assess the situation (in 1999), it was clear that the people were not ready there, they did not know the concept (of independence)," Mr Djalal told his former boss, Mr Alatas.

"I have spent many sleepless nights thinking about this because we put a timetable straitjacket on the referendum and all because BJ Habibie wanted to take the result to the MPR (Indonesia's upper house of parliament). It was not rational.

"We thought we could just splash lots of money about and that would signify something. We were wrong. East Timor became a police state, we were bribing people we thought were loyal to us, and doing horrible things to people we thought were not loyal to us."

Dr Habibie's eccentric and unpredictable rule has been criticised from outside Indonesia but last night's statements were among the strongest to have been made at official levels in Jakarta.

Mr Djalal's assessment was backed last night by a one-time senior Suharto administration figure, former industry minister Hartato, who said from the floor that the occupation of East Timor was "still an extremely important problem for Indonesia" and that it "must become an issue of extreme introspection for us — I very much agree with what the young man has said".

Mr Alatas responded to Mr Djalal's comments by agreeing that Indonesia must learn from its East Timor mistakes and be careful "not to disregard our problems in the regions, such as in Aceh and Papua".

Former ambassador to Australia Sabam Siagian, unlike Mr Djalal an official speaker at last night's launch, warned that there was still an overwhelmingly Java-centric approach to the way Indonesia's outer islands were administered, something that had contributed to the disaster of East Timor and could continue to create problems.

Former Indonesian official speaks out on East Timor

Radio Australia - August 10, 2006

Reporter: Geoff Thompson

Tony Eastley: One of Indonesia's most senior officials has said that his country ran East Timor like a police state and used bribes and allowed militia violence in a failed attempt to defeat the 1999 referendum on independence.

The unprecedented admission came from Indonesia's presidential spokesman, Dino Patti Djalal, who was a senior Foreign Minister official when the East Timorese overwhelmingly voted for independence.

He was speaking at the launch of a new book about East Timor by Ali Alatas, who was Indonesia's Foreign Minister at the time. Jakarta Correspondent Geoff Thompson reports.

Geoff Thompson: The Pebble in the Shoe is the name of a new book by Indonesia's former Foreign Minister Ali Alatas, a title which repeats something he once said about how Indonesia was affected by East Timor's long struggle for independence. Ali Alatas has a different view now.

Ali Alatas: I have to admit that in its final years the East Timor problem was no longer a mere pebble in the shoe, but had become a big boulder dragging down Indonesia's international reputation to one of its lowest points.

Geoff Thompson: Ali Alatas' book catalogues the long diplomatic path to East Timor's troubled freedom and confirms that it was John Howard's letter to BJ Habibie which sent the then Indonesian President suddenly rushing towards the independence option without consulting his then Foreign Minister.

But last night it was Indonesia's current presidential spokesman, Dino Patti Djalal, who stole the show. He spoke from the floor, not on behalf of Indonesia's President, but as a former

senior Foreign Ministry official who played a part in East Timor's militia-bloodied passage to independence.

Dino Patti Djalal: We never really succeeded. We never really had the heart and will to rein in on the militia, at our own cost, and at the end that is what burned Timor in the end, and that is what ruined the whole peace process.

Geoff Thompson: In 1999, Dino Patti Djalal had the job of putting positive spin on Indonesia's disastrous attempt to defeat the independence momentum. Now he admits Indonesia had no idea what it was doing as it splashed money and permitted violence in a failed bid to win hearts and minds.

Dino Patti Djalal: And in fact what happened was East Timor became sort of a police state, where intelligence controlled all activities.

You could sense that there was tension at the basic level of society. Our strategy for winning hearts and minds was bribing people who we thought were loyal to us and fighting off and probably doing horrible things to those who did not... we thought were not loyal to us. And in such circumstances, there was no way we could win the hearts and minds of the Timorese.

Geoff Thompson: It was an extraordinary speech, made before an audience of dignitaries, including Indonesia's current Foreign Minister, Hassan Wirajuda. Dino Djalal said that Indonesia must learn lessons from its Timor experience, lessons which, he said, made peace in Aceh possible.

In Jakarta, this is Geoff Thompson for AM.

Jakarta-Dili ties on the mend

Straits Times - August 24, 2006

John McBeth — For three years now, the small white house across the street from the football field in the heart of the frontier town of Atambua has been used as a mess by Indonesia's paramilitary Police Mobile Brigade. But they have

still failed to repair some of the smashed windows that bear a lasting testimony to the brutal murder of three United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees (UNHCR) aid workers in September 2000.

The killings by a mob of frenzied militiamen came a year after then-East Timor's vote for independence triggered widespread bloodshed across the former Indonesian province and sent 250,000 to 300,000 refugees fleeing into neighbouring West Timor. About 30,000 to 45,000 of those never returned, preferring to retain Indonesian citizenship and eke out a living in temporary camps and resettlement villages.

The UNHCR pulled out of Atambua after the three workers from the United States, Croatia and Ethiopia were hacked to death with knives and machetes and their bodies burnt.

But despite that horrendous crime — and the ridiculously light sentences subsequently handed out to six men charged with the brutality — the commission returned 18 months later to help in resettling the refugees, some of them the families of militiamen.

That comes as little surprise to those who have admired UNHCR operations in other parts of Asia. Without a doubt, the agency's greatest achievements were during the 1980s, assisting the Vietnamese boat people, Laotian tribal refugees and the tens of thousands of starving, malaria-ravaged Cambodians who flooded into Thailand — particularly from the Khmer Rouge zones — following the 1979 Vietnamese invasion.

In Indonesia, however, the UNHCR earned the ire of the government for its strong public statements on human rights violations in East Timor, a position also taken by the UN Human Rights Commission in calling for an international inquiry into the abuses.

In his newly published book, *The Pebble In The Shoe*, ex-foreign minister Ali Alatas criticises then-commissioner Mary Robinson for acting on her own initiative at the request of a hostile non-member — Portugal.

The Indonesians also acted unreasonably in blaming the UNHCR for being in the wrong place at the

wrong time in Atambua, setting off a series of international repercussions that, after the 1999 bloodshed, only served to isolate Jakarta further. Still despite the worst atrocity in its history, the agency persevered, albeit under restrictive 'Phase Five' security precautions that were only lifted last year.

When it finally ended its mission late last year, all but 4,000 refugees had been permanently resettled, mostly in West Timor. A handful moved to the neighbouring islands of Sumba, Flores and Bali and even fewer accepted a government offer of free migration to Central Kalimantan, where they would have been given 2ha of marginal land. The main reason for not going: It was too far from Timor. Other refugees were taken in by relatives and friendly villagers or settled on land owned by the Catholic Church.

Although 224,000 East Timorese had returned to their homeland by 2002, the 400 or more repatriated in the next three years has slowed even more, to just 20 so far this year. The rest took part in the 2004 parliamentary and presidential elections, marking them as bone fide Indonesian citizens.

Figures vary considerably. The UNHCR says it reintegrated 28,800 East Timorese in 11 resettlement sites around West Timor, but local officials put the number of refugees in the border district of Beru alone at 45,000, or 12,480 families. Aware of the envy that can be aroused by giving too much help to outsiders, the local government has been careful not to ignore the needs of impoverished local residents.

In the village of Naiola, south of Atambua, a mixture of landless West Timorese farmers and refugees from the East Timorese enclave of Oecusse live side by side in apparent harmony. Each of the 290 families has been allotted a plot of half a hectare, many of them planting cashew trees provided by the World Food Program, which could eventually earn them a tidy income. How to survive in the meantime is a daily concern.

Farmer Augustinus Soares Oki, 29, and his wife Josefina, 24, say life is hard, with the nearest water 1.5km away and the newly tilled soil lacking the nutrients to grow corn and other productive

crops. The couple tend papaya trees in their backyard and are also feeding two rented cows, whose second calves will become their own in exchange.

"We work so hard, but the yield is so disappointing," sighs Mr Oki, echoing a sad refrain that is often heard in villages across this sun-burnt province. On occasion he has had to sell rocks from a nearby river to feed his family but, for all of the difficulties, Mr Oki has never thought of returning to his former home. "We came here to save ourselves from the violence," he says. "Why go back?"

It is the same for Ms Magdalena Rekomendosa, 26, who joined the exodus from Dili in 1999 and still lives with her husband and three children in temporary housing on the outskirts of Atambua. Even today, she is not sure what happened back then when the panic began and they ran like everyone else. "The situation was bad, but we really didn't understand it ourselves," she says. "I'm Indonesian and East Timor is still so chaotic."

Relations between East and West Timorese have been through some testing times. No doubt irked by what they feel was a government betrayal, many East Timorese have a reputation as complainers whose demands for special treatment are not always appreciated by their equally impoverished benefactors across the border.

The Indonesian-backed militias, blamed for causing much of the bloodshed in 1999, have long since been disbanded and the military which once supported them has now entered a new, if uncertain, era. The only recent border incident occurred close to the town of Maliana last January when East Timorese police shot dead three former members of the Red and White Iron militia, including one man who was on the UN list of war crimes suspects.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Hassan Wirayuda accused the East Timorese of using excessive force, but Dili claimed that the three were among five Indonesian infiltrators who attacked the patrolling policemen and tried to disarm them. Whatever the truth, Indonesian troops near the site of the incident overlooking the gravel-filled Talau River were not happy to see recent visitors

and instructed them to leave.

With the border demarcation now largely settled, and Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and his East Timorese counterpart Xanana Gusmao on cordial terms, the main issue between the two countries these days appears to be Dili's reluctance so far to implement a 2004 memorandum of understanding to introduce border passes and open three traditional markets along the 175km-long frontier.

New Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta is said to have promised action on both during his recent visit to Jakarta, but no one is holding his breath just yet. "The local East Timorese don't have any basic necessities," says deputy Belu district chief Gregorius Mau Bili, a former Unicef official. "But if we sell to them, the East Timorese government accuses us of fostering illegal trade. We always seem to be in the wrong."

Still, seven years after the Aug 31 referendum that ended Indonesia's brutal 25-year rule over East Timor, Jakarta may finally have good reason to complain and to trumpet the goodness of its intentions.

POLITICS/POLITICAL PARTIES

Alkatiri's ouster sought through extraordinary party congress

Lusa - August 21, 2006

Dili — Intra-mural opponents of former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri's continued leadership of East Timor's dominant FRETILIN party said Monday they hope to convene an extraordinary congress to elect new party leaders.

Vicente Ximenes, an organizer of the FRETILIN Mudanca, or "change" in English, faction told Lusa anti-Alkatiri activists were working for an extraordinary party congress by November, at the latest.

The Timorese are expected to go to the polls in general elections by May of next year.

Ximenes said some 200 FRETILIN activist had met in

Dili Saturday to outline strategy for mobilizing support for calling an extraordinary congress in the wake of Alkatiri's unopposed re-election as party secretary-general in May during the country's spiral of violence.

Foreign Minister Jose Lums Guterres would have the faction's backing if he again challenges Alkatiri for the leadership post, Ximenes said.

In anticipation of the faction meeting, FRETILIN's National Political Commission called Friday on party bodies to apply "adequate treatment" to "acts of indiscipline" by party members.

The faction failed last week in its court challenge of Alkatiri's re-election, when Dili's high court ruled that the May congress vote through a raised-hand ballot violated neither national law nor FRETILIN statutes.

In demanding the ouster of Alkatiri, who resigned as prime minister on June 26, President Xanana Gusmao also publicly questioned the "legitimacy" of his re-election as party leader through the show-of-hands vote.

Alkatiri is under investigation on allegations, he denies, that he set up political hits squads during the wave of violence.

Guterres, at the time Dili's ambassador to the United States and the UN, withdrew from the party leadership race when the congress delegates opted for the raised-hand ballot.

Facing no opposition, Alkatiri and his running mate for party chairman, Parliament Speaker Francisco Guterres, took nearly 94% of the vote.

Ximenes said an extraordinary party congress could be convened in one of two ways, either through the resignation of the current leadership, based on statutes that interdict leaders who face investigation on criminal charges, or the demand of two-thirds of the party's district committees.

Show-of-hands vote to endorse Alkatiri 'legal'

The Australian - August 15, 2006

Mark Dodd — East Timor's highest court has declared legal the controversial "show of hands" vote that endorsed the leadership of then prime minister Mari Alkatiri at a national party congress in May.

The decision is a blow to President Xanana Gusmao, who attacked the Fretilin party congress for acting unconstitutionally in its bid to reassert the authority of the Alkatiri government in the face of worsening political violence.

The challenge was made by eight Fretilin party moderates on behalf of Jose Luis Guterres, a former UN ambassador who tried to unseat Dr Alkatiri but dropped out of the running when the party adopted a show-of-hands vote instead of a secret ballot.

Mr Guterres's supporters said the show of hands was designed to intimidate voters. Mr Gusmao agreed and later accused the Alkatiri camp of vote-buying. But on Friday, East Timor's Court of Appeal ruled that voting procedures adopted at the party congress were not in breach of the constitution.

"This panel of judges of the Court of Appeal decides (that) article 18 (constitution) does not require a vote of the representative assembly of members to be 'direct and secret'," it found. The court said there was no basis to call on Fretilin to reconvene a party congress to elect a new leadership, a demand made by Mr Gusmao.

The result of the leadership spill sparked widespread rioting in the capital Dili. On May 25, Australian troops were sent in to restore order.

ECONOMY & INVESTMENT

East Timor doubles security spending

The Australian - August 23, 2006

Mark Dodd — East Timor will double its spending on police and defence this financial year, under a national budget worth \$US451.9 million (\$601 million).

Interim Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta's first budget includes \$US315.5 million in spending from the national treasury and \$US136.4 million from foreign donors, eclipsing ousted prime minister Mari Alkatiri's proposal for a \$US215 million budget. The Alkatiri administration spent only 37 per cent of its \$US247.4 million budget last year.

Political analysts say the Horta budget is designed to stimulate the moribund East Timorese economy and improve security in the aftermath of the political violence earlier this year. But with national elections scheduled for next May, the budget reinforces suspicions that Mr Horta is wooing popular support with his spending plans, which include controversial community handouts.

The budget makes an allocation for a patrol boat, as the Government focuses more on border security. The country's petroleum fund savings have increased from \$US623.4million last financial year to \$US1.04billion for 2006-07.

Oil and gas revenue is up 63per cent from last year to \$US732 million, while East Timor's estimated petroleum wealth is calculated to have reached \$US9.4 billion.

The budget was passed by the Dili parliament on August 14 by 64 votes to five, with one abstention. The main feature is an increase in spending in all categories, including salaries and wages, which are up 30 per cent.

East Timor will open four diplomatic missions in addition to the 14 foreign embassies it now runs. The new missions will be in Cuba, Kuwait, the Vatican and The Philippines. Several hundred East Timorese are enrolled as medical students in Havana, and many Cuban health workers work in East Timor.

The increased defence funding covers implementation of a new directorate of procurement to enhance transparency in defence spending. Defence responsibilities have been expanded to include control of East Timor's southern maritime border security — a move that will require the purchase of patrol boats.

The vice-president of parliament's foreign affairs, defence and security committee,

Clementino Amaral, said he hoped Australia would assist East Timor to develop an effective maritime patrol capability. "Most of our ocean riches are being stolen by foreign boats," Mr Amaral told The Australian.

"We need at least two or three new patrol boats. This year we can afford one. We need help from Australia, our neighbour." He said two Portuguese-donated patrol boats were unable to patrol in heavy seas.

Under the budget, additional police funds will be used to open six new border security posts, build a new police training centre and a new warehouse for the use of riot police.

Another 249 police will be hired, bringing to 3500 the total number of officers serving in the National Police of East Timor. The new police will be deployed in paramilitary units, with 100 officers going into the border patrol unit, 50 into the riot police, and 99 expected to join the Malaysian-trained counter-insurgency police reserve.

And given the widespread arson attacks that occurred in recent political violence, budget approval has been given for the purchase of two new fire-trucks to be based in Dili.

Horta says confident gas pact will get OK

Reuters - August 18, 2006

Jerry Norton, Dili — An agreement critical to advancing development of the Timor Sea's biggest gas resource could go to East Timor's parliament in September or October, and would likely be approved, the country's prime minister said.

Oil and gas producers have said they are waiting for the deal to be ratified before committing to development of the Greater Sunrise area, estimated to hold 8 trillion cubic feet of gas and up to 300 million barrels of condensate.

"I am confident it will be approved," East Timor

Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta told Reuters in an interview on Friday, but he added he wasn't sure whether the agreement would go to parliament, now in recess, in September or October.

About 20 percent of Greater Sunrise lies in a Joint Petroleum Production Area (JPDA) between Australia and East Timor and the rest in what Australia calls its exclusive jurisdiction.

Under the JPDA 90 percent of royalty revenues go to East Timor and 10 percent to Australia, while the new agreement would share remaining revenues 50-50, potentially delivering up to \$14.5 billion to impoverished East Timor over 20 years.

Australia has been putting off its own ratification waiting for East Timor to act first.

Greater Sunrise operator Woodside Petroleum Ltd froze the \$5 billion project in 2004 while waiting for Canberra and Dili to iron out their differences.

Another sticking point has been whether to build a liquefied natural gas processing plant for Greater Sunrise in East Timor and a pipeline to feed it the field's production, or to send it to a plant being built in northern Australia.

"The remaining issue to be resolved is the direction of the pipeline, where the pipeline goes, to Darwin or to Timor," said Ramos-Horta. "We believe it makes more economic sense, commercial sense, that it comes to East Timor, but we don't deal with it in a dogmatic, Biblical manner," he said. "If we are persuaded through an independent study... that it makes more sense to go to Australia, then (so) be it, but we would then want some downstream compensation because of the loss of additional revenues that we know would come to our side if the pipeline were to come to East Timor."

Ramos-Horta said he hoped the study could be finished by the end of the year.

In addition to Woodside, Greater Sunrise's stakeholders include ConocoPhillips, Royal Dutch/Shell and Japan's Osaka Gas Co. Ltd.. Woodside is 34 percent-owned by Shell.

Ramos-Horta also said he was receiving next week

"a significant delegation from the Middle East, from the Gulf countries, from Kuwait, from India to negotiate with them serious investment in infrastructure," including, among various projects, an "oil refinery to refine oil and export to Australia, Indonesia and so on".

The prime minister said he had just given the green light to an East Timorese company to build new oil storage facilities in the country which in nine months would have a capacity of up to 10,000 tonnes, "which is far more than the current oil storage facility we have with far better price".

Indonesia's state-owned Pertamina supplies the existing facility, while the new one would deal with Malaysia's Petronas, Ramos-Horta added.

Timor parliament passes delayed US\$315 million budget

Agence France Presse - August 9, 2006

East Timor's parliament has passed the 2006-7 fiscal year budget, the young nation's largest ever at 315 million dollars, after a delay caused by violence and political upheaval in May.

East Timor's fiscal year began on July 1, days after Mari Alkatiri stepped down as prime minister in the wake of deadly unrest sparked by the dismissal of some 600 soldiers who deserted complaining of discrimination.

Nobel peace laureate Jose Ramos-Horta was sworn in to replace him last month and is leading a government that will rule until elections in May next year.

Ramos-Horta has already presented the government's planned program to parliament, which focuses on stimulating Asia's poorest economy through infrastructure projects.

Sixty-six members of the 88-seat parliament voted in favour of the budget, which is 121 percent higher than last year. Two voted against. The government will also tap into 100 million dollars

provided by international donors, an increase of 300 percent on 2005-6.

"With the 66 votes for, two against and zero abstaining, it was a true, good process and the prime minister has already said that the government promised to implement this budget," deputy prime minister Rui Araujo told reporters.

Of the expenditure, 122 million will be for goods and services and 120 million is slated for capital development, a government statement said.

Ramos-Horta plans a meeting with all district and subdistrict heads at the end of August to discuss kickstarting the economy.

East Timor's economy grew by 2.3 percent last year, up from 0.4 percent in 2004. About 40 percent of the population lives below a poverty line set at 55 cents a day, according to United Nations figures.

Despite the millions of dollars expected to flow from its rich reserves of oil and gas in the coming years, the UN has warned that the income is fraught with uncertainties and the country still needs financial support from donors.

May's violence left at least 21 people dead and forced 150,000 to flee their homes. The refugees remain in camps, too afraid to return home despite the presence of some 3,000 international peacekeepers in the nation.

It was the worst unrest to hit East Timor since it gained independence in 2002, after a 1999 vote to breakaway from neighbouring Indonesia which ruled it for 24 years.

DAILY MEDIA REVIEWS

East Timor daily media review - August 1-29, 2006

[Compiled by the UNOTIL Public Information Office from national and international sources.]

August 29, 2006

Homes burnt in Wailili

MP Norberto Esperito Santo told the media on

Monday that violence between two sub-villages resulted in the burning of 25 houses in Wailili, Baucau sub-district. According to Esperito Santo the grave of former Falintil commander, Rubliki was also destroyed in the fire as well as some coconut, breadfruit and Kami trees. He said that the Baucau PNTL detained a suspect and also found ammunition, which includes a pistol, a magazine and a heavy weapon. The people whose homes were affected by the fire have received assistance from the Ministry of Labour and Community Reinsertion of Baucau, although life has returned to normality the population is too traumatized with the events to resume their daily routine, Norberto Esperito Santo said. According to *Diario Nacional*, the information could neither be confirmed with Baucau PNTL commander nor the District Administrator via telephone. (DN)

MPs question actions of Australian police

Various MPs spoke out strongly during the Parliament plenary session on Monday against the behaviour of the Australian Federal Police (AFP) for ordering the PNTL members to strip off their uniforms in public in Comoro on Saturday (26/8). The MPs said that the behaviour of the AFP was a serious disregard to the sovereign state of Timor-Leste, and wanted the Parliament to ask those responsible to clarify the issue. MP Francisco Branco (Fretilin) said that apart from the attitude which not only violated human rights and the dignity of each person but also that of the state institution, adding that the order by AFP to PNTL to remove their uniforms, was not a dignified attitude and that the Parliament must strongly protest against it. Others MPs that spoke against Saturday's incidents were from PSD, UDT, KOTA, UDC.

In a separate article in *Diario Nacional*, MPs, Joaquim dos Santos (Fretilin) and Maria Paixao (PSD) said that the bilateral forces, commanded by Australian forces were not stopping the violence but creating it as shown by the reality amongst the youths. Joaquim said that the international forces restoring order must follow the country's law and order as per the agreement ratified by the National Parliament. The agreement Timor-Leste signed was to provide security and not to provoke conflict, adding that the international forces had

been handing over youths detained by them to others youths to beat them up. These actions, Santos said, showed that the forces were creating conflict in the country. He added that if the forces wished to create conflict it would be better for them to leave the country. MP Maria Paixao (PSD) said that if the international forces were neutral they should not have ordered a member of PNTL to remove his police uniform in the public as the Timorese culture is different from the international forces. She said that the Parliament must speak to the Australian commanders and take action against the members of the international forces who acted in that manner, which was not well received by the population and was against the Timorese culture. (DN, STL, TP)

New mission must provide good advisors

The American Ambassador to Timor-Leste, Joseph Grover Rees told the Timor Post on Monday that the new UN mission must provide good advisors to Timor-Leste in order to quickly help resolve the problems the people were currently facing. The Ambassador gave the example of the absence of an investigator in the Prosecutor General's office, adding that an international investigator must be employed to train a Timorese to take over the job. On the judicial system Joseph Rees said the international prosecutors and judges must reinforce the judicial system in Timor-Leste to help the Timorese judges, prosecutors, and public defendants to perform their duties in a better manner in order for the judiciary to serve with capacity. According to him the judicial system must perform better following the crisis and that could be achieved with the mutual cooperation between the international and national police. The US Ambassador said that back in 2004 he was sad when the Timorese judges and prosecutors stopped their judicial training, leaving a few expatriates to take care of the system, but was overwhelmed when he participated in a ceremony in June for Timorese who became judges, prosecutors, public defenders and legal officers.

Speaking at a press conference on Monday held at the UN compound in Dili, SRSG Sukehiro Hasegawa said that the new United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste would restore justice and continue to investigate the crimes against

humanity in 1999. SRSG further said that the UN Security Council encouraged Timor-Leste to put into use the available electoral legislation packet for the 2007 elections. Hasegawa explained that the adoption of resolution 1704, to establish UNMIT, which would be composed of an appropriate police contingent of 1608 and an initial component of 34 military liaison officials. UNMIT would assist the government of Timor-Leste in all aspects ranging from institutional to election support said the Head of the UN in Timor-Leste.

On the same occasion the UN Acting Police Commissioner, Antero Lopez told the participants that the UN could not provide better training for the PNTL because the Timorese State kept on asking the UN to transfer the powers to the Timorese police. Lopez said that Timor-Leste like any new country required time to perform their duties and that maturity could only be achieved step by step. He said that the mistake was the lacking of a strong culture in the training area which could not sustain the existing police service. The Acting UN Police Commissioner said that mechanisms must be put in place in order to have a system for the police that would not to be under political pressure in order to avoid crisis in the rule of law.

MPs Branco (Fretilin) and Ximenes (UDC) said that Timor-Leste at the moment only required international police under the auspices of the United Nations to maintain law and order and restore PNTL. They are of the opinion that the country did not yet require a peace keeping force. (TP, DN)

UN Security Council commends people, government

Timor-Leste Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jose Luis Guterres said that the United Nations Security Council had praised the people and the government of Timor-Leste for putting in the efforts to improve the situation in the country. The Council had also praised the work of the international forces currently in Timor-Leste such as the Australian, Portuguese GNR, Malaysian, New Zealand and has asked the forces to work together with the United Nations to protect the UN personnel and the installations throughout the country, said the former Timor-Leste Ambassador to the UN. He added that the negotiations for the new mission, UNMIT

were not easy due the problems in other part of the world like the Middle East and Africa, therefore he reminded the Timorese people that although the international community still sympathized with the Timorese people, it was up to them to be conscious of the problems around the world and to put in efforts to resolve their problems and not wait for the international community. The new Foreign Minister further said that the international community voted unanimously in support of the new mission and that the Security Council was concerned about the IDPs especially women and children. He added that due to the many global problems, the Timorese must try and resolve their political problems or face not having any help if similar problem arose. On the new Special Representative, he said that it was not yet known who would be heading the new mission. (DN)

Better to wait for the results of investigation of PNTL members: Freitas

The chairperson of National NGO East Timor People's Action (ETPA), Cicilio Caminho Freitas thought that it was better for the Ministry of Interior to wait for the result of the investigation from the UN Independent Special Commission of Inquiry for East Timor before reactivating the PNTL. The members of the PNTL should be vetted on their involvement in the crisis. In addition, in relation to the government's plan to promote the reconciliation, Mr. Freitas said that the reconciliation planned by the government should start from the political elites, particularly those who were from the 1975's era. (TP)

Re-structuring of the F-FDTL and PNTL should depended on recommendations: Amaral

Vice President of Commission C, National Parliament, Clementino dos Reis Amaral told the journalists that before re-structuring the institution of both PNTL and F-FDTL, it was better to wait for the result of the Assessment Team. (STL)

Reconciliation will not resolve all problems: Basilio

Bishop of Baucau, Dom Basilio do Nascimento told

the journalists that the reconciliation promoted by the government should be implemented step by step. They had to separate the problems according to political, ethnical and judicial grounds. So that both political and judicial decisions must be carried out separately. (TP)

Prime Minister and Bishop Nacimento meet to discuss the government budget for the Catholic Church

On Friday, 25 August 2006 Dr. Horta and the Bishop of Baucau, discussed the government's support of the church projects. Apart from this discussion, Dr. Horta also asked for the advice of Dom Nacimento in relation to the crisis and a reunion plan meeting that would be held in Dili on August 29th 2006. (STL & TP)

August 26/28, 2006

New mission starts with traffic campaign

The New Expanded United Nations mission in Timor-Leste began with a community awareness education campaign, focusing on traffic rules and regulations for safety and security. United Nations police currently in the country handed out leaflets to motorists at various locations in Dili. A motorist by the name of Amandio dos Reis said that the distribution of information was important in reminding the motorists to follow the rules, as the traffic in Dili had been in disarray following the recent conflict. (DN)

*It'll be another month before UN police arrive:
Horta*

Prime Minister Ramos-Horta said that although the UN approved the new mission for Timor-Leste on Friday, it would take another month before the 1600 police officers arrived in the country, adding that all nations supported the Security Council's decision to send the police force. In relation to the peace keeping forces, the Minister said that the Security Council would make that decision in the month of October. Ramos-Horta stressed that the Timor-Leste government was

prepared and ready to work with the UN since Timor-Leste was the one requesting the UN to send its forces in order to assist in the reorganization of police and the F-FDTL. He further added that the government will try and work closely with the United Nations and with all the nations that want to help the country, but the problem of Timor-Leste has to be resolved by all the Timorese people through dialogue and reconciliation not only at the level of the leaders but also that of the youth. (TP, STL)

Police detained 62 people in Comoro

In an early Saturday morning operation, the international forces detained 62 people including the head of the gang who had attacked a police officer a week earlier. The operation led by the Australian command with the support of the Portuguese Guarda da Republica (GNR), and the Malaysians, caught the residents of Comoro by surprise and confiscated various items used by youths during violent attacks.

In a separate article, there were reports of assaults in some areas of Dili especially in Becora area. An IDP in Becora parish said many people have tried to go back to their homes but had to return to the parish due to threats made by unknown people in their area. (TP)

UN will attend to security demands: Hasegawa

During his visit to the districts of Bobonaro and Suai, SRSG Sukehiro Hasegawa told the government officials and PNTL officers that the UN would guarantee the security demands through the increased presence of police with the new mission. SRSG Hasegawa said that a third of the police incorporated in the new mission will be stationed at the districts and would be in charge of the executive policing especially in Dili, but stressed that they would work together with the PNTL officers to help develop their capacity in community policing. In Maliana a senior PNTL officer presented some of the difficulties faced by the institution such as lack generators, transport and computers, and also suggested reactivation of the solar system to help with running water.

The concerns raised in Covalima by government

officials were the improvement of security, transport, electricity and the need for better communications including radio and television. The officials also feel that the political situation has to be resolved but believe that the reconciliation must start with the national leaders. The Head of UNOTIL said that he will present to the Prime Minister and the President of the Republic their concerns and through the UN agencies in Timor-Leste would try to find the resources contributed by the donor countries, but the most important thing was for the government officials in the districts to be responsible and guarantee that the funds allocated in the national budget to the district must be carefully spent so as to benefit the people, reported STL Monday.

Diario Nacional reported that the visit of the SRSG to the two districts was to listen to the concerns and observe the conditions of the population at the base level in terms of security and politics. According to DN, during the meeting in Maliana, the Administrator of Balibo, Lucia Fina informed that some of the sub-villages had resumed illegal trading with West Timor and vice-versa. Also a few people had taken some young women to Atambua in order to sell them to Malaysia, adding that to-date these girls have yet to return. The Administrator of Bobonaro, Beatriz Martins said that the government had not been functional since May 5 due to the commission's boycott as there were allegations of unknown groups terrorizing the population, so the leaders had to flee and take refuge in Dili. (STL, DN)

No tolerance for companies that violate law: Zito

In relation to the case of Makikit Hardware Company that sacked several East Timorese workers during the ET crisis, the Confederation of the Syndicate (trade union) in East Timor through Zito da Costa said it will not tolerate any companies that violate the law that existed in East Timor particularly the labor law. According to Zito based on the labor law article 36 said that any company can sack its employees but should be based on the fundamental reasons stated in the East Timor law.

In order to execute the budget well, government should modify the Organic Law: Tilman

The president of the Commission C, Manuel Tilman told the new decree law is too centralized and in order to execute the current budget successfully, the government should modify the organic law. (TP)

August 25, 2006

Reorganization of defence will follow commission's report: Horta

Speaking at the Parliament plenary session on Thursday, Prime-Minister Jose Ramos-Horta who is also the Minister for Defense said that the reorganization of the National Defense Forces must await the results of the Notable Commission previously established by the former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri. Ramos-Horta told the Parliament that the legislation for the Defense Force will be ready by September and it will help with the restructuring of F-FDTL and the new recruits. He added that the government had not forgotten the 'petitioners' case and was putting all the efforts to hold a dialogue with the group.

The Minister also told the Parliamentarians that according to the Government's plans for 2007, the Ministry of Defense will select officers from the national defense force at the Major level to work in Timor-Leste's embassies. He stressed that the purpose is to cooperate with the defense forces of the nations where they will be stationed in order to have a better Timor-Leste Defense Force in the future.

Jose Ramos-Horta informed the MPs that the government had already approved the budget to build 100 homes in Metinaro for F-FDTL officials, adding that the defense force budget will also include new uniforms for F-FDTL, who had been wearing uniforms donated by various countries. (TP, DN)

August 24, 2006

National hospital insecure

The national hospital is becoming vulnerable due to the constant stone fighting and the presence of unknown faces, said Antonio Caleres Junior, Director of the hospital. According to Caleres there have been a few incidents where people seeking medical treatment could not proceed to the hospital. He pointed out that many pregnant women came to the hospital to give birth but could not proceed into the compound and had to have their babies delivered at a private clinic. Antonio Caleres further said the facilities of the hospital cannot be used by patients as it is being used by other people. He said he has observed a few people carrying light weapons such as machetes, walking into the hospital. He believes some of people currently in the hospital have moved from Obrigado Barrack and Jardim (opposite port) camps. The Director of the national hospital asked the international police to set up a police post at the hospital so that the public can seek medical treatment safely. (STL)

Permanent police posts

At Wednesday's plenary session of the National Parliament, Minister of Interior, Alcino Barris told the MPs that the International and National police will establish six permanent police posts around Dili, in areas where conflict still arises. Barris said PNTL will work with the International Forces in these posts.

Vice-Prime Minister Rui Maria de Arazjo said the government is carrying out an evaluation process on the commanders and agents of PNTL, adding that those involved in crimes would be handed over to the courts, while the ones who are found not guilty of any crime must resume their duties and work with the international police. He said the Evaluation Commission comes under the Minister of Interior and will work with the evaluation panel, which is composed of the Vice-Minister of Interior, UN Police Commissioner, a representative from the Prosecutor General's Office, Superior Council of Defence and religious leaders.

On the issue of security, Nicolao Freitas, a 31-year-old-man from Manumeta Raihun said around 11p.m. on Monday night while he was sitting on the street outside his house with four of his friends,

international forces dressed in GNR uniforms with their faces covered and speaking in Portuguese beat him up. He said they suddenly appeared out of the dark and went straight for him. They picked him up and beat him with iron bars and gun butts. According to Freitas, as he was hand cuffed and taken away as he yelled to the neighbor to inform his wife that he was being taken away by the international forces. Upon hearing this they punched him a few times and then let him go. Nicolao Freitas was taken to the hospital by a priest from the Cathedral Parish who decided to visit the neighborhood following the shootings on Monday night. He appealed to the international forces to inform the communities of their patrols and to act in a way so as to avoid further violence. (TP, STL)

Civil society supports UN presence

The civil society welcomed the UN presence, as it continues to provide better support in the area of security for the population, said Director NGO Forum, Angelina Sarmento. According to Sarmento, the conflict in the past months has affected many people. She said the forces in Timor-Leste should be under the command of the United Nations. Angelina Sarmento also said the NGO Forum is promoting dialogue in the suburbs and targeting the youths as many of them have chosen the wrong path and they must be encouraged to resort to dialogue and learn to listen to each other rather than following those that want to create problems. (STL)

Yudhoyono sent plane for PM to participate in meeting (TPp1)

Prime Minister Ramos-Horta flew out of Dili on Wednesday morning in a special plane sent by the Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to participate in a meeting in Jakarta. The meeting of the ASEAN leaders took place in Jakarta on Wednesday. According to the Vice-Prime Minister Rui Maria de Araujo, the head of the government was not scheduled to participate in the meeting but the Indonesian President wanted Ramos-Horta to be present, therefore he sent a plane specifically to pick him up. The meeting was about bilateral ties and security in the region. The Prime Minister is due to fly back to Dili on Thursday morning.

On the issue of security, Vice-Minister Araujo said the government is sad as violence continues in the capital Dili, referring to the attacks in Comoro on Tuesday night, which left an international vehicle totally destroyed. (TP)

August 23, 2006

*Ministers must put aside political interest:
Bishop Basilio*

The Bishop of Baucau Diocese, Don Basilio do Nascimento said the Timor-Leste government has a large composition compared to some other nations twice as big as Timor-Leste and yet those nations still manage to carry their country forward even with a smaller government composition. Despite the number of ministers and secretaries of state, the Bishop said he hopes the main objective of the government is to carry the country forward adding that each minister knows his/her duty to the nation and personal and political interests should be left aside. He said an accusation made by President Xanana Gusmao that some secretaries of state carry out their work influenced by personal interest is based on information the President, himself, received. He congratulated President Xanana for having the courage to point a finger starting at those who are not performing their duties with integrity.

In reference to the court process against the former Minister of Interior and former Prime Minister, Bishop Basilio do Nascimento is of the opinion that the court must be allowed time to do their work but the court must also be aware that the longer it takes the more the public will begin to doubt the process. (STL) UN has agreed on police force but still discussing military presence

Francisco 'Lu'Olo' Guterres, President of the National Parliament said the UN has accepted the presence of a UN police force in Timor-Leste but it is still debating over a military component. In response to the concerns of some MPs regarding the security situation, Lu'Olo said the police including the 360 military should all be under the

command of the UN. (STL)

Government allocates US\$10 million to rebuild homes

The President for Commission A of the National Parliament responsible for Constitutional Affairs, Rights, Freedoms and Guarantees, said the government has allocated US\$10 million for the people whose homes were destroyed during the crisis. Vicente Guterres said the fund is part of the State budget for the fiscal year 2006/2007. He said the people who lost their homes must present a report with concrete data to government, which will be double checked by a team established by the government on the accuracy of the report and which will take time to resolve. He further said, according to Prime Minister Ramos-Horta, UNHCR will provide tents for temporary use by IDPs who do not have a house to return to. Ramos-Horta said the government will only help the owner of the houses burnt during the crisis and not those who are illegally occupying state houses or those belonging to others. On the question of a new suburb, the Prime Minister said it was an idea raised to create a suburb for those people who did not have homes or were illegally occupying the houses that do not belong to them. (TP)

Petitioners reluctant to approach government

Lieutenant Colonel Salsinha Gastao, the spokesperson for former military group 'the petitioners', said he is not reluctant to approach the government to try and resolve their problem but some of their demands to the government have not been met. Gastao pointed to the detention of Major Alfredo who received an order from President Xanana Gusmao to move to Dili but was later detained and put in prison. He said apart from this, together with his group, they were prepared to travel to Dili to meet and work with the government to resolve their problem as requested by Prime Minister Ramos-Horta. Salsinha added that Prime Minister Ramos-Horta must also resolve the small problems in Dili. For the time being Gastao said, the 'petitioners' will wait for the results of the International Inquiry Commission with whom they have already met and for its report to be made public. (TP)

August 22, 2006

Prosecutor General must not close Alkatiri's case

President of the National Parliament, Francisco 'Lu'Olo' Guterres said the Prosecutor-General will address the Parliament soon to explain the investigation results on former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri in relation to allegations of guns distribution to civilians. Guterres told the media on Monday that MPs are concerned with the investigation results regarding Alkatiri which has not been made public, adding that the MPs' concerns are fundamental and just because the Prosecutor-General presents his report to the Parliament each year but this year he has not yet been called due to the crisis. 'Lu'Olo' said the results of the investigation process of allegations against Mari Alkatiri should be made available by now but for unknown reasons the Public Ministry keeps delaying it. The President of the Parliament stressed it is important for the results of the investigation to be made public for Mari Alkatiri to exercise his function as Member of Parliament and concentrate on legislation. According to Jornal Diaro Nacional, Francisco 'Lu'Olo' Guterres will also invite the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Interior to explain the security development of the nation starting from the crisis up to the present.

In a separate article, MP Francisco Branco (Fretilin) appealed to Parliamentarians with evidence in relation to allegations of some MPs' involvement in arms assault, distribution of guns to civilians, and commands to attack the government food warehouse during the crisis, to report to the judicial sovereignty. According to Diario Nacional, Branco suggested the Parliament plenary session on Monday establish a Parliamentary Eventual Enquiry Committee to investigate MPs allegedly involved in the crisis. (TP, DN)

According to media reports Tuesday, a former Falintil member accused of being involved in May 25 incidents is currently under pre-trial detention as per Dili District court decision on

Monday (21/80).

People wishing to divide Timorese are not nationalist: Belo

Former Bishop of Dili Diocese, Don Carlos Ximenes Belo told *Diario Nacional*, the terms Lorosae and Loromonu are used by people wishing to divide the Timorese people, adding these people are neither nationalists nor patriotic. Belo said he cannot comment further on the situation as he is not presently in the country but stressed people from 'east' or 'west' are all Timorese people and one is not above the other. He further said the youths involved in thefts and the destruction of properties should not consider themselves Christians and Timorese. Belo said political leaders, for their own interest, are creating the 'issue' of Lorosae and Loromonu adding that the capital Dili belongs to all Timorese. He appealed to the people to be humble and forgive each other. (DN)

Youth attitude positive: Goncalves

MP Joe Goncalves (PSD) congratulated a group of youth from Ermera District for their initiative in overcoming the division of Lorosae-Loromonu, by participating in Falintil commemorations in Baucau on August 20. According to Goncalves the youth initiative is a positive step towards peace and stability in the nation. MP Francisco Xavier (ASDT) said the attitude the youth demonstrated must be honored for showing a good example to the leaders, the population and other youths in forgiving one another. On Sunday, around 100 youths from Ermera traveled to Baucau to participate in Falintil's commemoration day. According to media reports, F-FDTL Chief of Staff, Colonel Lere Annan Timur and Commander Falur Rate Lae welcomed the group in tears. (DN)

'Fretilin Grupo Mudanca' will hold extraordinary congress

'Fretilin Grupo Mudanca' will hold the second extraordinary congress following extensive consultation with former delegates as well as representatives from the districts. The extraordinary congress will be held at the end of the month of September. According to Victor da Costa, leader of the group, the second

extraordinary congress has the full consent of the members.

In the meantime, former coordinator and founder of Ojetil, [a youth group of Fretilin] called Traccoa stated that it is necessary to hold the second extraordinary congress in order for Fretilin to win the 2007 elections. Traccoa further said that in 2001 many members left and joined other parties due to their dislike of the system applied by Mari Alkatiri in Fretilin. Therefore, he added, it is important to hold the extraordinary congress to change the leadership. (STL)

August 19, 2006

Debate on restructure of defence force and police

Prime Minister Ramos-Horta said debate on the future of PNTL and F-FDTL, especially the future defence policy, will take place in the National Parliament with the participation of some entities including the civil society. The Minister stressed there will be restructuring for F-FDTL as a defence institution but not to the commanders, adding his Ministry has presented the restructure plans to the Council of Ministers for discussion before presenting it to the National Parliament. Following the weekly meeting with the President of the Republic on Friday (18/8) Ramos-Horta told the media that on September 14 he would hold a meeting with District Administrators and heads of villages regarding the allocation of the budget to the districts. He said the meeting would be held in Baucau and Suai. (TP, DN)

Public defenders should be active: Ramos-Horta

On Friday the Prime Minister visited Becora Prison where he met with prisoners to check on their living conditions. According to Ramos-Horta, the conditions have improved a little but he stressed that the government needs to look carefully into the situation to make sure the prisoners are treated with humanity. He also said the government would strengthen the security of the prison as a measure to prevent threats from outside. During the visit, the Minister also appealed to the

Public Defender to work harder on pending cases because all are entitled to the right to defense in the courts. (TP)

Former Falintil members surrenders to international forces

A former Falintil members from region III, known as Oan Kiak turned himself in to the international forces on Friday afternoon in relation to accusations related to May 25 incident. According to the commander of international police, Steve Lancaster, Oan Kiak has been accused of murder, possession of illegal weapons and other offences though none related to the shooting of PNTL officers in Caicoli. Lancaster who refused to reveal the place of the surrender said a member of F-FDTL accompanied Oan Kiak who gave himself up peacefully and said he will appear in court next week. The Commander of the international forces also said they are aware of other people currently the subject of arrest warrants and having been involved in the incident and he appealed to them to surrender peacefully like Oan Kiak has done.

On Monday Suara Timor Lorosae reported MPs from UDT and ASDT as saying they totally agree with the statement of Parliament Vice-President Jacob Fernandes that the international forces are not serious in disarming armed groups. According to the two MPs, the international forces have been in Timor-Leste for a while now but the situation remains the same and even though the disarmament process has taken place many groups continue to be armed. The two MPs also claim they received information of shootings from the districts which has been reported to the international forces but the incidents have not been looked into by the forces. Alexandre Corte-Real (UDT) said the 'door-to-door' campaign for next year's elections should start now and he's worried that the political parties cannot proceed with the activities due to the number of people still in possession of illegal weapons.

In a separate article, MP Elizario Ferreira (Fretilin) said F-FDTL must correctly explain to the population the misunderstanding or behavior that led to the crisis. Ferreira said the defence force must reconcile themselves and try to approach the population to explain the motives that led to the crisis. He said that the Timorese

people have been forgiving provided the mistake is acknowledged. He cited the experience of 1999 as an example of that. He suggested that the armed forces put their professionalism above all and embrace all Timorese from east to west. (DN, TP, STL)

SRSB believes international forces can act to stop violence

SRSB Sukehiro Hasegawa said during a press conference on Friday, he believes the international forces are sufficient to handle any type of violence up until the elections in 2007. Hasegawa said the groups attacking the refugees' camps are not of east or west ethnic background. He added that the UN is concerned about how to scale down the violence that continues on the streets. The Head of UNOTIL said the attack on Oribigado Barrack refugee camp was committed by unknown group as the camp has a mixture of people from east and west. He added that in order for the population to return to their homes, the communities must work together with the international forces. SRSB stressed that the work the UN is currently doing requires the assistance of other agencies to analyze and study the reasons leading to the behavior of the people committing these acts and to remind the offenders that their behavior is not helping the community.

According to Diario Nacional Monday, Deputy Prime Minister Rui Araujo said the government will fund NGOs 'not to keep their mouth shut' but with the intention of becoming partners in the implementation of the state budget for fiscal year 2006/2007. Araujo said the support will stop the mistrust between the civil society and the government which is crucial to the development of the country. He said the funding to the NGOs varies from social activities to development and will help to implement the program in the communities. The state budget has been approved by the Parliament and is awaiting the President of the Republic to promulgate it. (DN, TP, STL)

Alkatiri's statement will lead to Fretilin loss

Leader of 'Fretilin Mudanca', Egidio de Jesus said the declaration of Mari Alkatiri regarding his group like a 'pest' will lead to the loss of Fretilin in 2007 elections. De Jesus said in order

to save Fretilin, Mari Alkatiri and Rogerio Lobato should no longer be speaking on behalf of the party. He added both should not take part in Fretilin's Central Committee (CCF) due to the allegations of guns distribution and they will soon to appear in court. (STL)

August 18, 2006

Court of appeals is independent

In response to Xanana's statement made in June that current leaders of Fretilin were illegal and illegitimate, Akatiri said that the president has no competency to interpret law or even if he can he could not make any decision. After of Court of Appeals made decision that Fretilin's leaders are legal and legitimate last Friday, he added that the Court of Appeal is an independent body and made its decision based on facts not opinions.

Lucia Lobato, MP from PSD party told the media at National Party that all citizens have right to interpret law and have right express their opinions but the court is the one would make any decision. (DN, STL)

International troops not serious about disarming civilian groups

Vice President of National Parliament (NP) Jacob Fernandes told the media at NP that political crisis in Timor-Leste is still tense because international troops are not serious about dealing with the armed civilian groups. "In the districts many armed civilian groups still carry weapons around but international troops are not serious about disarming them" said Fernandes. According to Fernandes the current situation would not help facilitate general election due to the civilian arms still around threatening people and political parties would not be brave enough to campaign their political programs. "We don't know who still carries weapons around and how many weapons have been recovered by the international troops but when you see television some of weapons are not owned by PNTL and F-FDTL for example model SKS and GRM" said Fernandes. To follow general election

schedule internationals must work with PNTL and F-FDTL to disarm armed civilian groups because they know people who are involved in crimes Fernandes added.

Government will hold open debate about future of defense

After weekly meeting with the President Xanana Gusmao at the Palace of Ashes, Prime Minister Ramos Horta told the media that reformation of PNTL and F-FDTL must be discussed seriously and the government will hold open debate in National Parliament so that civil society can be involved in discussion about the future of F-FDTL. TP reported that Horta's weekly meeting with the president also discussed the national budget which has been approved by the National Parliament and also the government will hold an extraordinary meeting with the civil society and 13 district administrators to see the implementation of the budget fiscal year 2006/2007. In the meantime Horta also mentioned two candidates Zacarias Costa & Nelson do Santos for as possible new UN Ambassador candidates, to replace Jose Luis Gutteres who was appointed as Foreign Minister last month. Horta explained that he had discussed with the President of Republic to choose one of them to be a new ambassador. (TP, STL)

Longuinhos should announce result of Alkatiri's hearing

MP from Fretilin Party, Osorio Florindo told TP that Prosecutor General Longuinhos should announce result of Alkatiri's hearing because people are waiting to hear who is the most responsible for this crisis in which thousands of thousands people have lost their properties and live in IDP camps. "People are waiting the result of the hearing and why still not been announced?" asked Florindo. Florindo also asked Prosecutor General to investigate Rai Los and Labadaen groups who gave evidence of weapons distribution in this country. MP from UDT party Alexandre Corte-Real also agreed that in order to accelerate the process of Rogerio Lobato and Mari Alkatiri's case, Prosecutor General should investigate those people who were involved this crisis. (TP)

August 17, 2006

Too early for new F-FDTL recruits

Two opposition parties, KOTA and UDT have expressed discontent with the announcement by Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Ramo-Horta on planning for new recruitment for the armed forces. MP Clementino Amaral (KOTA) is of the opinion that new recruitment should proceed following the investigation by the notable commission on claims of discrimination within the defence institution by the 600 soldiers dismissed a few months ago. UDT spokesperson, Alexandre Corte-Real is of the opinion that the problems of the petitioners must first be resolved as there is no urgency for new recruits since the international forces are now guaranteeing stability if there is an external threat. He stressed that it is better for the government to concentrate on the general elections as it is nearing close to that time. (TP, STL) Xanana does not have the capacity to interpret law: Alkatiri

The President of the Republic does not have the competence to interpret the law or he may interpret it but he cannot decide on legitimacy" said Mari Alkatiri during a press conference on Tuesday, following the court decision on Friday, ruling legitimacy of the re-election of Mari Alkatiri as Secretary-General and Francisco 'Lu'Olo' Guterres as President of Fretilin during the party's second congress on May 17-19. On claims that Fretilin distributed guns and bought votes during the congress, Alkatiri said the decision of the Court of Appeals constitutes legitimacy for leaders of the party, namely Guterres and Alkatiri, to make claims of defamation against the party.

In a separate article in *Diario Nacional*, Alkatiri said there is only one Fretilin which has registered in the Court of Appeals. If other people want to create a new party, he said referring to 'Fretilin Grupo Mudanca,' to enable them to run for the elections, that is fine or they have the option of voting for other parties. He added that Fretilin's door is open to anybody

who wants to rejoin the party with the intention of improving it and defending democracy and the rights of the state (direito de estado). He is confident, he said, that the party will win the 2007 elections.

Francisco 'Lu'Olo' Guterres said the decision of the Court of Appeals means 'Fretilin Grupo Mudanca' has lost their claims and according to article 62 of the party's constitution, an extraordinary congress can only convene by Fretilin Central Committee following a district meeting decision. (TP, STL, DN)

Interference in court decision

MP and spokesperson of PD, Rui Menezes said in order to have a transparent judicial process for former Minister of Interior Rogerio Lobato and former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri, the Court of Appeals should distance itself from political intervention of CPLP (Comunidade Pamses Lingua Portuguesa) panels. Menezes stressed the court must make the decision based on facts and without influence from CPLP panels, pointing out that most of the decisions of the court lately have political influence from CPLP. He said one example was the Court of the Appeals' decision of Fretilin's second congress as legitimate although many argued that the voting procedures were against the Constitution and political party laws. Commenting on Menezes' claim, Vice-President of the Parliament, Jacob Fernandes said the decision of the court was based on the law currently in motion in the country.

In the meantime, the Director of Justice and Peace Monitoring Program Tiago Sarmiento said there was a declaration by the Prosecutor-General in relation to allegations of guns distribution against former Minister of Interior Rogerio Lobato and former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri but there has been no follow up on the status of this claim. Sarmiento said it is imperative for the Prosecutor-General and the Public Ministry to explain to the population the dynamic process as everyone is following this case. He added that if the process is kept quiet, it will have a negative impact on the justice institution and on the situation if a similar case of instability occurs. (TP, STL, DN)

What is Timor achieving with violence: Bishop

Nascimento?

The Bishop of Baucau Diocese, Don Basilio do Nascimento appealed to all youth to stop the violence once and for all as the violence that occurred lowered the dignity of Timor-Leste. The Bishop said his message might not be welcomed by some people but he would ask what is Timor-Leste achieving by using violence. Don Basilio stressed that if a violent mentality continues to be the root of the nation, the little that Timor-Leste has achieved in the last four years as a positive step forward will be completely lost. He appealed to all to sit together and reflect on the present violence and ask themselves where will it lead Timor-Leste and who will benefit from the violence. He said the enemies of Timor-Leste today are its own people. The Bishop of Baucau Diocese stressed that it's a big problem if the Timorese don't realize that that could be their own enemies and that their courage was only displayed against others but not among their own people... (STL)

August 12, 2006

Commission of inquiry will publish results

Paulo Pinheiro, the head of the United Nations Special Independent Commission of Investigation for Timor-Leste said the results of the investigation for 28 April, 23, 24 and 25 May will be made public in October. Speaking during a media conference held in Dili on Friday, Pinheiro added that the Commission will appeal to Timor-Leste judiciary to follow up on the facts gathered as the Commission does not have the authority to detain anyone. The first phase of the investigation concluded Saturday and the team will return to Timor-Leste in September to continue the investigation, said Pinheiro. He said they have spoken to the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the former Prime Minister, leaders of the political parties, members of the Timorese police, community residents, UN Representatives, the Diplomatic Corps, the Provedor for Human Rights and the Prosecutor-General. According to Saturday's media report, Pinheiro stressed that the Commission's work will result in a complete,

accountable and impartial report. The completed report will be submitted to the National Parliament, UNHCHR and the UN Secretary General. (DN, TP)

Fretilin will not hold extraordinary congress

The Court of Appeal ruled out on Friday that the recent Fretilin congress vote by show of hands is legitimate, therefore Francisco 'Lu'Olo' Guterres and Mari Alkatiri would retain their position as President and Secretary-General of the party until 2011. According to Claudio Ximenes, President of the Court of Appeal, the vote by show of hands did not violate Fretilin's regulations of 2004. He said that the Court has no fundamental base to ask Fretilin to hold an extraordinary congress to vote for new leadership. Fretilin's II congress was held between 17-19 May 2006. (TP, DN)

Dialogue between F-FDTL and PNTL

Prime Minister Ramos-Horta said, according to information he received, the willingness of F-FDTL and PNTL to reconcile is important for the nation and for the people to again trust the two institutions so they feel safe to return to their homes. Ramos-Horta also said the dialogue between the two institutions is the best solution to resolve the crisis that led to the explosion between them resulting in the loss of life and property. He also said the dialogue must take place urgently. Speaking to participants in a dialogue process program in Bebonuk, organized by youths of that area, Ramos-Horta said the majority of the leaders are to blame for leading the population down the wrong path but he added that part of the problem has also come from the communities as well.

He told the youth that the UN Security Council will make a decision this week on whether to send 1600 police to join those police already on the ground to strengthen security. The Minister appealed to the youth not to accuse the international forces of taking sides, as they do not know who is Lorosae or Loromonu but are in the country to provide security to everybody. He also asked the youth to work together and resolve the problems and to see him if they cannot work out the problems.

On the same occasion, Ramos-Horta also told the participants from three sucos that Timor-Leste has negotiated with Kuwait to open a highway between Lospalos-Dili-Maliana that will create job opportunities to thousands of Timorese but the main concern is to maintain the tranquillity within the country.

The Prime Minister added that the State budget, for the fiscal year 2006/2007 expected to be approved by the National Parliament today (14/8) will boost the economy of the country by six to seven percent and there will be new jobs as per studies carried out in 2000. He has asked all the ministers to open their doors to the public once a week to listen to problems that exist within the communities and for members of the government to report within the Parliament once a month the work that has been undertaken as a measure to make the government carry their duties and expend their budget more effectively and efficiently.

In a separate article in Timor Post Saturday, the youths of Kolmera and the IDPs in the same area have taken the initiative to hold a dialogue to stop the constant conflict between them. (TP)

Confrontation between groups leaves one dead

According to Timor Post Saturday, the confrontation between two groups in Zumalai, Covalima sub-district has left one-person dead. Minister of Interior, Alcino Barris said police have identified one person dead following a confrontation between "Saka Izoladu" and "Kolimau" a week ago. Barris said members of the group "Saka" have fled to the jungle but that he believes that it won't be long before they emerge as it is a dense jungle area and the group would not be able to cope too long under those conditions. He said the police are aware of who belongs to the group. He added that, following the incident, the population has become alarmed and fled the area. (TP)

August 11, 2006

Slater: Put peace first

After attending a workshop on the "The Mission of the Multilateral Forces in TL" organized by the NGO Forum in Villa-Verde, Commander of the International Troops Brigadier General Mick Slater told the media that if East Timorese transform their mentality about peace, then police and military will not be needed. "To put police and soldiers on every corner is not the solution because according to Timorese history, the presence of police and military under the Indonesian occupation did not change the spirit of the Timorese; therefore if peace is what is wanted then it must be prioritized above everything else", said Slater. Slater asked all Timorese people to support the government in the implementation of its programs to rebuild this country and stated that all international troops are here to maintain security and to create an environment of peace and harmony. "We are not here to implement the government program so Timorese have to get involved in the development process for the future of this country", Slater added. In response to the rumors that international troops are not showing impartiality, Slater said that they are here not to defend any groups from East or West but to "act according to Timorese laws and everyone is under the law so the law should be protected".

In a separate article, Slater stated that the International Force will remain here for as long as the government wants and that their mission here is to protect Timorese people who want to live in peace. (STL, TP)

Horta: Our priority is to eliminate corruption

After the swearing-in of a new Inspector-General Manuel Cuntinho Bucar, Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta in his speech stated that the priority of his government is to try to eliminate all kinds of corruption. "I give all my support and power to the Inspector-General to investigate all kinds of corruption in the public services and bring it to the Prosecutor-General to process them according to the law" said Horta. If any members of the government or public servants abuse their power or are involved in corruption, the Inspector-General must take it seriously, Horta added. (STL, TP)

NFJP insists on processing of Alkatiri's group

Spokesperson and Coordinator of National Front for Justice and Peace (NFJP) Major Augusto de Jesus Tara insisted in his press release yesterday that all Timorese leaders who have committed crimes must be brought to justice. Tara said that justice has not been applied to those who have committed crimes including Mari Alkatiri's and Rogerio Lobato's group. He further added that to have reconciliation in this country people must see justice first because they have suffered from the crimes committed which led to the crisis. (TP)

Bano: Will work hard to bring back the population to their homes

Minister of Labour and Solidarity Arsenio Bano told STL that his Ministry and the Government will work hard to bring home the population in the IDP camps. The Government has begun a dialogue with the community leaders including Chief of sucos, aldeias and District Administrators to create a good environment and provide security when the refugees return to their homes. "The aim is to create a peaceful environment in every suco and aldeia so that when the refugees return to their homes they will be well received by the community", said Bano. If people live in peace and harmony then we don't need security anymore," Bano added.

August 10, 2006

Secretary of State should not work just for the party: Xanana After the swearing-in of new members of the second constitutional government, President Xanana Gusmao in his speech appealed to Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta to make sure his Secretary of State goes beyond working solely for the party by implementing government programs in districts and sub-districts. He also asked Minister of State Administration Ana Pessoa to put a stop to district administrators who just attend political party meetings and don't pay attention to the lives of the people. "To gain confidence again from the people, the government must work with all groups and implement the government's program effectively," said the President.

In a separate article, Gusmao appealed to all youth in Timor-Leste to stop drinking alcohol because alcohol can control their minds and create more conflict. He appealed also to the vendors who sell alcohol not to sell it for a while until the situation is normalized. (STL, TP)

Timor would never have gained independence if not for Portugal

Prime Minister Ramos Horta made an official visit to the Headquarters of Guarda Nacional da Republicana (GNR) yesterday. Horta in his speech stated that "If Portugal hadn't brought Timor-Leste's case to the United Nations' agenda, the struggle for independence would never have come about. He said Portugal played a very important role in Timor's fight for independence and advocated for the Timor-Leste at the United Nations.

In response to the statement of the National Front for Justice and Peace (NFJP) which had asked GNR to stop their mission in Timor-Leste allegedly because GNR are not exercising impartiality, Horta said that the GNR are here because the government, President of Republic and the President of National Parliament asked them to come to maintain security and protect people from any kind of violence. He appealed to the Timorese people and MPs not to speculate that GNR are not showing their impartiality. He said any such statements must be based on facts. "Don't just make speculations based on rumours; come with facts," said Horta. (TP, STL)

If leaders have no sensitivity people will take to the streets

Coordinator of National Front for Justice and Peace (NJJP) Vital dos Santos told the media that if the leaders have no sensitivity to bring justice to those who have committed crimes then the people would take to the streets to demand justice. The crisis that happened in this country is due to the failure of East Timorese leaders to resolve the petitioners' case. Santos added. He further explained that National Parliament and the government have no confidence from the people anymore because they have no political goodwill to solve the petitioners' problem. (STL).

Major Alfredo, Tara and Salsinha are innocent

President of Christian Democrat Party Antonio Ximenes told the media at National Parliament that Major Alfredo, Tara and Salsinha are innocent because the leaders ignored their problem. "We all know that Major Alfredo, Tara and Salsinha are innocent but they are victims of the leaders in this country" said Ximenes. According to Ximenes, to solve the crisis the second constitutional government must hold a national dialogue so everyone can get involved and express their feelings to find the best solution for this country. (TP)

August 9, 2006

Government presents formal budget to parliament

Prime Minister Ramos-Horta and his cabinet members presented the formal budget for fiscal year 2006/2007 in total US \$315 million to National Parliament yesterday. The budget is expected to be finalized and approved by National Parliament in a few days. Horta in his speech stated that the national budget is quite large and that he hopes it will help to resolve the crisis with the employment of more people through government-sponsored projects. Most of the budget comes from the Petroleum fund and should help to accelerate development in this country especially in the education, health, and agriculture sectors. "The government doesn't want to depend on the Petroleum fund but to build this country we need it" said Horta.

In a separate article, Director of East Timor Institute Development Study (TIDS) Joao Saldanha told the media that if the Government implements the budget well, then Timor-Leste's economy will be increased by 15 percent. (TP, STL, DN)

Salsinha: Resolve the problem first then dialogue
MP from KOTA party, Manuel Tilman told the media at National Parliament that to resolve the problem of F-FDTL it must create a regional military and implement a restructuring of F-FDTL. According to Tilman, F-FDTL must be divided into two regions

East and West so that the army could do their job properly and not function only in Baucau and Metinaro. In response to the dialogue between F-FDTL and petitioners, Tilman said that dialogue is important to resolve the discrimination issue within F-FDTL.

Spokesperson for the petitioners, Gastao Salsinha told the TP via telephone that he and his group are ready for dialogue but the discrimination problem within F-FDTL needs to be solved first so that people can live in peace. (TP, STL)

GNR will stay in East Timor

In response to the statement of the National Front for Justice and Peace (NFJP) which had asked GNR to stop their mission in Timor-Leste, Minister of Interior Alcino Barris said that the GNR will stay in Timor-Leste to maintain security and protect Timorese people. "All international troops are here to protect us and paid by their own governments so don't create rumours that the GNR and Australian troops are not showing impartiality" said Barris.

MP from PD party, Rui Menezes told the media that only President Xanana can bring an end to the GNR mission in Timor-Leste. Regarding NFJP's demands, Menezes said that Timor-Leste is a free and democratic country so people have the right to express their feelings but that does not mean they can act on everything they want. (DN, STL)

UN mission in Timor, Jose Luis attend Security Council meeting

Foreign Minister Jose Luis Guterres told the media at Nicolau Lobato International Airport that the reason for his visit to New York is to attend the UN Security Council to discuss the issue of the UN police who are expected to arrive in Timor-Leste with the objective of maintaining security and stability in this country now and during the general elections in 2007. "I think this meeting is really important for TL to see the resolution of UN Security Council according to what we have asked for from the UN," said Guterres. The government and civil society have to work together to find the best solution to help people emerge from the crisis, Guterres added. (STL)

August 8, 2006

F-FDTL and petitioners will hold dialogue

Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta told the media at International Airport Nicolau Lobato, that the President has sent a letter to Brigadier General Taur Matan Ruak and members of F-FDTL to hold a dialogue with the petitioners. "We have to hold dialogue between F-FDTL, PNTL and the civil society to share different ideas that enable them to serve this country" said Horta.

In response to the reformation of F-FDTL and PNTL, Horta said that reformation within PNTL has been started but F-FDTL's 20:20 package is still underway with international advisors. When that's finished, a report will be sent to the government and the National Parliament for approval.. He further explained that the President and the Minister of Interior are looking into the problem of how to reform the two institutions so that PNTL and F-FDTL could serve the nation and act in a professional manner according to law.

In a separate article, Horta said that his government has no plan to buy more guns as was reported in yesterday's news, but does plan to buy equipment for the Marine Unit, particularly ships to patrol the maritime area and control illegal fishing in the country. However, he said, this plan will take time to implement. (TP, STL, DN)

International force must return PNTL guns: Amaral

Vice President of Commission B for Defence and National Security in the National Parliament Clementino Amaral told a DN reporter that international troops (IT) must return PNTL's guns which they took from PNTL members. "I think international troops should investigate all PNTL members to make sure that they are not involved in any of the recent violence" said Amaral

In relation to the government's plan to buy equipments for the Marine Unit, Amaral said that it is important to buy equipment and ships for the Marine Unit to patrol and maintain security in the

maritime area. (DN)

Justice first before reconciliation

MP from PSD party Lucia Lobato told the media at National Parliament that justice has to be implemented first before reconciliation can begin and all people who committed crimes must be brought to justice. "The East Timorese want reconciliation and it's necessary because people want to rebuild this country in peace and harmony. Reconciliation is a fundamental principal that everyone should defend but those people who committed crimes first must be brought to justice." said Lobato. She added that East/West issues would not be resolved unless people who were involved in incidents 28 April and 25 May are summoned to court. (TP)

Stop GNR mission in East Timor

National front for Justice and Peace (NFJP) asks Guarda Nacional Republicana (GNR) to stop their mission in Timor-Leste because their presence here is not bringing peace to the country.

Coordinator of NFJP Augusto Araujo Tara stated in his press release yesterday that all judges from Portugal and the GNR have not shown their impartiality and commitments to bring justice for East Timorese people. "As we all know the former Prime Minister Alkatiri's case has not been brought to justice and also judges in the court of Appeal are controlled by the Portuguese and they can manipulate regulations of UNTAET No 1/1999, section 3 so that Mari Alkatiri will not be brought to justice" said the press release.

Tara further stated that when GNR captured Alfredo they detained him in prison but Mari Alkatiri and Rogerio Lobato still remain at home like nothing has happened to them. (STL)

Youth must together to resolve the security problem: Xavier

In relation to the fighting between youth groups in Dili, President of ASDT party and Vice President of National Parliament Francisco Xavier appealed to the youth for calm and to contribute to efforts to restore peace and stability to this country. "Independence does not mean to fight and

create instability but to come together to rebuild this country. There is no East and West but we are all Timorese and we all fought for independence" said Amaral. To maintain security and stability the youth must joint their hands together and only we bring peace and unity to this nation. We all want to see East Timor as a great country in the world" Amaral added. (STL, TP)

August 7, 2006

Gusmao appeals to the youth for peace

After the arrest of Major Alfredo and his followers, there has been fighting between youth groups in Dili for the past three days. President Xanana Gusmao has appealed to the youth for calm and to contribute to efforts to restore peace and stability in this country, so that Timor-Leste may not lose its dignity as a nation. "I appeal to all youth in Timor-Leste to stay calm and maintain national unity and restore peace in this country", said Xanana. He further stated that this government is trying to find the best solution to help people emerge from the crisis through to national reconciliation.

In a separate article, PDN MP Juliao Mausiri told the media that national reconciliation must begin with Xanana Gusmao and Taur Matan Ruak because they were not united in dealing with the petitioners' case. "People were not fighting before, so they should not be blamed; if Xanana and Taur promote reconciliation between themselves, there will be no problem among the people", said Mausiri.

Director of LABEH, Christopher Henry Samson, told STL that the crisis has come about due to a lack of unity among the leaders. "The conflict has occurred because the leaders have no capacity to bring this people together; when talking about reconciliation it is necessary to first implement justice", said Henry. (STL,TP).

Horta will have regular dialogue with political parties

After attending PD's National Congress, Deputy Prime Minister Dr Rui Araujo told the media that the current government led by Dr. Ramos Horta will hold regular dialogues with all political parties, civil society and the Catholic Church. He explained that the government will work together with all different groups to normalize the situation and return all refugees to their homes. "It is important to have dialogue to share ideas that will enable development in this country", said Araujo.

Regarding the 2007 General Election, Araujo said that all political parties will have subsidies including those who do not have seats in Parliament, but that they will have to wait for the Electoral Law which has not yet been approved by the National Parliament.

On the same occasion, Araujo announced that the government has plans to buy more guns and ships for the F-FDTL in particular for the Marine Unit. "The budget has been approved by the National Parliament and the money will be allocated to the Ministry of Interior to implement it but only when the F-FDTL has been reformed", said Araujo. There are many MP's complaining about this matter because they believe that it will create more problems but Araujo said that it is necessary to increase the capacity of the F-FDTL to act in a professional manner (STL, TP).

Transition government has no right to sign new agreement

President of PD Fernando Lasama told the media after PD's National Congress that the transitional government led by Dr. Ramos-Horta has no right to sign any agreement with any country because it does not hold the confidence of the people. Lasama added that the National Parliament is also a part of the conflict which led to the crisis, and that it has no legitimacy to ratify any treaties made by Alkatiri's government, because Fretilin has no credibility in the eyes of East Timorese. He also demanded that the government work hard to end the crisis and bring all people who committed crimes to the court. "PD demands that the President create and lead a small transition government to only focus on humanitarian, health and refugees, and on measures to return refugees to their homes", said Lasama. (STL)

Members of PNTL who committed crimes must be tried

After meeting with Prime Minister Ramos-Horta at the Ministry of Interior, PNTL Commander Paulo Fatima Martins told the media that members of PNTL who committed crimes must go to court according to the law of this country. "I appeal to all members of PNTL that anyone who has committed crimes please present these to the court and that those who are innocent please return to PNTL to continue their job" said Martins. Martins further added that he and other commanders of the PNTL have been investigated and if found guilty they will take responsibility for the crimes they have committed according to the law.

In a separate article, Prime Minister Ramos-Horta said that to resolve the problem and to serve this country again PNTL and F-FDTL must hold dialogue. "Dialogue is important to resolve two institutional problems: first, we have to show our maturity and responsibility by talking to each other and confess that what we have done was wrong so that we can together serve our nation", said Horta. (STL)

August 4, 2006

Everybody should be calm and observant: Hasegawa

SRSG Hasegawa has quoted by STL in Friday's edition of the daily appealing to the Timorese to remain calm and observe the rule of law in the country. In a press release, the head of UNOTIL further said the international community would respond to the demands of the Timorese to seek justice for those allegedly involved in crimes that led to the violent incidents of April and May this year. He added that the UN is assisting with mechanisms to investigate the facts and the circumstances that led to the incidents and that the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry for Timor-Leste has already commenced its investigations through a Secretariat in Dili led by the Commission's Executive Director, Mr. Luc Ctte. SRSG said the investigation is progressing well and Commissioner Prof. Paulo Sergio of Brazil will head the Commission. (STL)

Barris rejects proposal for reintegration of PNTL and Interpol

Minister of Interior Alcino Barris has rejected the proposal of the international police to integrate PNTL with the international police saying the proposal needs to be carefully planned so as not to contradict the current regulations. The Minister called a meeting with members of the government, commander of the international police and the United Nations to discuss the proposal and the terms of reference for the evaluation and the reintegration of the national police. Barris said the proposal is of good intention but it might not follow the rules of Timor-Leste, adding that the Ministry will issue new identification cards for PNTL to allow them to travel and cooperate with the international police.

In a separate article, Alcino Barris said PNTL are not yet active due to the lack of conditions and they would only resume duty following the evaluation of each member of police force. He said a permanent police post will be established in every suburb in order to enable the population to physically see the police presence and return to their homes. (STL)

FNJP is gathering everybody to dissolve the parliament

National Justice and Peace Front (FNJP) held a meeting yesterday in Tuana-Laran, Dili to encourage organizations to advocate for dissolution of the National Parliament. This meeting was attended by representatives from Youth Unity for Transparency and Justice (UJTJ), and all opposition's parties. FNJP believes that to end the crisis, National Parliament must be dissolved. General-coordinator of FNJP, Tara told the media after the meeting that the "objective of the meeting was how to dissolve the National Parliament because Mari Alkatiri uses National Parliament to hide behind and people insist on doing so". In response to a question as to when demonstrations would be held, Tara said that they need to prepare well so that their demands can be successful but if not they will blockade NP to stop them from their activities.

In a separate article, representative of Youth Unity for Transparency and Justice (UJTJ), Joao

Choque who also attended the meeting said that his organization disagrees with the FNJP's plan to dissolve the parliament because there is no reason to do so and it will create more problems. "If we dissolve the parliament, will it solve the problems?" Choque asked. "Our plan is how to resolve first the issue of east and west and the violence which happens everyday" said Choque.

MP from PSD party Lucia Lobato told the media that National Parliament must be dissolved to resolve the crisis because many people have no confidence in Parliament anymore. "We PSD think that the best solution is to dissolve the parliament to end the crisis" said, Lobato. (TP)

Horta wants public servants collaboration in investigation

In relation to the International Investigation Team who will be investigating April and May incidents, Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta appealed to all public servants to cooperate with the investigation process if the International Commission Inquiries contacts them for information. "This is an obligation to cooperate so if you have any evidence please give it to the Commission so they can do their jobs effectively" said Horta. He further explained that the Commission will be working with the Prosecutor-General to investigate thoroughly into the incidents which led to the crisis in Timor-Leste. (TP)

August 3, 2006

One person injured following attack

One person was injured and two kidnapped by an armed civilian group following attacks to the population in Holbese village, sub-district of Bobonaro. Minister of Interior, Alcino Barris told the media he received information from PNTL commander in Bobonaro saying an armed civilian group threatened and attacked people in that area but PNTL is currently investigating the case and Barris believes the culprits will eventually be captured. The injured person is receiving medical

treatment in Maliana hospital. (STL)

UN will independently respond to aspirations of the people

SRSG was quoted by Timor Post that the UN will respond to the aspirations of all the people independently, asking the Timorese to collaborate and to maintain a calm and let justice take its course.

According to Timor Post, SRSG Hasegawa stated in the press release that " I appeal to all to be calm and observe the rule of law of the nation. The International Community is aware and will respond to the aspirations and demands for justice, a just and fair treatment for all the people allegedly involved in the acts of crimes during the period that led to the violent incidents in the months of April and May this year including 28-29 April and 23, 24 and 25 May." The Head of UN Mission in Timor-Leste further said the mechanisms would be provided to carry out an investigation of the fact and circumstances relevant to the aforementioned incidents, through the Secretariat for the Independent Special Commission For Inquiry in Dili under the leadership of Luc Ctte, the Executive Director who plans to present their report on October 7 2006.

Hasegawa further said the UN will continue to provide assistance to the Prosecutor-General's Office to strengthen the capacity of the institution in order to carry out the work independently and with integrity according to the rule of the State. He appealed to the people of Timor-Leste to have the courage to open their hearts and have faith in starting the reconciliation process with their neighbors, friends from the districts either east or west and to work together to achieve their objective democratically, adding that with the upcoming general elections next year it is important that there is peace and stability in the nation for the elections to be totally free and democratic and without fear, violence and intimidation.

Australia troops are not leaving Timor: Slater

Brigadier General Mick Slater shot down rumors that Australian troops are going to leave East Timor soon. "We have heard the rumors but it is

not true; we will stay here to protect the people as long as the East Timorese government wants us to stay," Slater said. He stated that a few Australian troops have left with the ship but most of them stayed with armored cars and helicopters to provide protection to the Timorese people. He said that the international police from Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal (GNR) are also in Timor-Leste to maintain security and stability, helping to normalize the crisis situation by providing information. (STL, DN, TP)

Identity lost if church and customary authorities ignored — Horta

Prime Minister Ramos-Horta said under the Mari Alkatiri leadership he repeatedly urged the government to work with the church but he was ignored because he was the Foreign Minister. He was told by some to focus on foreign negotiations or reconciliation, Ramos-Horta told participants during a dialogue with members of the Church in Baucau Diocese on Wednesday. Ramos-Horta further said whenever he spoke of his respect for the Church, he was accused of conspiring with that institution. He said that the government must study traditional values and implement them with democracy values. He stressed that he became Prime Minister as a result of the crisis and was not elected democratically. He said that his government has nine months to implement a budget at the value of US\$315 million to improve the condition of the nation. The Minister said the State requires partnership with the civil society to work together with the support of the international community, adding that it is important for the State to be in partnership with the church to form the Timorese identity. He has acknowledged that the State institutions are young and therefore the government is conscious that it must work with institutions like the Church and customary authorities. Therefore, he said, in the next three months the government will hold discussions with heads of villages to mobilize the society towards the development process. The new Prime Minister said the recent problems were the result of the government being ignorant of the problems developing which began in 2003/2004. He said the government did not have the vision to honestly address those problems. He added, that if Timor-Leste had had a strong institution or a good

police force to prevent the situation, the conflict in Dili would not have occurred. But, he said, this was not the case; the Ministry of Interior was not intellectually capable of leading the police and worse, PNTL had been used by the former Minister of Interior and a few secretaries of regions for political interest rather than for that of state or national interest. As for F-FDTL, the new head of the government said that had they not left their headquarters, their prestige would have been higher but since they followed the orders given by the former Prime Minister, they lost their prestige. He added, that as Minister of Defence, he wants to build bridges and heal the wounds between the two institutions, lift their morale and work on dialogue from the top to the bottom with the objective of pulling Timor-Leste out from this crisis. (STL)

Court must be fair with Major Alfredo

Unidade Juventude Transparencia Justisa (UJTJ) requests the court to carry out a just process regarding Major Alfredo Reinado's case in order to avoid 'mafia law' in the justice system in Timor-Leste. During a meeting with President Gusmao on Tuesday (1/8) the youths stressed they want a transparent process that will reveal those responsible for the crimes committed during the crisis and the leaders who have distributed guns and ammunition to the population to kill each other. According to the group, youths were the victims of 28 April and 25 May and they demand that the State be responsible for those cases, and that the justice system urgently make a decision and condemn those responsible for the distribution of weapons. They also asked for clarification from Prime Minister Ramos-Horta regarding his statement that "youths with long hair, unwashed are the ones burning and looting." The youth also made an appeal for those who have burned houses not to continue hiding in the IPDs camps but to give themselves up as is just. They also want a government team to visit the camps and persuade those people whose houses have not been destroyed to return home. (TP)

Horta: Don't obstruct justice or international troops

In response to the protestors who demand the release of Alfredo, Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta told the media that Alfredo's case is now in the hands of justice as is the case of former Minister of Interior Rogerio Tiago Lobato. Horta appealed to Alfredo's supporters who want to protest on the street to free Alfredo that they do not obstruct the justice and if they do so it means they are against state and international troops. "People insist on justice and let's not interfere with justice. I appeal to all of you to trust the justice system and also to trust the international commission inquiries to do their job" said Horta.

MP from UDT party Alexandre Corte-Real asks Australian troops to take responsibility for the military equipment that they took from Major Alfredo because during the crisis Australian troops are the ones who guard him and his group. According to Corte-Real, Alfredo is still part of the F-FDTL. (STL, DN)

Horta presents government's programs to parliament

Prime Minister Ramos Horta presented the government's programs and budget plan for fiscal year 2006/2007 to National Parliament yesterday. Horta said that the programs he presented to National Parliament are based on a national development plan which majority of Fretilin parliamentarian defends and represents people's vision. Horta further stated that the objectives of the government plans are to create national reconciliation and humanitarian programs, also for reformation of institutions of PNTL and F-FDTL to maintain stability in this country.

In a separate article, MP from Democratic Party Mariano Sabino said that the programs of the government presented by Prime Minister Ramos Horta were good but to implement the programs in nine months is impossible. Sabino said that fiscal year budget 2006/2007 is really big but it spends most to structure of the government not the people. "We think better to minimize the ministries so that the money could spend effectively in development and for people's need" said Sabino.

MP from UDT party Queteria da Costa told the media at National Parliament that the budget for fiscal year 2006/2007 is big but will the government implement it? If not don't make people dream in the afternoon. "There are many programs from the government but we don't know which the priority is for the people, especially in the crisis situation." Said Queteria. She said that according to the constitution this government has mandate only for nine months so it is hard to implement all the programs. (DN, STL)

Alcino Barris: Guns for PNTL together 2.483

Minister of Interior Alcino Barris told the media at National Parliament after National budget discussion that PNTL has 2.483 big guns and more than 2000 pistols. Barris said that he still doesn't know how many members of PNTL have already handed weapons to international troops because international troops are still doing inspection of all weapons in Timor-Leste. "The inspection started from Maliana, Ermera, Liquica and other districts on how many guns still in the hands of members of PNTL" said Barris. He appealed to all members of PNTL or civilians who still carry weapons to hand them over to international troops or National Police headquarters. "It is a crime if any members of PNTL does not want to hand over weapons and we will process them according to law" said Barris.

In response to reformation of PNTL, Barris said that Paulo Martins is still the commander of PNTL "if no reformations in PNTL, Paulo Martins still the commander under old PNTL structure" said Barris. (STL)

Coalition of PSD, ASDT and PD for 2007 elections

Secretary-General of Social Democrat Party (PSD) Joao Goncalves told DN reporter that PSD, ASDT and PD will have coalition parties for general election in 2007 because the leaders have capacity to run the country. "We want a coalition not just because our party has great program but the leaders have capacity to implement the program when we win the election" said Goncalves. He said that PSD and ASDT already have an agreement and still waiting for PD to joint them. He believes that if it happens in the general election in 2007 they will get a high percentage of vote but it

depends on the people. "In the reality it depends on the people which political party they would vote but if they vote for PSD to win the general election 2007, PSD would put national and people's interest first above everything" Goncalves, added.

In response to Alfredo's detention, Goncalves said that Alfredo's case is different to Mari and Rogerio because both of them only allegations but Alfredo was carrying weapons. "I was so surprised when I heard that international troops captured Alfredo with weapons in his house because Alfredo himself already declared in Maubisse that he and his followers already handed over their weapons but why they still have it?" He asked.

MUN gives proposal to prime minister

Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta visited demonstrators who called themselves as National Unity Movement (MUN) in Matadouro, Dili. In his visit, MUN gave its proposal to the Prime Minister to maintain national unity in Timor Leste. Horta told the demonstrators that to build the nation we have to avoid any kind of violence because we won't gain anything from it. "I support the initiatives of MUN to promote national unity and avoid any kind of violence" said Horta. He further explains that as the head of the government, the door is always open for the poor people because the policy of this government is to try to reduce poverty in this country. (DN)

OPINION & ANALYSIS

East Timor's story, lessons for Indonesia

International Herald Tribune - August 14, 2006

Jakarta — For more than two decades, the brutal military occupation of East Timor, a distant, impoverished, peripheral territory, brought Indonesia little but disdain and dishonor on the world stage.

The ending, a bloody rampage by Indonesian-backed militia after a vote for independence in 1999, further tarnished the nation's reputation abroad, and left a bitter mood at home where the loss of East Timor was a subject best left untouched.

The seemingly closed chapter was reopened this month in a new book by Ali Alatas, the former foreign minister and ambassador to the United Nations.

It is the first account by an Indonesian insider who tried to steer some of the sorry events that at critical moments involved the United States, the United Nations and at all times, the heavy hand of the Indonesian Army. Alatas, always amicable, always accessible, was respected in New York as a quintessential diplomat handed the tricky task of representing his country during the rule of the secretive and authoritarian General Suharto.

In "The Pebble in the Shoe, The Diplomatic Struggle for East Timor," Alatas traces events from the Indonesian invasion in 1975 to the exit in September 1999, and the handing over to a UN peacekeeping force.

For the most part, he sticks to the narrow diplomatic history, rarely veering into what the Indonesian Army was doing on the ground, and mostly hinting, rather than asserting, that the army's actions made the diplomatic track so tortuous. "I decided I would try to open up a debate and leave it to the reader to draw his conclusions," Alatas said in an interview.

The debate came immediately. A launching of the book here Aug. 9 fashioned as a public seminar in the stately courtyard of the National Archives and attended by former army generals, Indonesian officials and foreign diplomats turned into an initial round of soul-searching, even catharsis.

An Indonesian official, who served under Alatas and is now President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's most senior foreign policy adviser, told the audience that Indonesia had many stark lessons to learn from East Timor.

The official, Dino Patti Djalal, described the period leading up to the UN administered referendum of Aug. 30, 1999, when the East Timorese voted overwhelmingly for independence.

Djalal said he had been sent by Alatas to visit the East Timorese leader, Xanana Gusmao, when he was still being held by the Indonesians in prison

in Jakarta. He had received and passed along a warning from Gusmao that the militias backed by the Indonesian Army would create mayhem. Nothing was done to prevent it, he said.

"One thing that stuck with me from that visit," Djalal said. "He said: 'Dino, this thing about the militias is going to be a cancer.'

"We never had the heart or the will to rein in the militia," Djalal said. "For the government as a whole that was a lesson. That's what killed us. We paid very dearly." According to UN estimates, about 1,000 people died in the violence that analysts have said was turned on and off like a spigot by the Indonesian military.

In his book, Alatas recounts that the looting, burning and killing after the voting was so bad that a delegation of Indonesian officials, including Alatas, was unable to leave the airport when they flew to East Timor for a first-hand look. At that point, Alatas acknowledges the nature of the Indonesian Army's complicity with the militia. "Privately," he said, he began to have serious doubts whether, even under martial law, Indonesian troops could control the situation, "because of wavering and indecisiveness to act strongly against the militias."

Djalal was more forthright in his remarks, saying Indonesia deluded itself during its rule of East Timor. "We spoke of winning the hearts and minds, but we didn't know what we were doing," said Djalal. "We thought we could just splash lots of money about and that would signify something. We were wrong. East Timor became a police state, we were bribing people we thought were loyal to us, and doing horrible things to people we thought were not loyal to us."

At another point in the seminar, the former Indonesian ambassador to Australia, Sabam Siagian, recalled how Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, in a visit to Jakarta just before the 1975 invasion of East Timor, had told Suharto the plans for East Timor were acceptable as long the operation was done "quickly and cleanly." Siagian noted: "It was neither quick nor clean."

In his account, Alatas says that the gunning down of East Timorese protesters in November 1991 by

the Indonesian military at a cemetery in the district of Santa Cruz was a "turning point" from which Indonesia never recovered. The massacre was captured on video tape by a British filmmaker and shown worldwide. "Since that date, international support for Indonesia's position inexorably declined, while that for the independence movement in East Timor markedly increased," he writes.

Soon after the Santa Cruz killings, the United States cut military aid to the Suharto government. With Indonesia's international image suffering so much, Alatas writes that he tried in 1994 to persuade Suharto of the wisdom of granting East Timor autonomy, a status that Alatas long favored. Suharto turned him down.

If autonomy had been granted in the 1980s or 90s, then independence would not have been necessary, Alatas suggests. To the astonishment of many, including Alatas, after Suharto's downfall the new president, B.J. Habibie, quickly set the path for independence.

The book's title comes from a remark Alatas once made to a Portuguese journalist who had asked him how he felt about the stigma over East Timor.

Yes, he had answered, it was a problem for Indonesia, "but only as bothersome as a pebble in a shoe," Alatas said. "In retrospect, however, I have to admit that in its final years, the East Timor problem was no longer a mere pebble in the shoe but had become a veritable boulder."

The troubles of East Timor came at a personal cost to Alatas. In the 1990s, he was a serious candidate for secretary general of the United Nations.

But Alatas has told people that Suharto did not want his candidacy pursued. Friends of the former foreign minister say that Suharto did not want the spotlight on East Timor that a campaign for Alatas would have attracted.

Timor Leste: Present problems, future strategies

The Guardian - August 9, 2006

Andy Alcock — For those who have supported the independence of Timor Leste (TL) for over 30 years, Timorese and others, the events occurring there over the past few months are heartbreaking. Many world leaders are describing TL as a failed state — this is particularly so of Australia's political leaders who have worked tirelessly to push for the removal of former TL Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri.

Much of the media analysis about events in TL have centred around the performance and personality of Alkatiri. In my view this is very naive and it has overshadowed attempts to highlight the many other contributing factors that led to the crisis.

It has to be admitted that TL's leaders have made some mistakes. Probably, the worst one was to sack almost 600 members of the FDTL (TL's defence force) following protests over conditions in March 2006. This led to divisions that could have been avoided if there had been some attempt to address the grievances more sympathetically. One FALANTIL (National Armed Forces for the Liberation of East Timor) I know personally complained to me that Alkatiri did not listen to the concerns of the veterans and did not treat them with respect.

Many of the problems within PNTL (TL's police force) have been laid at the feet of the disgraced former Interior Minister, Rogerio Lobato, who has been accused of training its members to be an opposing force to the FDTL.

It has to be said that Australia's politicians have contributed largely to the problems being faced in TL. For the 24 years of the Indonesian military (TNI) occupation, Australia gave military and diplomatic support to Indonesia.

In 1999, when the UN was planning for TL's independence referendum, it was Australian leaders who insisted that UN peacekeepers were not needed and that a policing operation would provide sufficient security. The result was that TL gained its independence, but saw the deaths of a further 2000 of its citizens and the destruction of 80 percent of its infrastructure.

Poverty

TL, the poorest nation in SE Asia, has the lowest per capita GDP in the world (\$400 pa) with over 40 percent of its population living below the poverty line of 55 US cents per day.

Eighty percent of the population is under 18 years of age and unemployment exceeds 50 percent. In addition, the British Medical Journal Lancet, which carried out a study of mental health needs in TL identified that significant numbers of people have post traumatic stress disorder and other psychological problems because they witnessed the torture, rape or murder of relatives or friends.

In addition to the actions taken by rebel members of the PNTL and the FDTL, little mention has been made in the main stream media of former militia groups and millenarian groups (eg Colimau 2000) that have contributed to much of the opportunistic violence.

Despite the criticisms of him, it must be acknowledged that Alkatiri has actually played a vital role in TL's leadership. He was one of the main architect's of the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT). The reason he is disliked by Australian political leaders is that he stood up to their bullying over the Timor Sea oil and gas negotiations. He has played a major role in keeping the TL economy out of the hands of the World Bank and the IMF. It will be interesting to see if interim PM Jose Ramos Horta will be as successful in this regard.

Alkatiri is responsible for bringing Cuban doctors to TL to work in rural areas and established a new medical school at the national university. He is known to have concerns about environmental and women's issues and is an opponent of the privatisation of TL's electricity.

If it is proven that he was responsible for arming unofficial militias, obviously this is a serious matter. However, in most democracies, he would have been asked to stand aside — not resign — until the allegations had been disproved. I think Xanana's decision to force him to resign was wrong and unwise. It will further antagonise the hard-liners in FRETILIN who have been critical of him.

With all of these problems, what steps need to be

taken return TL to effective development and rebuilding TL?

Security

The following actions need to be taken to assist TL to protect its security:

- UN peacekeepers need to remain in TL for some years to come
- TL certainly needs more assistance with the recruiting and training of its police force
- international peacekeepers and police will need to have a continuing presence in the border region until the TL border police and FDTL are able to effectively stop incursions by the TNI, its militias and its black marketeers
- the UN needs to pressure the Indonesian Government to ensure that all militia groups trained by the TNI on the TL/West Timor border are disbanded and remove the present TNI divisions away from the border
- the UN must insist that all member nations cease all forms of military cooperation with the TNI until all the war criminals in its ranks have been brought to justice
- the UN needs to establish an international war crimes tribunal to try the scores of war criminals in the ranks of the TNI and its militias this tribunal will need to have powers of extradition and UN member nations will have to be prevailed upon to cooperate with the tribunal and extradite any alleged TNI criminals who are found within their borders

The economy

The Australian Government needs to be pressured by the UN and the world community to:

- sign the International Law of the Sea
- hand over all the oil/gas profits it has taken from TL's half of the Timor Sea since drilling began
- the Indonesian Government be compelled to pay reparations for all the destruction that it has been caused by its military in TL.

The UN should provide interest-free loans and grants to:

- fund urgently needed humanitarian programs

- establish industries and job creation schemes
- rebuild the rice growing industry

Training and administration

It will be necessary for the UN with support from friendly nations to stay longer in TL to provide administrative support and training to the new nation. The UN is presently committed to remain for another two years. PM Ramos Horta believes that a 10-year commitment is necessary.

Respect for TL's sovereignty

There has been much debate about the motives of Australia in wanting to send its soldiers before being asked by TL's political leaders. There has to be some international agreement between all nations dealing with TL to respect its sovereignty on both land and sea and not to seek to profit unfairly from this nation at this early and very precarious stage of its rebuilding and development.

I believe that if the above strategies are undertaken, TL will be able to overcome its many problems and build a more successful future for its long suffering and courageous citizens. [Andy Alcock is the Information Officer of the Australia East Timor Friendship Association (South Australia Inc) Inc.]

East Timor's blighted independence

Asia Times - August 2, 2006

Todd Crowell, Hua Hin, Thailand — The turmoil in East Timor and the subsequent deployment of Australian and other peacekeeping troops has prompted much soul-searching, especially among human-rights activists for whom the cause of an independent East Timor was an article of faith.

Has East Timor become, four years after it gained formal independence from Indonesia, just another failed state or, as Australian Defense Minister Brendon Nelson said recently, "a haven perhaps for transnational crime, for terrorism and indeed

humanitarian disaster and justice"?

Such a description seems too strong for East Timor, which, though sunk into lawlessness, has not, to my knowledge, harbored any terrorists. The question is more whether this territory of fewer than a million people is or can become a viable country. Was independence a mistake?

Writing in *The Monthly* magazine, Don Watson, former Australian prime minister Paul Keating's speechwriter, created something of a stir when he wrote, "Life under a murderous occupation might be a little better than life in a failed state, albeit one perennially dependent on Australian aid and Australian policing.

"What was more, in an imperfect world, Suharto's Indonesia was a lot better than its critics were willing to concede, or able to see from their lofty Pilgeresque perches" — a reference to John Pilger, a fierce critic of Suharto.

Keating, his country's last Labor Party prime minister, took a markedly pro-Indonesia position (and took a lot of flak for it from the left wing of his party) because he was keen on positioning his country as being a part of Asia. (His successor, John Howard, is much less interested in the "Australia is a part of Asia" business.)

Wrote Watson: "The relationship was important because Indonesia was the most populous Muslim country in the world. It was a developing country offering numerous complementary interests. A successful relationship was a precondition of a successful engagement with Asia."

Watson went on to argue that the years of stability in Indonesia under president Suharto's New Order government made it possible to drop the "White Australia" policy, welcome Asian immigrants and make Australia a more open and tolerant country.

"Suharto gave us nothing less than an ability to shed our ancient fear of Asia. Liberalism in Australia profited from despotism in Indonesia. What we took for our own courage was just the profit of Suharto's ruthlessness."

Nevertheless, the history of appeasing Suharto

still leaves a bad taste in Watson's mouth, since he concludes, "It was good policy, but nevertheless cowardice as well."

Pilger would no doubt agree. The fiery, unreconstructed activist recently wrote a piece in *Antiwar.com* accusing Canberra of deliberately provoking disorder to remove East Timorese prime minister Mari Alkatiri, in effect an act of regime change.

Civil order has returned to East Timor. Former foreign minister Jose Ramos-Horta has replaced Alkatiri as premier. It is probably too early to dismiss East Timor as a failed state. But it is certainly a fragile state.

Instead of becoming what it is and likely to remain for many years, a poor, independent country and perpetual ward of the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, Australia and Portugal, it could have remained part of a dynamic and now democratic Indonesian nation.

This notion, of course, would be heresy to many, even as they lament the chaos that overtook the country a few weeks ago. Did not the Indonesian army murder tens of thousands of Timorese during its 25-year occupation?

It can certainly be argued that Jakarta long ago lost the mandate of heaven to govern East Timor because of its harsh occupation. But one also has to ask whether it is right that a national border in Asia be determined by which European colonizer settled where.

Why couldn't the Timorese have followed the example of Goa? India and Indonesia were in very similar positions at the close of World War II. In both cases the main European colonizer — the British in India and the Dutch in Indonesia — withdrew but left behind small Portuguese enclaves, which Lisbon clung to fiercely.

New Delhi finally lost patience, and in 1961 invaded the largest of its enclaves and forcefully expelled the Portuguese. The world condemned India, but the affair was soon forgotten. Goa settled down peacefully, eventually becoming a full-fledged state of the Indian union.

Fast-forward to 1975. The Carnation Revolution ousted Portuguese dictator Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, and Lisbon was shedding its overseas empire. East Timor declared independence, and the Indonesian army invaded. But in this case years of guerrilla warfare against the occupation ensued until in 1999 East Timorese voted for independence.

One wonders whether East Timorese might be having buyers' remorse today. Are they so different from their former countrymen in other parts of Indonesia that they should be independent? If this is true for East Timor, why not for Aceh or Bali or Papua? That, of course, was always Jakarta's argument.

And if ethnic differences are such important criteria, then how important is it that East Timor is divided into the Kaladis of the west and the Firakus to the east? Should the country be further divided into the Republics of East East Timor and West East Timor (throw in a Republic of Oecussi-Ambeno, the small enclave in West Timor administered from Dili)?

On independence, East Timor adopted Portuguese as one of its official languages, presumably as another way to set itself apart from its former countrymen. Portuguese teachers flocked to the new country to offer instruction, so that in addition to their other disadvantages, the Timorese would learn a language that is virtually useless for them in Asia.

By contrast, Indonesians couldn't care less about studying Dutch or learning about their Dutch heritage. Instead they cultivated Bahasa Indonesia as a language that would unite the disparate groups that make up their nation.

The great irony of the East Timor struggle is that just as it finally reached its goal of independence in 2002, Indonesia was becoming fully democratic. Meanwhile, in Goa they celebrate December 16, the day India invaded, as "Liberation Day".

[Todd Crowell is an Asia Times Online correspondent based in Thailand.]