



Forensics Training for Human Rights Investigators



» UNMIT Photo/Martine Perret

“Forensic science helps the investigation, interpretation and development of justice”, explained forensic pathologist, Dr Nurul Islam, to the 14 members of staff from the Provedoria of Human Rights and Justice (PDHJ) who attended his training session.

The three-day course, run by UNDP, was designed to help members of the human rights investigations team get to grips with the basics of forensics.

“Around 60% of total complaints made to the PDHJ relate to its human rights mandate. Since 2005 the PDHJ has received over 250 complaints on human rights violations”, said Alison Ryan, the project manager for UNDP.

For the human rights investigators from PDHJ it is very important that they have an awareness of different forensic science techniques and can apply this knowledge in their evidence gathering and analysis.

Naasson Sarmento is one of the human rights investigators at PDHJ. He said that this introduction to forensics had been invaluable for his work:

“I am regularly given medical reports from cases under investigation. Until now it has been incredibly difficult to understand the content and to interpret the results. Now I can understand the forensic terminology and know what follow-up questions I need to ask”.

It is also important that the PDHJ staff know how to collect and document evidence when they are called to the scene of an incident, for instance taking accurate photos and measuring injuries.

This is vital information for any future investigation.

Karlheinz Gortano, UNDP’s Investigation Mentor, is working to increase the capacity of the staff at PDHJ:

“The PDHJ investigators had a case where a member of the public accused a police officer of assaulting them. Unfortunately the bruising was not photographed properly at the time of the complaint. That obviously caused huge problems later on in the investigation, once the physical evidence had faded”.

Another of the trainees, Paulo Ribeiro, who is head of PDHJ’s Oecussi office, thought

this training was especially helpful to those members of staff posted in the districts:

“As investigators in the field we often find it difficult to persuade people to be examined in a hospital. Now we have the skills to preserve and collect evidence when necessary”.

The course included a visit to the National Hospital to view the facilities available to the forensics department. Plus a presentation from one of the Cuban doctors regarding the autopsy procedure for suspicious deaths. In the last 10 years there have been over 1,000 autopsy cases in Timor-Leste.

However, Dr Nurul Islam, who is the forensic pathologist with the UN’s Serious Crimes Investigation Team, emphasized to the PDHJ staff that forensics is not just about cases involving a death. Collecting trace evidence, for example from a rape victim, can help to identify an assailant and bring them to justice.

The Acting Provedor, Dr Rui Pereira dos Santos, welcomed the opportunity for his staff to attend the course:

“This training is important because it highlights the power of forensics, and demonstrates how the practical application of this science can help PDHJ perform its role as Timor-Leste’s independent national human rights organization.”

35th anniversary of FALINTIL



» UNMIT Photo/Bernardino Soares

The 35th anniversary of the formation of The Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor - Forças Armadas da Libertação Nacio-

nal de Timor-Leste - (FALINTIL) was commemorated on 20 August.

Established on 20 August 1975, FALINTIL was dissolved on 1 February 2001. In 2002 the official armed force of the newly independent Timor-Leste was named, Força de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL).

In honour of the anniversary, the Government of Timor-Leste held activities in the Dili including a ceremony where President Jose Ramos-Horta, Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao and UN SRSG Ameerah Haq threw flowers into the ocean in front of the Government Palace.

Second annual Tour-de-Timor



The second annual Tour-de-Timor bicycle race will take place between 13-17 September.

The route for the grueling race will take place through

the western districts of the nation, starting in Dili, through to Balibo, Sua, Ainaro, Aileu and back to Dili.

The inaugural race last year attracted international attention with many professional cyclists participating in the event.

The Tour-de-Timor is organized by the Office of the President.



International Youth Day Special

Timor-Leste recently celebrated the first ever International Year of Youth which started on 12 August. This day has special resonance for Timor-Leste given that it has one of the youngest populations in the world with more than half of all Timorese under the age of 18.

With such a young and growing populace, Timor-Leste must determine what role youth will play in nation and state building processes. In an effort to harness the energy, imagination and initiative of the world's youth in overcoming the challenges facing humankind.

Timor-Leste Youth Parliament inaugurated in Dili



» UNMIT Photo/Martine Perret

The Timor-Leste Youth Parliament has been inaugurated in Dili. Over 130 young parliamentarians aged 12-17 were selected across 65 sub-districts to sit on the parliament.

Supported by UNICEF, the parliamentarians underwent three days of training on leadership and citizenship and are expected to represent the views of young people and engage with policy makers to facilitate the inclusion of youth voices in national development.

Young Timorese brought together through dance

Young Timorese members of the Movimento Adolescente Crianca regularly practice Capoeira, an Afro-Brazilian art form that combines elements of martial arts, music, and dance.

Consisting of 74 young men and women aged between 11-21, MAC is a youth NGO that promotes children's rights through the arts. Dance and acrobatics techniques are used as a way to teach discipline, respect and unity among Timor's youth.



» UNMIT Photo/Martine Perret

Mercy Ship provides vital treatment to Timorese

Mercy Ship left Dili on 24 August after two weeks of providing vital medical services to Timorese in Dili and the districts. Treatment was free and available to all Timorese who were referred by a doctor to the Ship. Staff from the Mercy Ship visited health clinics throughout the country to get the referrals and provide transport to patients outside of Dili.

Some of the treatments included surgery to repair cataracts and hernia and more

complex treatments for cancer patients.

The Mercy Ship travels all around the world providing mobile medical services, including acute surgical medical facilities, to U.S. disaster relief and humanitarian operations worldwide. Some of the services provided by the ship include surgery, primary health care clinics, dental clinics, preventative medicine, and veterinary care.

The last time the Mercy Ship came to

Timor-Leste was in 2008 as part of a humanitarian and civic assistance mission throughout Southeast Asia and Oceania.



» UNMIT Photo/Bernardino Soares

Thoughts of young Timorese at the celebration of International Youth Day

Natalina Beliana
from Fini Kreatifu Group Dili



“As a youth, I am very happy to follow International Youth Day. If we want to developed our nation we must come together to build our nation for the future.

We must avoid violence and stay in peace within our families. If we do this, we will certainly create peace in the community and help contribute to the development of our future. //

Luis Takur
from Baucau District, Sub-District Baguia



“Young people in Timor-Leste know how long it took to fight for freedom.

The freedom was also won because of the contribution of youth. Young people have an opportunity to reflect on the contribution we can make to this thing we call ‘development’.

I believe that that all young people- from rural areas and cities- have a role to help move the nation forward and to contribute to development. //



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