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Electrification of the Nation continues with the Inauguration of Central Electric Betano

On Tuesday the 20th of August the President of the Republic H.E. Taur Matan Ruak, the Prime Minister H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, the Secretary of State for Electricity H.E. Januário Pereira and senior members of Government, in the presence of Members of the National Parliament, the Diplomatic Corps and national and international guests, gathered with local communities for the Inauguration of the Central Electric Betano power plant in the district of Manufahi.

With the construction of the Betano Power Plant on the southern coast the two new power plants that are a foundation of the National Electrification Project are now completed. The first plant in Hera on the northern coast of Timor-Leste has been operational for over a year.

The aim of the National Electrification Project is to provide reliable electricity generation, transmission and distribution throughout Timor-Leste.

Preparation and planning for the 130 MW Betano power plant began in 2011 with construction underway in June of 2012. The generators arrived later in October that same year.

Other key components in the country's 150KV nationwide power grid include the construction of 9 substations and a network of transmission and distribution lines. All substations have now been completed. The scheduled work on over 600 kilometres of transmission lines and 120 kilometres of distribution lines is over 90% complete.

The result of these achievements is that 47 subdistricts in 12 of Timor-Leste's 13 districts, from the border at Mota-Ain in the west to Tutala in the east, and from Lore in the north to Mota Masin in the south, now have 24-hour electricity.

Work is continuing to ensure access to the grid in Oe-cusse district, the island of Atauro and 13 other subdistricts. The tender process for Oe-Cusse Ambeno's own power plant is underway with a contract



Ágio Pereira
+670 77045002
agio.pereira@cdm.gov.tl
govtmedia@gmail.com
www.timor-leste.gov.tl

expected to be awarded to the selected bidder before the end of the 2013. Distribution lines will be built across the whole district. An undersea cable is proposed to join the island of Ataúro to the grid.

Timorese participation has been encouraged by the Government with the various components of the National Electrification Project being executed by 5 international companies and 200 national companies. Sufficient access to energy is critical for the further development of Timor-Leste's productive capacity and the Betano plant will be an important supplier for planned south coast development.

Government Spokesperson Ágio Pereira noted "the inauguration of Central Electric Betano marks another important step in fulfilling the goals of our Strategic Development Plan to build and maintain core and productive infrastructure. As with any major infrastructure project undertaken throughout the world it has had its share of challenges. However, after little investment in supplying electricity to rural areas in the decades prior to the restoration of independence, and then the widespread destruction of electrical infrastructure in 1999, the completion of these core components of the National Electrification Project is a major achievement in the history of our nation. That is why it was with a strong sense of pride that our President of the Republic and Prime Minister inaugurated Central Electric Betano."**ENDS**



Ágio Pereira

+670 77045002

agio.pereira@cdm.gov.tl

govtlmedia@gmail.com

www.timor-leste.gov.tl