



## SPOKESPERSON SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



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### **Government inaugurates first institute of higher education on the South Coast**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February the Prime Minister, H.E. Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo, officially inaugurated the Polytechnic Institute of Betano in the municipality of Manufahi. The Polytechnic is the first institute of higher education created directly by the Government of Timor-Leste and will support the provision of technical education, particularly in the areas of agriculture, livestock and engineering, in order to empower young Timorese to perform professional activities.

Prime Minister Araújo, in his address to officials, students and staff, said that the Government believed that investing in education and training was an investment into building a strong society and that the opening of the Institute marked one more step in the education and training of Timor's young people to equip them to participate effectively in national development.

More than two hundred students are set to attend the institute this year studying in courses on Animal Production and Civil Construction. When they graduate these students will have acquired skills to carry out specific activities needed in the labor market, both in the public and private sectors. Other courses that are being considered for the Institute to offer in the future include Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Food and Agricultural Products, Animal Health and Forestry. The Council of Ministers approved the Decree-Law establishing the Institute and approving its Provisional Statutes in September 2016 and the work has been undertaken to finish the buildings, define the curriculum, recruit teachers and administrative staff, and provide the equipment needed to effectively teach the curriculum.

Timor-Leste's Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030 recognizes the need for "polytechnics to offer technical higher education that is specific to Timor-Leste's development needs" and the Government Program speaks of promoting "an efficient polytechnic and university sector" in order to provide students "with the opportunity to receive quality education and to take part in the construction of our country."

Spokesperson, Minister of State Agio Pereira, said "the opening of this Polytechnic Institute sees the promotion of higher education focused on our national development" and noted "its location in Manufahi on the South Coast is an expression of our policy to decentralize services. The Government congratulates those involved and wishes the teaching staff and students well for the months ahead."**ENDS**



**Agio Pereira**  
+670 77045002  
[agio.pereira@cdm.gov.tl](mailto:agio.pereira@cdm.gov.tl)  
[govtmedia@gmail.com](mailto:govtmedia@gmail.com)  
[www.timor-leste.gov.tl](http://www.timor-leste.gov.tl)