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Office of the
Spokesperson

Press Release

Meeting of the Council of Ministers on October 28, 2020

The Council of Ministers met, at the Government Palace, in Dili, and approved the **Law Proposal draft on the Organization and Functioning of the Courts**, presented by the Minister of Justice, Manuel Cárceres da Costa.

This Law Proposal draft refers to the organization and functioning of the Supreme Court of Justice, creating conditions for, once there are career judges with experience and sufficient number, to proceed to the respective establishment. Until that moment, the respective roles continue to be ensured by the Court of Appeal.

It is also proposed the approval of the legal framework that will enable the future installation of the administrative and fiscal jurisdiction, which is responsible for judging the state bodies' decisions appeals, as well as other administrative and tax disputes.

The nature of the current district courts, as courts of common jurisdiction is reiterated, with the possibility of splitting these courts of common jurisdiction into specialized jurisdiction courts: in civil, criminal matters and also, whenever the volume and complexity of the proceedings committed to a determined court of the first instance justify it, specialized jurisdiction courts in matters of family and minors.

The **Decree-Law draft regarding the New Regulation of the Military Service Law**, presented by the Minister of Defence, Filomeno da Paixão de Jesus, was approved.

The new regulation aims to reconcile the innovation introduced in the new F-FDTL Military Status, concerning the recruitment of troops in times of peace, adopting the





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mandatory military service system, to meet the needs of the FALINTIL-Defence Forces of Timor-Leste and the stated government programmatic purposes.

The introduction of mandatory military service led to the need to restructure military recruitment and reorganize the various phases of providing normal effective military service to promote the effectiveness and efficiency of the various military and civilian services directly involved in fulfilling military obligations.

The Council of Ministers approved the **Government Decree draft**, presented by the Prime Minister, Taur Matan Ruak, on **the measures for the state of emergency implementation**, renewed by the Decree of the President of the Republic No. 66/2020, of 27th, October, to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The state of emergency, now renewed, covers the entire national territory and will be in effect between November 4th, 2020, 00.00 a.m., and December 3rd, 2020, 11.59 p.m.

Regarding Government Decree 13/2020, of October 3rd, which defined the implementing measures for the previous state of emergency declaration, the following changes are registered:

The rules of mandatory prophylactic isolation applied to workers in the oil sector, in addition to the aircraft crews who ensure international transport of passengers or goods and for drivers of heavy goods vehicles for international land transportation, are now also approved by ministerial diploma from the Minister of Health;

It becomes mandatory to maintain a distance of at least five feet between each person, as long as they do not live in a common economy, use a face mask that covers the nose and mouth when you have to access or stay in public or private places of collective use, and hand hygiene when intend to enter into commercial,





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industrial or service establishments or buildings where public administration services operate.

The remaining measures for the implementation of the state of emergency's declaration are maintained, namely, with regard to the requirement to mandatory sanitary control to all individuals wishing to enter or leave the national territory and mandatory isolation (quarantine), with a minimum duration of fourteen days, and COVID-19 test, to citizens wishing to enter the country, citizens who have symptoms of COVID-19, or who have had contact with individuals infected with SARS-CoV-2. Expenses related to prophylactic isolation are borne by each individual, when it is carried out in a private health establishment, residence or isolation centre. Land border crossing for traditional or customary purposes and for access to regulated markets continues to be prohibited, while the respective sanctions are maintained. The entry of foreigners into national territory, across land borders, remains subject to prior authorization. During the period of validity of the state of emergency, all licenses, authorizations and other administrative acts and documents remain valid, regardless of the expiration date.

The Government Decree draft, presented by the Minister for the Affairs of National Liberation Combatants, Júlio Sarmento da Costa "Meta Mali, **on the regulation of financial support granted for housing purposes to each of the national liberation veteran combatants, demobilized from 20 to 24 years' war participation**, was approved.

This Government Decree draft establishes a financial support in the amount of 40 thousand American dollars, to be attributed to the national liberation combatant veteran, demobilized from 20 to 24 years' war participation, who still does not have a decent and adequate housing, who is building their own home, but haven't finished yet, or that already have a decent and adequate home.





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Acting Minister of Finance, Sara Lobo Brites, made a presentation to the Council of Ministers on Australia's **initiatives plan on partnership for development, for the 2020-2021 period, called "Timor-Leste COVID-19 Development Response Plan"**.

The plan includes activities to the technical capacity and health infrastructure improvement, to the ongoing Australian programs continuation and strengthening and also activities in the context of economic recovery.

Lastly, the Vice Prime Minister, José Maria dos Reis, made a presentation to the Council of Ministers through the Interministerial Technical Group for the **implementation of a submarine fibre optic cable system**.

The Working Group, which operates under the responsibility of the Interministerial Commission, is responsible for coordinating the process of planning and implementing a submarine fibre optic cable system.

The Working Group presented the existing technical options, the evaluation and negotiation criteria, the plan for implementing broadband network infrastructure across the country and the political-legislative options. The chosen option should guarantee secure and quality connectivity, as well as giving Timor-Leste the opportunity to develop the national digital economy, promoting the national interest, including sovereignty, cybersecurity and economic rights. **END**

