



IV CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT OF STATE OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

PRESS RELEASE

Council of Ministers Extraordinaire Meeting from March 6, 2012

The Council of Ministers extraordinarily met this Thursday, March 6, 2012, in the Council of Ministers Meeting Room, at the Government Palace, in Dili and approved:

1. Decree approving the National Mourning for the death of Mr. Francisco Xavier do Amaral

The independence of Timor-Leste was proclaimed on November 28, 1975. The spokesman of this proclamation was Mr. Francisco Xavier do Amaral, then President of Fretilin. Subsequently Mr. Francisco Xavier do Amaral was sworn in as President of the Republic, the first President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.

Under the Constitution (article 11. °) the State is responsible for appreciating and honoring those who fought for national independence. This is the case of Mr. Francisco Xavier do Amaral who, in addition to being a fighter for independence, since the beginning, saw his freedom curtailed and spent many years working forcibly in the country of the occupying force.

Mr. Francisco Xavier do Amaral has already seen his status recognized as Proclaimer of Independence and First President of the Republic of Timor-Leste as well as one of Prominent Figures in the Struggle for the Liberation and Independence of the country.

Consequently, at the time of his death, it is the duty of the State to provide him with the appropriate funeral honors as applicable to all Timorese regarded as having status of State leaders, in order to remember and reflect on the life of a person with significant role in the country's independence.

Therefore the Government enacted National Mourning as a expression of grief over the death of the Proclaimer of Independence, Mr. Francisco Xavier do Amaral.

The National Mourning period begins immediately and ends at 18:00 pm on March 8 including the National Flag being kept at half-mast or half-halyard.

Also approved was the creation of a committee responsible for organizing and conducting funerals ceremonies, made up of representatives from the Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Planning as acting coordinator, and including the Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Defense and Security.

The Council of Ministers expressed condolences to the entire country, in particular to the bereaved family, the ASDT Party militants as well as the population of Turiscai (birthplace).