



## SPOKESPERSON SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



**MEDIA  
RELEASE**

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Díli, Timor-Leste**

### **Honoring “Dom Ricardo”**

The Government of Timor-Leste conveys its sadness and heartfelt condolences on the passing of Emeritus Bishop of Díli Alberto Ricardo da Silva. Monsignor Ricardo passed away at the Guido Valadares National Hospital on Thursday evening after a prolonged illness. He was 71 years old. In the past days many hundreds of mourners have gathered in Díli to pay their respects to the much loved “Dom Ricardo”.

Alberto Ricardo da Silva was born in Aileu on 26 April 1943. He went to the seminary in Díli and went on to study philosophy in Macao and theology in Portugal. In Rome he was a student at the Pontifical Gregorian University obtaining a licentiate in spiritual theology and was ordained a priest in Portugal on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 1972. He was installed as the Bishop of Díli Diocese on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 2004, only recently stepping down from that role due to ill health.

Dom Ricardo was an important figure in the resistance struggle of Timor-Leste and sought to protect many, especially the youth, whom he famously sheltered in his Motael parish, particularly around the time of the November 1991 Santa Cruz Massacre. He had a heart for justice and a gift as a pastor, always seeking the protection and welfare of his “flock”.

In his many years of service he was a parish priest, a rector of the seminary and the Bishop of Díli.

Dom Ricardo’s life was celebrated today in a mass at Díli Cathedral and he has now been laid to rest in the Clerical Cemetery in Ailoklaran. In the mass, President Taur Matan Ruak formally attributed and honoured D. Alberto da Silva with the State Medal President Nicolau Lobato for his distinct role, in extremely difficult times of the struggle for national liberation of Timor-Leste.

Spokesperson for the Government, Minister of State Agio Pereira noted “we together mourn the passing of our Dom Ricardo. We are saddened by his passing and yet lifted as we celebrate and honor his life. A lifetime unconditionally dedicated to the people of Timor-Leste. He was truly an example of the ‘good shepherd’, always sheltering, protecting and concerned about the welfare of his people, particularly the youth of Timor-Leste, our future leaders. He will forever be a beacon of light in the story of our journey together, as a proud Nation.” **ENDS**



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