Trade and Education Boost for NT and Timor-Leste

Trade and education ties between Timor-Leste and the Northern Territory are set to further strengthen with initiatives raised at high level meetings in Dili today.

Chief Minister Paul Henderson and Asian Relations and Trade Minister Rob Knight today met East Timorese President Jose Ramos-Horta and Vice Prime Minister Luis Guterres and other senior ministers at the second Northern Territory Timor-Leste Ministerial Forum.

Mr Henderson proposed a trade and investment seminar be held to coincide with the next Ministerial Forum to be held in Darwin later this year.

“There is room to greatly expand the trade and investment between East Timor and the Northern Territory,” Mr Henderson said.

“I will ask the East Timorese Government to present opportunities for expanded trade and investment at the Seminar later this year.

“Last year Territory exports to Timor-Leste totalled $23 million and imports totalled $9 million – and we can build on these numbers.”

Mr Henderson said education and training exchanges would also be expanded, with a new pledge to develop friendship arrangements between Territory and Timor-Leste schools.

“Six public internships commence next month, three football scholarships start in June and I have told President Ramos Horta today that I will move to expand the relationship between schools.

“Our schools have a lot to offer schools in Timor-Leste and vice-versa, even through simple dialogue and visits.”

Asian Relations and Trade Minister Rob Knight said the Territory and Timor-Leste would continue to build on cultural and business ties through sporting events.

“These events help showcase the region to potential tourism markets and cement our already strong relationship with Timor-Leste,” Mr Knight said.

“This Friday we officially launch the Darwin Dili Yacht Rally, with a fleet sailing from Darwin to Dili in July.

“The second round of the Timor Sea Football Cup is scheduled to be held in July – involving Timor-Leste, the Indonesian province of NTT and the Northern Territory.”

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