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Strengthening Ties with Timor-Leste

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The Northern Territory Chief Minister Paul Henderson will be holding high-level talks in Dili today as part of the second Timor-Leste/Northern Territory Ministerial Forum.

Mr Henderson and the Minister for Asian Relations and Trade Rob Knight will attend the Forum which will have a focus on education, training and sporting initiatives.

“The aim of these regular Ministerial Forums is to further cooperation, examine progress in existing initiatives and continue to strengthen our relationship,” Mr Henderson said.

“We have strong links with Timor Leste in many areas. Last financial year Territory exports to Timor Leste totalled $23 million, while imports from Timor-Leste were nearly $9 million.”

Mr Henderson said issues to be discussed include the Northern Territory Government’s public service internship program, football scholarships and the Darwin Dili Sailing Rally.

“The Territory Government is supporting Timor-Leste’s education, training and employment prospects through the internship program.

“Last year, four public servants from Timor-Leste interned with the NT Government in human resource management. Another six public servants are expected to begin a six-week internship next month.”

The Northern Territory Government is also supporting soccer scholarships for two East Timorese players and a coach at the Northern Territory Institute of Sport starting in June, with the support of Football Federation NT.
“The Northern Territory Government is also proud to support the return of the Darwin Dili Yacht Rally on July 3 this year – with the fleet sailing from Darwin to Dili.

“This is a resumption of the races that first ran for two years in 1973 and 1974. The Territory Government has provided $25,000 for this year’s event, which has already attracted interest from 12 yachts.

“As well as cementing ties between our jurisdictions it will help attract tourists to our region by showcasing the pristine marine environment.”

Mr Henderson will also call on the Australian Ambassador to Timor-Leste Peter Heyward and meet the Commander of the International Stabilisation Force Commodore Stuart Mayer RAN. He will also meet the head of the U-N Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste, Ms Ameerah Haq.

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