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## Oil talks resume between Timor-Leste, Australia

Catholic prelate prays Greater Sunrise oil field pipeline heads to Dili and provides much-needed jobs



Bishop of Virgilio do Carmo da Silva of Dili and hundreds of Catholics celebrate Mass in Metinaro Hero Cemetery, about 15 kilometers from Dili, on Feb.17 to pray for the success of Greater Sunrise oil field negotiations being held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Feb.19-24. (Photo by Thomas Ora)

Thomas Ora, Dili  
Timor Leste

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Negotiations have resumed between Timor-Leste and Australia to determine exploration and revenue sharing issues for the multibillion-dollar [Greater Sunrise](#) oil and gas fields.

The Feb. 19-24 talks in Kuala Lumpur follow recent talks in Sydney, Australia that concentrated on exploration issues. Although no outcome has been made public, this week's talks were expected to concentrate on revenue sharing.

Former president and prime minister [Xanana Gusmao](#) was leading Timor-Leste's negotiating team.

According to a sources familiar with the negotiations Timor-Leste would receive 70 percent if the pipeline goes to Timor Leste or 80 percent if it goes to Darwin.

Church leaders in Timor-Leste hope the pipeline from the oil field, reportedly worth about US\$50 billion, goes to the impoverished nation.

"The church and people hope that the negotiation team will succeed in bringing the Greater Sunrise pipeline to Timor-Leste," Bishop Virgilio do Carmo da Silva of Dili said.

If the oil is processed in Timor-Leste it can create many job opportunities, helping solve one of the country's main problems — unemployment, he told a Mass celebrated in Metinaro Hero Cemetery near the Dili at the weekend.

He expressed hope revenue from the oil would be put to good use by alleviating poverty and providing good education, health, clean water, infrastructure, and electricity.

"Leaders of this country, must use natural resources, oil and gas, for the entire nation," he said.