



ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City
1550 Metro Manila, Philippines
Tel +63 2 632 4444
Fax +63 2 636 2444

www.adb.org

NEWS RELEASE

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Timor-Leste Gets Extra \$76.2 Million For Road Upgrade Project

DILI, TIMOR-LESTE – The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Timor-Leste have signed an agreement for an additional \$76.2 million loan for an ongoing project which is helping to create a national network of reliable, safe roads.

The agreement was signed on 4 March by Minister of Finance and ADB Governor, Santana Viegas Cardoso and ADB's Resident Mission Country Director, Shane Rosenthal. Initial ADB financing for the project totaled more than \$54 million.

“This project is building a new generation of climate-resilient infrastructure, boosting national connectivity and creating better access to health, education and other essential services,” said Mr. Rosenthal.

The additional financing will help fund upgrades and climate-proofing for an additional 97 kilometers of national roads under the Timor-Leste Road Network Upgrading Sector Project. The project is upgrading and climate-proofing over 170 kilometers of roads to help respond to the country's growing volumes of passenger and cargo traffic. It complements ongoing road network improvements being supported by other development partners.

About 80% of the male and female laborers who will be taken on to do further construction work will be hired from areas around the project site. They will get safety awareness training, as well as being provided with information on HIV/AIDS prevention.

Timor-Leste's road network includes over 1,400 km of national roads, over 860 km of district roads, and about 3,000 km of rural roads. Around 70% of the roads are judged to be in poor condition. The World Health Organization estimates that 190 lives are lost each year to road accidents so the project also includes support to develop a national road safety action plan.

ADB, based in Manila, is dedicated to reducing poverty in Asia and the Pacific through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration. Established in 1966, it is owned by 67 members – 48 from the region.

Media Inquiries:

Sally Shute-Trembath
Telephone: +61 2 8270 9444
E-mail: sshute-trembath@adb.org

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