



PRIME MINISTER

Speech of His Excellency the Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão 9th Constitutional Government

On the Occasion of the
*“Budgetary Days on the
General State Budget for
2024”*
September 12th, 2023

Ministry of Finance, Dili
September 12th, 2023

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Honoured guests,
Good morning

Today, I come here before Your Excellencies as the representative of all the people of Timor-Leste, responsible for presenting an amended budget for our country. It is a great honour to address Your Excellencies to discuss the financial plan that will shape our beloved country for the future.

Firstly, I would like to thank all the citizens of Timor-Leste for their continued support and resilience. Our nation has come a long way since its independence, and it is the unity and determination of all of us that has allowed us to get this far.

As we delve into the details of our budget, we must rethink the guiding principles that should shape our financial decisions: transparency, accountability, inclusiveness and sustainability. These principles are at the core of our Government's efforts to create a prosperous and harmonious Timor-Leste.

The main objective of our budget is to increase economic growth, prioritising the well-being and development of our people. We aim to foster an environment that attracts foreign investment and creates opportunities for local entrepreneurs

and small businesses. By supporting these sectors, we can unleash the full potential of our people and drive sustainable economic growth. This means fostering growth, not just through public spending.

Infrastructure development is very important for developing countries like ours. For this reason, a significant part of this budget will be allocated to transport, water and sanitation, energy and telecommunications projects. Improving our road and transport networks will connect isolated communities, promote trade and facilitate the movement of goods and services. In addition, we will continue to invest in renewable energies and improve access to electricity, trying to use our natural resources in an environmentally friendly way.

Education remains a priority for our entire Government. The future of Timor-Leste is in the hands of our youth, so it is our responsibility to provide them with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed. Investing in education and increasing human capital will also contribute to reducing unemployment and poverty rates. We will focus on improving the quality of education, promoting vocational training and ensuring equal opportunities for all, regardless of origin or geographical location.

Healthcare is a crucial aspect of our citizens' well-being. Our new budget includes provisions for the expansion and improvement of health facilities, as well as for the recruitment and training of doctors and other health professionals. We are committed to building a robust health system that guarantees universal access to quality health services for everyone in Timor-Leste.

Agriculture, our traditional sector, continues to play a crucial role in our economy. Ensuring food security and supporting farmers will remain a top priority. We will encourage modern farming techniques, support agricultural cooperatives and invest in research and development to increase farm productivity and competitiveness.

Furthermore, as a country rich in natural resources, we must manage them responsibly. The budget includes measures to improve resource management, promote sustainable practices and invest in renewable energy projects. We must protect our environment for future generations and ensure that our natural resources can be used in an economically beneficial and ecologically sustainable way.

In conclusion, this new budget for Timor-Leste reflects our commitment to the well-being and development of our country.

With a strong focus on economic growth, infrastructure development, education, health, agriculture and resource management, we are confident that we can build a prosperous and sustainable future for all our citizens.

We must think that successfully implementing this budget requires the collaboration and involvement of all stakeholders, including the Government, the private sector, civil society organisations and our citizens.

Together, we can tackle the challenges and fulfil our vision of a prosperous Timor-Leste. And we can all continue to work together, hand in hand, towards a brighter future.

Thank you.