

# Ba Ami Nia Belun Sira

Newsletter for Friends and Benefactors



## Mary MacKillop East Timor

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Vol . 13 No.1, April 2006  
[www.mmiets.org.au](http://www.mmiets.org.au)

## Moringa – The Miracle Tree

*The Moringa tree provides 2 times the protein of yoghurt, 3 times the potassium of bananas, 4 times the Vitamin A of carrots, 4 times the calcium of milk, 7 times the Vitamin C of oranges.*

We were first alerted to the incredible tree known as Moringa (Marungi in Timor-Leste) by Mr Don Devitt, a farmer from the North Coast of NSW. He had gained some considerable information about the tree and its extraordinary properties from the internet and various experts whom he contacted across the world. These findings set us off on a path of investigation which has led us to a new and exciting stage in our efforts to improve nutrition and health standards in Timor-Leste.

*Moringa Oleifera* is believed to have had its ancient origins in Northwest India. It has now spread to many tropical and sub-tropical countries around the world including Timor-Leste where it grows prolifically. It is only within recent years that scientific research has established its tremendous nutritional and medicinal benefits together with many other uses e.g. extraction of seed oil and water purification. Pilot projects in Senegal and other parts of Africa have shown remarkable success in treating malnutrition particularly in mothers and young children.

In Timor-Leste, we found that most people use the leaves of the tree as food and in some areas for medical purposes. However, because little is known of its exceptional properties, its full value is not realised. The people need to be alerted to the treasure in their midst by providing them with information about the properties and benefits of this remarkable multi-vitamin tree.



*Moringa pods*

We are particularly interested in the powdered form of the plant which may be used as a diet supplement. Therefore, there will be two “Train the Trainer” workshops in May to give local people the chance to learn how to manufacture the powder. Working with the Carmelite Sisters, who conduct mobile clinics in the Maubara district, we plan to implement a diet supplement program in eight villages in the area. This program will be carefully monitored and evaluated by local health workers with Sr Joan Westblade as the main co-ordinator. If the results are positive, the program could be repeated in other districts.

It is well known that physical health and mental capacity depend on good nutrition. We know very well that it is difficult or well-nigh impossible to teach a hungry or sick child to read and write. We know also that the incidence of malnutrition among East Timorese children is as high as 50%. So the need is urgent and the challenge is great! We are hoping for miracles!

See also comments on *Seed Sterilisation* p.2

## A Great Night

*To all our dear East Timorese and other friends from other countries, who helped and collaborated for the party on 25<sup>th</sup> of February 2006, we appreciate and thank you for your help and support. God will give you good health and endless joyful life.*

*On the day of the party we collected \$7,034.10. Anyone who would like to know more information about the party please ring us at Mary MacKillop, St. Marys, phone number: 9623 2847.*

*If anyone would like to receive Mary MacKillop's newsletter please let us know. This Newsletter will come three times a year and the cost is \$15.00. Do not close your eyes for those who still need your help because we also don't know what tomorrow will bring us.*

*All the staff from Mary MacKillop wish you all a Happy and Peaceful Easter.*

**Ba belun Timor oan no ema rai seluk sira tomak nebé kolabora ba festa iha loron 25 fulan Feveireiru, 2006, ami agradese no apresia tebes ho imi tomak nia tulun. Maromak sei f6 nafatin isin di'ak no ksolok rohan laek ba imi hotu. Iha festa kalan ne'e ita hasai \$7,034.10. Ema ruma hakarak hatene liu tan kona ba asuntu festa ne'e nian, bele kontakta Mary MacKillop iha St. Marys, telefone número: 9623 2847.**

**Ema nebé hakarak simu boletin hodi hatene Mary MacKillop nia nia knaar eh liafuan foun ruma, halo favor kontakta ami. Boletin ne'e sai tinan ida dala tolu. Boletin nia folin \$15.00 ba tinan ida nia laran. Keta taka matan ba sira nebé sei presiza ita, tanbá loron aban ita rasik la hatene sei sai sá.**

**Ami knaar na'in sira tomak hosi Mary MacKillop hato'o Páskoa Ksolok ho Damen ba belun sira tomak.**



Luisa Marques

## António de Padua

António has returned to his homeland to teach music and is now a staff member of MMET. Recently he gave his first music lessons to the children at the Maubara orphanage. He was ecstatic at their response. We are extremely pleased that this young man is making his dream a reality.

## Jenny Coles

A long-time supporter, Jenny is now employed by Mary MacKillop East Timor and works mainly with the students in the Buka Matenek support scheme. Jenny's wide experience and devotion to the Timorese people are of great benefit in our work as she makes links within the universities and with the students.

## Imagine this in places like Timor-Leste...

Genetic engineering (GE) companies and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) are creating Terminator (seed sterilisation) technologies. As the GE industry is also the largest owner of seed companies, Terminator offers them permanent monopoly ownership, control and profits from seed fertility and reproduction. In the worst case scenario, no fruits, vegetables or broadacre crops could be grown without buying new seed and paying technology fees year after year.

In 2000, following global public outrage, all the parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recommended that governments prohibit the field-testing and commercialisation of Terminator, creating a de facto global moratorium.

At a CBD meeting in Spain in January, the Australian government delegation argued for precautions to be removed from the moratorium agreement and for Terminator to be assessed and approved, case-by-case. As the US is not a party to the convention and has no official speaking rights or vote at the CBD, US delegates were seen to advise the Australians on the wording of the proposal. Australia again threatened the Terminator moratorium when the CBD met in Brazil, 20-31 March 2006.

The CBD reconfirmed the Terminator moratorium, for the time being, with the support of a global citizens campaign. Over 500 civil society groups worldwide – farmers, indigenous, religious, and environment groups, etc. now call for a permanent Terminator ban.

Terminator technology has no redeeming merit and it is absolutely against the public interest. New Brazilian laws prohibit the use, sale, registration, patenting and licensing of Terminator technology and India has banned the registration of Terminator seeds. Australia should also totally and permanently ban Terminator, to protect food security, farm incomes, crop diversity and the environment, for this and all future generations.

**Visit [www.banterminator.org](http://www.banterminator.org).**

Email: [info@geneethics.org](mailto:info@geneethics.org)

WWW: <http://www.geneethics.org>

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## Young Heroes

Earlier this year we received a request from a journalist with the Northern Star Newspaper for information on Dunoon's Juleff family and their commitment to raising funds for the people of East Timor. The paper was looking at nominating the three Juleff children (Selena, Casey and Shannen) for their "Young Heroes" feature.

This family has been raising money for East Timor since early 2004 by holding swimathons and running discos. From their donations we have been able to buy school resources in East Timor for schools like Aidabeleten. It is possible that the Dunoon Primary School will also be raising funds to support the children at Aidabeleten.

## **Report of the Commission on Reception, Truth and Reconciliation**

This recent report (CAVR) is titled *Chega!*, which means "Enough!" in Portuguese. It is huge, over 2,500 pages long, with an Executive Summary of 200 pages. The report blames the Indonesian government and the security forces for the deaths of as many as 183,000 East Timorese civilians in 1000's of separate incidents which constitute crimes against humanity.

The report resulted from three and a half years' work where interviews with almost 8000 witnesses took place. The scientifically conducted research included random sampling of family units who were interviewed in depth. The researchers also visited every cemetery in East Timor, listed all the names of people who died after 1974 and investigated the manner of their deaths.

### **Crimes against Humanity**

The CAVR report records how the Indonesian military used starvation to exterminate the people and that napalm and chemical weapons were used to poison the food and water. The Indonesian security forces "consciously decided to use starvation of East Timorese civilians as a weapon of war", the report says. "The intentional imposition of conditions of life which could not sustain tens of thousands of East Timorese civilians amounted to extermination as a crime against humanity committed against the East Timorese population."

The report also lists massacres where thousands of civilians were killed and details the torture of 8500 East Timorese. It documents how rape was used by the Indonesian military as a weapon, a practice which sowed widespread terror among the population. The fear engendered in the people was used to subjugate them and render them powerless and hopeless.

All this terrible violence culminated in the 1999 reprisals for the independence vote, when the Indonesian military and its militias rampaged through East Timor, killing as many as 1500 people and destroying most of the towns.

### **Who is Responsible?**

Despite the publishing of the names of many of the perpetrators, only a few lower-ranked soldiers have received any punishment at all, and in those cases the punishments were light jail terms. However the report states, "The violations were committed in execution of a systematic plan approved, conducted and controlled by Indonesian military commanders at the highest level."

A culture of impunity prevailed in the occupied territory and "widespread and systematic executions, arbitrary detention, torture, rape and sexual slavery was officially accepted by Indonesia", the commission found.

It is noted that many of the Indonesian military officers who played key roles in the occupation have since been promoted. The report said many of the current senior members of the Indonesian military "could be held accountable" for the violations in East Timor. (It should also be noted that many of these officers were sent to

West Papua, so that the terror now being experienced by the West Papuan people is being provided not only by the same system which oppressed East Timor, but in many cases by the same individuals.)

The CAVR report also criticises Australia for its long-term *de jure* recognition of the Indonesian occupation and its failure to try to prevent the use of force in East Timor. Australia for the most part acknowledged Timor's right of self-determination in words, but undermined it in action. The whole sorry saga is on the public record.

### **Community Reconciliation**

On a more positive note, the CAVR Report describes the process of Community Reconciliation which has taken place where Timorese militia responsible for lesser crimes committed during the violence, such as arson or theft, could take their place back in the village. The success of this process is probably the cause of the absence of reprisals and revenge attacks. Many villages in Timor-Leste have asked that this process continue, but funding is tight.

### **Reparations**

The report recommends reparations from Indonesia and the members of the UN Security Council, including Britain and the US, who gave military backing to Indonesia between 1974 and 1999, as well as those nations that provided military assistance to Jakarta during the occupation, including Australia.

When dealing with reparations, the report is careful to distinguish between general national development, assistance for which Timor depends on its neighbours, and just reparations which are required from neighbours in recompense for their part in Timor's troubles. National development assistance and reparations are complementary, but they are distinct. Reparations are fundamental to re-establishing right relationships and as such are over and above the assistance which large, rich and relatively unstressed nations such as Australia can provide.

That reparations are due to the Timorese people is clearly obvious when the health situation is considered. Untold numbers of East Timor people suffer severe health problems as a direct result of the oppression they endured while close neighbours did nothing to help. For example, there are people with bullets still inside them, or with unhealed wounds, or bones not set properly, there are gynaecological problems because of rape, and many mental health issues. There are also disabled middle-aged men, many of whom are ex-political prisoners and torture survivors who are unable to work and so provide for their families.

In all, this ground-breaking report shows what happens when power is used with impunity and when profit is preferred over people.

The UN Report on East Timor (*Chega! - Enough!*) including the executive summary is available at <http://www.ictj.org>. The executive summary is available at <http://www.etan.org/news/2006/cavr.htm>

## Japanese Bishops Support MMET

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan is supporting the production of the kindergarten program. Below is a photo of Monsignor Leo Ikenaga Jun who recently met with Sister Tess Ward OLSH at our office in Becora.



## A Letter from Nico, who writes....

"This is the story of the Christmas party which was organised by the Mary MacKillop Institute at Mota Ulun (Head of the River) on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2005.

"It was an important day for all communities especially the children and the youth in the Mota Ulun area, Becora. These young ones will never forget the big Christmas party and receiving things like rice, soap, fish, cakes, candies, washing powder, toothbrushes, some sport equipment like balls, pumps and nets and also some school materials such as books, rulers, pens, erasers etc. In Becora the members of Mary MacKillop Institute and also some volunteers such as Tim and his parents Bruce and Mary spent their day with the community for about three and a half hours.

"During that time there were many people there. Most of them were children and the principle of sharing meant that all received something. They were really happy and appreciated what Mary MacKillop Institute did, because it was the first time that such a party occurred in their village. The village never had a party like this during 24 years when Indonesia occupied East Timor.

"One of the community representatives, Francesca, confirmed to the Mary MacKillop Institute and their beloved mother Joan (Westblade) and Bev (Raby) that it would continue to organise the same party for the next time, and she asked Mary MacKillop Institute that if possible it would provide education for the children even through non-formal education, because they definitely need it and the last words she said was that the Christmas Party was running successfully because of the efforts of Sr Joan Westblade and Bev Raby." **Joanico da Silva (Nico)**

## An Important Message

Over the past ten years or so many people have generously contributed goods for the people in East Timor . The movement of these goods has always been a very big task while the collection of goods from Customs in Dili has always been a tedious procedure often taking days and sometimes weeks or months to complete the necessary paperwork.

During the last year Border Control in Dili introduced import duty on all goods coming into Timor so that now we must pay tax on all the goods we send from Australia. We would prefer that money given to us for use in Timor-Leste goes directly to the maintenance of the projects we conduct in Timor. Despite the very real need of many people for basic goods, the way ahead for the future is to support the local economy. As of now we will be limiting the goods we send to East Timor to school books and supplies which we produce here. Goods such as clothing, toys, church requisites etc. will no longer be sent from St Marys.

*Thanks for all your great support.*

### DONATIONS / SUBSCRIPTION TO NEWSLETTER

TITLE (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms.).....FIRST NAME/INITIAL.....

SURNAME.....ADDRESS.....

.....POSTCODE.....

I wish to donate reading books to children in East Timorese schools \$.....

I wish to subscribe to "Ba Ami Nia Belun Sira" @ \$5.00 per year \$.....

I wish to contribute to the work of the Institute  
by making a donation. I enclose cheque/money order: \$ .....

(Make out to *Mary MacKillop East Timor*)

OR by Credit Card: Mastercard  Visa  Bankcard

I wish to claim tax deductibility: Yes  No

***Please return this form to: Mary MacKillop East Timor PO Box 299 St Marys 1790***