



**JUDICIAL SYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAMME**  
**PROGRAMA DE MONITORIZAÇÃO DO SISTEMA JUDICIAL**

***Press Release***

**03/07/2013**

**Suai District Court conducts mobile court in Bobonaro District**

On 26 and 27 June 2013 the Suai District Court conducted a mobile court to hear 8 cases in Bobonaro District. These cases comprised 2 cases of homicide, 3 cases of rape, 2 cases of manslaughter and 1 case of aggravated property damage.

The mobile court is a mechanism that has been developed to bring justice to the people who live a long way from the courts, so that they can have access to the formal justice system. This program is carried out with the financial support of UNDP.

7 cases have been dealt with final decision and the other case is scheduled to be decided on 13 July 2013. The case of manslaughter resulted in a punishment of 2 years 6 months imprisonment that was suspended for 5 years, and one case resulted in an acquittal because the public prosecutor could not prove the elements of the crime to convict the defendant for the death of the victim.

1 case of sexual violence resulted in a punishment of 8 years imprisonment, another case resulted in an acquittal, and one other case was adjourned. In the case of aggravated property damage the convicted person was sentenced to 2 years four months imprisonment that was suspended for three years.

*“JSMP acknowledges that the mobile court is a very productive mechanism for members of the community who live in isolated areas, however JSMP encourages the court to ensure that every legal process is carried out in accordance with the correct legal procedure,”* said the Executive Director of JSMP, Luis de Oliveira Sampaio.

JSMP notes that the mobile court is a progressive step forward and very appropriate in the current Timor-Leste context. However, JSMP is concerned that if the mobile court is not conducted carefully and with sensitivity it could undermine the legal interests of the parties who are directly involved in these cases.

JSMP observed that the court failed to protect victims of sexual violence because trials were open to the public. JSMP believes that the judicial actors are aware that according to the law cases that involve sexual violence and minors are automatically deemed closed to the public to protect the privacy and identity of the victim.

JSMP believes that this situation has occurred because of a lack of effective communication between the court and the local police. Therefore, JSMP requests for the court and relevant institutions to provide adequate infrastructure and facilities to assist the mobile court process so that it can be carried out effectively.

The mobile court was conducted by a panel of judges comprising Pedro Raposo de Fiquieredo, Costansio Baros Basmery, and Hugo da Cruz Pui. The public prosecution service was represented by Benvinda da Costa Rosario and Jacinto Babo Soares. The defendants were represented by public defender João Henrique de Carvalho.

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