



Press Release
15 January 2024
Covalima Municipality

Ogues village holds a *re-tara-bandu* ceremony
The Village Chief recommended for JSMP to continue bringing justice closer to the community in Ogues Village and to support the implementation of *tara-bandu* rules

On 29 December 2023 JSMP participated in a *re-tara-bandu* ceremony in Ogues Village, Maucatar Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, which took place with the participation of municipal authorities, local authorities, community members from Ogues Village, community members from neighbouring villages, intellectuals, veterans and customary elders.

The ceremony to review *re-tara-bandu* rules in the aforementioned village was aimed at further improving the *tara-bandu* rules to reflect the circumstances and needs of community members in Ogues Village.

These *tara-bandu* rules prohibit people from damaging plants, animals and also prohibit people from violating the rights of others and these rules will be used to apply sanctions when communities go against these *tara-bandu* rules.

These *tara-bandu* rules apply to community members in Ogues Village and community members from other villages who engage in behaviour that goes against the prohibitions in the Ogues Village area.

“JSMP has a commitment to bring justice closer to community members in Ogues Village and continue helping villages to further improve their *tara-bandu* rules to harmonise the national law, but at the same time respect positive customs. On the other hand, JSMP was very happy because the local authorities, especially the new Village Chief and the new administrative structure in Ogues Village, warmly accepted JSMP during this review process and accepted JSMP’s thoughts in the interests of the community,” said Ms. Ana Paula Marçal, Executive Director of JSMP.

A representative of the President of the Municipality Authority, Mr. Antonio da Rezorisaun Barros, who is the Covalima Municipality Secretary, during his speech thanked JSMP for conducting programs in Ogues Village that can help the local authorities to carry out a review to hold a *re-tara-bandu* ceremony to be implemented in the aforementioned village.

The president of the aforementioned authority requested for JSMP to continue expanding this program to other villages to increase the knowledge of local authorities in each village.



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The Administrator of Maucatar Administrative Post, Mr. Constantinho do Carmo Cardozu, in his speech requested for the communities to respect these rules, because to date he has observed that many people do not respect each other and he hopes that with the existence of these rules, there can be a change in attitude amongst community members.

He also thanked JSMP for supporting the village to hold this review of the *tara-bandu* rules to be applied in this village and also to hold dialogue between the judicial authorities and communities so that they understand legal procedures.

A representative of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Director General of Biodiversity, really appreciated the administrative structure of Ogues Village for organising this event and also thanked JSMP for working with the local authorities to further improve the *tara-bandu* rules which have not yet been reactivated because sometimes these rules do not provide benefits to communities.

The Director said that these *tara-bandu* rules can further strengthen biodiversity and also conserve culture and also remind all of the village authorities that the Government, through the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, is ready to provide support based on its capacity when villages have the idea of creating *tara-bandu* rules or reviewing *tara-bandu* rules.

The Director General also emphasized that this program is supported by the MCI based on the proposal that had been sent and today this activity was really well organised.

The Ogues Village Chief, Mr. Febriano Pereira, in his opening speech said that this *re-tara-bandu* ceremony was held with the aim of making an even better contribution to Government programs to protect the environment and to promote art and culture in the community. The motto of *tara-bandu* is to re-organise, protect and revive the assets of Ogues Village. This activity was strongly supported by JSMP who established an agreement with the administrative structure of Oques Village for one year in Ogues Village.

The Village Chief also acknowledged that from research conducted by JSMP and others, many errors were discovered in previous *tara-bandu* rules, and many previous *tara-bandu* rules did not provide benefits to the community because when sanctions were applied they were too severe in comparison with a person's guilt and capacity. Other failures include the lack of a committee to oversee the application of the aforementioned rules. The Village Chief was very grateful to JSMP for its program which really helps the local authorities to review the previous rules and also supports the authorities to consult the community before reviewing these rules. The Village Chief requested for JSMP to continue working together to bring justice closer to the community through the dissemination of information about the formal law and to help local authorities and the community with the implementation of these *tara-bandu* rules.

The ceremony to review the *tara-bandu* rules was attended by a representative from the Government, the security forces, namely the Maucatar Post Police Station Commander,



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a Veteran, a representative from the Municipal Authorities, the Administrator of Maucatar Administrative Post, a representative from JSMP, the administrative structure of Ogues Village, Matai Village, Holpilat, community members from Debus Village, a representative from customary elders from sacred houses and community members from Ogues Village.

The Community Security Support Program (PASK) is a joint effort between JSMP and The Asia Foundation (TAF) which is financed by the New Zealand Embassy to conduct research on the effect of community justice to resolve disputes in the community.

Ana Paula Marçal
Executive Director of JSMP
Email: ana@jsmp.tl
Website: <http://jsmp.tl>
www.jsmp.tl