

EDUCATION

- More than **240,000 primary and secondary students** headed back to school in early October 2001 for the new academic year. The students are being taught by nearly **6,000 teachers** using the more than 1 million textbooks that have been distributed to schools throughout the country. Some **5,000 students** are attending the **National University of East Timor** which was re-opened in November 2000.
- More than **700 primary schools, 100 junior secondary schools, 40 pre-schools and 10 technical colleges** are currently functioning in East Timor. Of these, 535 schools – or more than 2,780 classrooms – have been rehabilitated to Basic Operational Level under the Transitional Administration's Emergency School Readiness Project. This figure represents the total number of school classrooms that needed rehabilitation after the violence of September 1999. The Transitional Administration has also rehabilitated the Ministry of Education in Dili.
- The Transitional Administration's Division of Education is responding to East Timor's long-term educational needs while at the same time setting up administrative structures and running emergency educational processes.
- A **school mapping** process began in April 2001 and continues to examine each school's physical condition; the facilities available; the area served by each facility; and the projected student population and retention rates.
- Clear importance is being attached to students at the primary and secondary levels who represent one-third of East Timor's population. Investment in technical and vocational training for older students is another fundamental priority of the educational administration.
- In October 2001, the Division of Education launched a double-track initiative to train teachers. Those who do not possess BA's are being trained towards that level at the National University, while others are receiving fast-track in-service training.
- The **National Research Centre and Institute of Linguistics** was officially inaugurated on 14 July 2001 at the National University of East Timor's new campus in Dili. The Research Centre will support the work of the Agriculture, Technology, Economics, Education and Political Science faculties. The National Institute of Linguistics will promote the development of the Tetum language.
- On 20 September 2001, **Armindo Maia** was sworn-in as the **first Education Minister of East Timor**.

