

Development of Oecussi enclave, Timor-Leste, begins in July

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A recent launch ceremony was the first step in construction of infrastructure projects in the Special Social Market Economy Zone (ZEESM) in the Oecussi enclave, said former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri.

Speaking Macau-based bilingual newspaper Plataforma, Alkatiri said that the first projects included construction of a road that will link Sacato to Lifau, a power plant and a hotel, which will initially house participants taking part in commemorations, in 2015, of the arrival of Portuguese navigators in Timor-Leste.

“In July and August we will begin construction of basic infrastructure such as road, bridges, expanding the port and the airport and water and electricity supply,” said the former Prime Minister who is responsible for execution of the ZEESM.

Alkatiri told the newspaper that the work would be paid for by the Infrastructure Fund and was estimated to cost US\$300 million, US\$100 million of which would be spent by the end of this year on construction of roads and bridges.

The ZEESM will require investment of US\$4.11 billion by 2025, of which US\$2.44 billion will be spent over the next four years.

Of the total, 67% or US\$2.75 billion will be funded by the State and the remaining US\$1.36 billion will be secured within the private sector.

“I have already received three proposals from groups from China that have shown interest in buying the entire project,” said Alkatiri who, despite not naming the three groups, made it clear that “that possibility does not interest us as one of the aims of the Zone is to protect the social component of the project.”

Alkatiri said there had already been several investment proposals, including one for a banana plantation on an area of 400 hectares that would export to China and another for pineapple production on a 100-hectare plot. (macauhub/TL)

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