



**FRENTE REVOLUCIONÁRIA DO TIMOR-LESTE INDEPENDENTE
FRETILIN**

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Video evidence shows Ramos Horta buying votes

Fretilin will tomorrow provide East Timor's National Electoral Commission with videotaped testimony of voters who say they were paid to vote for Jose Ramos Horta in the first round of the presidential election.

The Commission (CNE) will be handed a CD containing a visual recording of the statements of five witnesses in the Venilale area of Baucau District testifying that they received money to vote for and mobilise others to vote for Ramos Horta in the first-round ballot on April 9. The visual recording also shows two voters testifying that Ramos Horta personally gave them money in return for their votes.

Fretilin's deputy general secretary, José Reis, today said the party had received many allegations of vote-buying by Ramos Horta, but had not raised them publicly until it could secure credible supporting evidence.

"We now have that evidence and we want it investigated," Reis said. "We will send the CD to the CNE for them to investigate and take whatever action they deem fit and proper," he said.

"Ramos Horta has previously raised similar allegations against Fretilin but has provided no proof to substantiate his claims nor lodged complaints with the authorities.

"The institutions with the constitutionally and legally mandated responsibility to investigate and take action on electoral misconduct are the appropriate forum to raise any such allegations. That is why we will ask the CNE to investigate the documented testimony of vote buying by Ramos Horta. We ask and expect only that the CNE apply due process and the law," added Reis.

Recently, in order to damage the Fretilin-backed candidate for President Francisco Guterres Lu Olo, Ramos Horta's campaign publicly accused FRETILIN of campaign misconduct in Kulau (Suco Becora) in Dili. But after attending a meeting there personally and speaking directly to people in the area on 2 May 2007, Horta was forced to admit that he did not find any evidence to support his claim.

The Dili daily newspaper *Jornal Diario* reported on 3 May 2007 that (direct translation from Tetum to English):

"President of the Republic candidate José Ramos Horta did not find evidence in regard to rumours circulated by the party ASDT that some people were starting to buy electoral cards from people because people have the right to receive state assistance." The report went on to say: "Ramos Horta shed light on this when he went to see the condition of the people relating to the rumours publicised by ASDT, that in Kulau some people were buying electoral cards from people but when he arrived at the location he did not find strong evidence of this....."

José Reis said: "If Ramos Horta has evidence we challenge him to take it to the authorities. We have repeatedly said that evidence of electoral misconduct should be presented to the authorities and not be used as a tool to smear opposition candidates."

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