

Reporter

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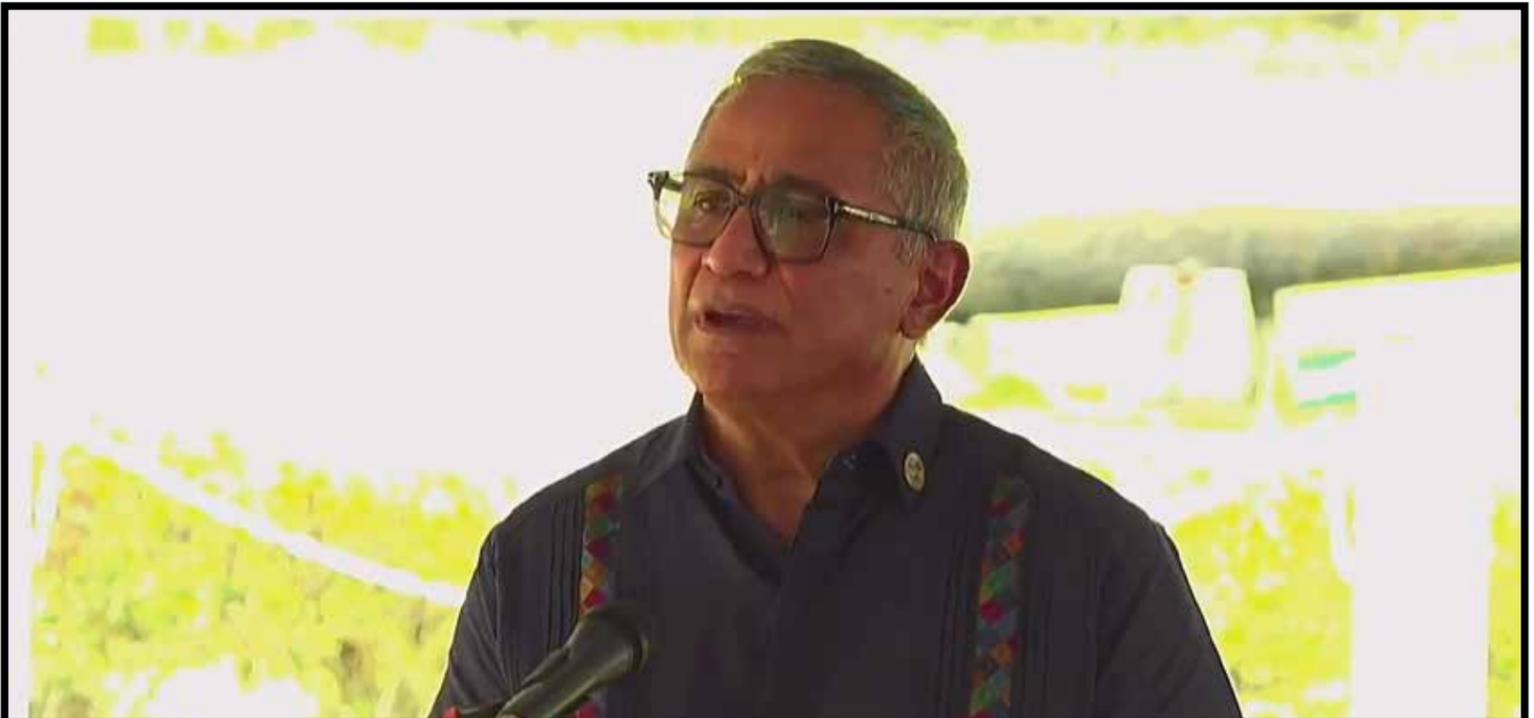
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'\$5 minimum wage will be implemented in January': Prime Minister

"In January, the \$5 minimum wage will be implemented," avowed Prime Minister John Briceño in his Independence Day speech on Wednesday.

The Prime Minister's announcement followed his reminder to the public that his government remains committed to addressing the scourge of poverty.

Briceño's position is consistent with the People's United Party (PUP)'s manifesto promise, in which they wrote: "As the economy roars back,



Prime Minister John Briceño says \$5.00 minimum wage coming in January 2022.

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\$630,000 Extra on Holidays! BPO Association says unscheduled breaks come at a high price

Every public holiday costs the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector an additional \$632,000, President of the BPO Association Nubia Ramirez told *The Reporter* Thursday.

According to Ramirez, the

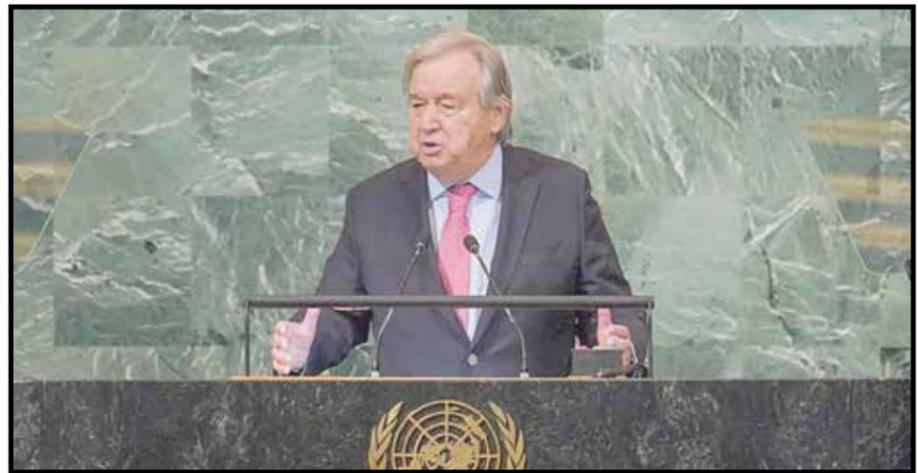


BPO Association President Nubia Ramirez

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UN Chief Anotnio Guterres: 'Polluters must pay!'



"Polluters must pay!"

These three words effectively summarize United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres' words of caution on the looming climate disaster that the world faces.

Speaking at UN General Assembly's 77th Session's General Debate on Tuesday, the secretary general addressed several global issues, including what Guterres called the

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INSIDE BOX:

Fuel-price stabilization formula sets excise duty on Regular gasoline at \$4.41



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On Wednesday, September 2021, President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation announced a partial mobilization to recruit 300,000 soldiers for his diminishing army to continue its war in Ukraine. The new conscripts will come from men with combat experience who have been retired from the military.

This must be taken to mean that Russia intends to fight on for as long as her resources will hold out - to victory in Ukraine or disaster in Moscow. The Russian strongman also said he will not hesitate to use his nuclear deterrent to defend the security and honour of the Russian homeland.

For people in Belize and elsewhere this means that the energy crisis caused by the war will continue. And there are no prospects of fuel prices reaching normal levels any time soon.

In Belize, today regular gasoline costs \$13.50 a gallon and premium gas is \$16.60. The price of diesel is at a record \$13.41 a gallon. While these prices are held fixed on account of the government's fuel-price stabilization program, they still cut deep into the Belizean economy, causing businesses to fail, and triggering widespread domestic hardship.

Western military analysts estimate that the new recruitment drive is an exercise in desperation. New recruits, no matter what their prior experience, cannot become battle-ready overnight. There are training, logistical, operational and supply problems to overcome.

Apart from military preparedness, there are supplies and transportation issues, and Russia still does not have an answer to the limited range High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS) which the United States has been supplying to the Ukraine.

Without air supremacy and a workable answer to the HIMARS, any renewed Russian offensive will have to face hellfire if it wants to reverse Ukrainian gains.

The threat of nuclear intervention is a lot more serious. But Russia cannot play the nuclear card without exposing herself to massive retaliation from NATO and the US, which have sufficient non-nuclear tools to bring this about.

Russia's take-over war against Ukraine has already been lost. Most experts agree. But it may take several more months before this becomes clear to the warmongers in Moscow.

In the meanwhile Belize and the rest of the world will have to hunker down and endure what cannot be avoided.

'\$5 minimum wage will be...

Cont'd from pg. 1

we will increase the minimum wage to \$5.00 per hour."

Departure from Phased-In Approach?

Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the announcement appears to be a departure from earlier communications to the effect that the Government of Belize will employ an incremental methodology. In March this year, when the Government announced the formation of a Minimum Wage Taskforce, GOB stated:

"On November 25, 2021, Cabinet requested that the ministry develops a plan for the gradual implementation of the government's commitment to a five-dollar minimum wage."

The release added, "The task

force will develop a plan to institute the government's commitment to a five-dollar minimum wage."

The March 2022 release also acknowledged the potential economic impacts of a too abrupt and sharp increase. "The government recognizes that any increase to the present minimum wage would have implications for various sectors," GOB wrote. "As a result, the phased minimum wage increases must be linked to productivity growth and Belize's competitiveness. With stakeholder input, careful consideration will be given to the impact of these increases on the various sectors of the economy in the short-, medium- and long-term."

BCCI's and NTUCB's Call for Balanced

and Evidence-Based Approach

As *The Reporter* had previously reported, the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) and the National Trade Union Congress of Belize (NTUCB) had both articulated support for a "balanced and evidence-based approach" to minimum wage updates.

BCCI's Immediate Past President Marissa Longworth, speaking on the BCCI's weekly program, "The Business Perspective," explained, "We don't have any objection to an increase in the minimum wage. ... Our concern more has to do with the mode of increase and how quickly that increase occurs." The proposed increase to \$5.00 would represent more than a 50% increase

for employers who pay at the legislated minimum.

Also present on the same program was President of the NTUCB Luke Martinez, who underscored the unions' position on the minimum wage. "The NTUCB's has always been for a higher minimum wage. ... Of course, we agree that it cannot be something that is going to be fast."

Belize's minimum wage has stood at \$3.30 since 2012. Given Belize's average annual headline inflation of approximately 0.8%, estimates indicate that \$3.30, if adjusted only based on inflation, would be closer in value to \$3.60. Therefore, there remains significant debate over the size of the increase that should happen in the short to medium term.

UN Chief, Anotnio Guterres: Polluters must pay!

Cont'd from pg. 1

"climate crisis." He highlighted the fact that the countries hardest hit by climate change are not necessarily the ones responsible for causing the problem in the first place.

"The G20 [countries] emits 80 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions. But the poorest and most vulnerable—those who contributed least to the crisis—are bearing its most brutal impacts," lamented Guterres. "Meanwhile, the fossil fuel industry is feasting on hundreds of billions of dollars in subsidies and windfall profits while household budgets shrink and our planet burns."

Guterres continued by reiterating the longstanding point that fossil fuel

companies should be held to account for their role. "Of course, fossil fuels cannot be shut down overnight," he acknowledged. "A just transition means leaving no person or country behind. But it is high time to put fossil fuel producers, investors and enablers on notice. Polluters must pay."

The funds derived from those taxes on windfall profits should be earmarked, says the UN chief, towards helping countries that are suffering the "loss and damage caused by the climate crisis," and should likewise be used to assist people struggling with "rising food and energy prices."

In leaked documents, it was revealed poorer countries are planning to demand wealthy

economies be taxed on fossil fuels or flying to compensate for suffering from the ongoing climate crisis.

Guterres called for action in his address demanding that the fossil fuel industry be held accountable for making profits while billions while citizens regress further into poverty.

As climate change progresses the damages to developing countries are only going to worsen. Keeping in mind the increasing sea and air temperatures in the Caribbean, Antigua

and Barbuda also submitted a paper to the UN shedding light on the potential threat of a super storms forming within years that would cost US\$ 8.9 billion in damage in the island nation alone, six times its annual GDP.

Guterres stated that the unrest that hovers between developed and developing countries is an increasing threat and was the root of geopolitical tensions that were poisoning every area of global cooperation, "by acting as one, we can nurture fragile shoots of hope."

THE REPORTER

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\$630,000 Extra on Holidays!

BPO Association says unscheduled breaks come at a high price

Cont'd from pg. 1 association—which represents roughly 90 percent of an industry that employs about 8,000 persons across about 30 firms—has serious concerns with the government's practice of arbitrarily announcing new holidays that do not fall within the standard schedule of holidays.

"The calendar of annual holidays should be clear from the beginning of the year," Ramirez shared. "It cannot be something that the Government decides on their own at any given time as has been happening [over the years]."

Ramirez added that the ad hoc additions create disruptions, and force adjustments in operations. It even impacts scheduled training days. Furthermore, apart from the direct payroll cost increases, Ramirez explained that the loss of revenue for the day must also be weighed. "There is the loss of revenue due to higher absenteeism on holidays, as well as salary payments for person who do not show to work on holidays but are still due payments."

The BPO Association's comments follow the impromptu Monday, September 19th, holiday, held in observance of Queen Elizabeth II's funeral. Given that the formal announcement was made on Wednesday, September 14th, the business community had less than one week to prepare for the additional direct and indirect costs associated with public and bank holidays.

Belize has 14 scheduled holidays. At minimum, according to the numbers provided by the association, these cost the industry close to \$8.85 million per year. The addition of the September 19th holiday pushed up that total cost to \$9.5 million, an estimated seven percent increase.

For its part, the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) had written to the government to request that the unplanned day off not carry with it the overtime rate that is conventionally applied on holidays.

In the BCCI's letter, dated September 14th, BCCI President Marcello Blake pointed out that while the business support organization accepts the Government's decision to observe the day as a public and bank holiday, the "unplanned" holiday presents significant cost implications for businesses that must operate on the aforementioned date.

Blake explained that the "abruptness" of the announcement is likely to catch employers off guard as it would propel them into having to meet an unbudgeted payroll costs during a time when most businesses are still in recovery mode.

Citing section 119 of the Labour Act,

Blake called on the government to exempt the one-time holiday from carrying the overtime rate. The government, however, responded by saying the time was too short to convene the appropriate bodies to grant the requested exemption.

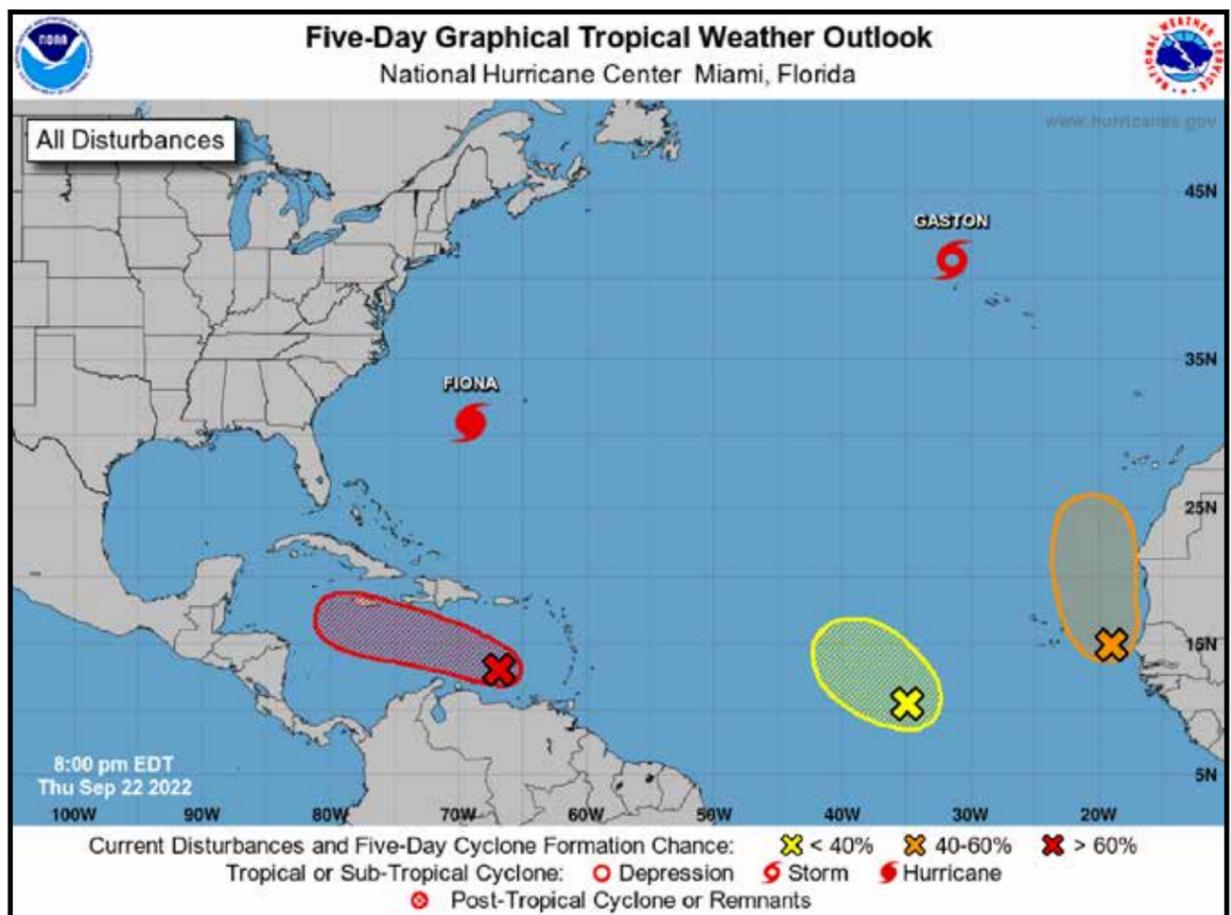
Last Thursday, following the government's response, the Chamber, writing to their members, reiterated that since early 2021 they have requested several commitments from the government as it pertains to adding new holidays.

According to the BCCI, one such measure is a recommendation that no newly enacted

public holiday should carry payroll implications on an employer until after a prescribed notice period of at least 365 days. As was previously mentioned, the September 19th holiday provided less than a week's notice, for which the BPO sector's employers had to incur more than half million dollars in unplanned expenditure.

As it currently stands, section 119 of the Labour Act currently exempts the application of sections 115 to 118—which includes the provisions for overtime for public holidays—for select sectors and positions.

Potential tropical depression brewing in nearby waters



By Britney Gordon

Chief Meteorologist Ronald Gordon advises Belizeans to monitor weather conditions as a tropical depression is likely to develop early this week, with the potential to form a hurricane.

Currently, an area of low pressure near just north of South America is being monitored. The system demonstrates a high chance of evolving into a tropical depression. Gordon predicts if that were to occur, Belize would feel the impact around Tuesday, September 27th.

Gordon explained that the system is disorganized as there are strong upper-level winds over it at the moment preventing it from becoming organized and developing. However, there are indications that as the system enters the central Caribbean sea, it will have a better chance of

development.

As the system has not yet developed into a storm, there is no clear path projection. Gordon stated, "Some of the models take the system towards the Northern Yucatán peninsula. Other models place it farther away from the country, towards the northern tip of Cuba. Therefore, given the wide-area of predictions, there is a high level of uncertainty as to the precise path."

He affirmed that if and when the system takes the form of a storm, there will be more accurate predictions of its projected path. It is believed that the northern area of

Belize will be on the receiving end of its impact.

Given that September and October are the two months where most tropical cyclone activity is likely to occur, this is a typical weather pattern.

The National Meteorological Service advises that the public stay informed with the latest official updates. "If there's a need for an advisory, that will be done in conjunction with the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO). We are not there yet. There is not even a depression out there at the moment," Gordon concluded.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR RENT: TWO-person apartment - located at the corner West and Allenby Streets, southside Belize City. Single bedroom, spacious living room and kitchen. Secure with concrete walls and floor. Hot and cold water & Internet. Electricity and water are separate. Kitchen sink installed. \$400.00 a month with payment in advance. Call 672-4454 or 227- 2503 for more details or for viewing opportunity.

FOR RENT: Two person apartment at corner West and Basra Streets, Belize City. Single bedroom, small living room and kitchen. Ground floor, secure with concrete walls and floor. Hot and cold water. Kitchen sink installed. \$400.00 a month with payment in advance. Call 672-4454 or 227-2503 for more details or for viewing opportunity.

VACANCY: A vacancy exists for a Warehouse Attendant. Please contact Jitendra Nandwani at 610-1122 for more information.

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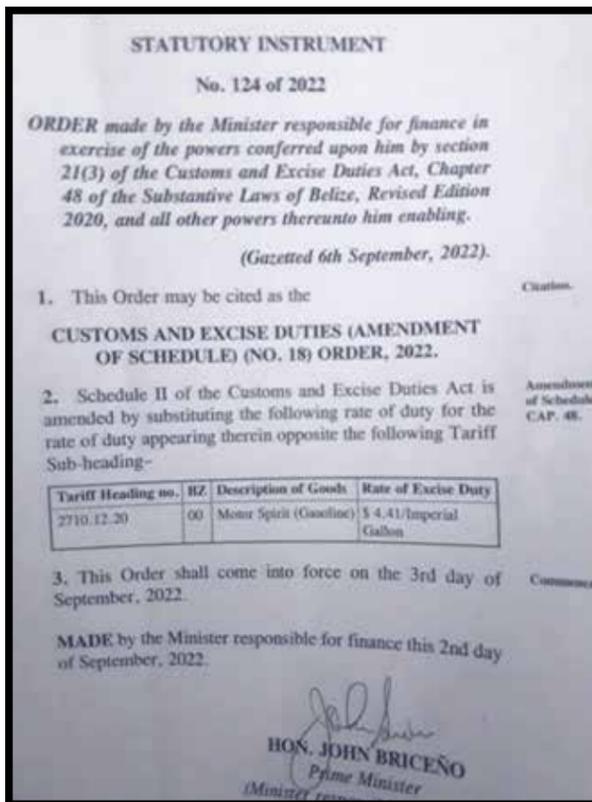
Fuel-price stabilization formula sets excise duty on Regular gasoline at \$4.41

The Excise duty for regular gasoline has climbed to \$4.41 per imperial gallon under the fuel-price stabilization program.

According to Statutory Instrument No. 124 of 2022, published in the Gazette on September 6th, the rate of excise, for the first time in five years, has moved beyond \$3.95 for this fuel product. This almost 12 percent increase over the pre-stabilization-program rate is a feature of the fuel-price fixing mechanism that holds regular gasoline at \$13.50 as opposed to being closer to \$13.04 if the original rate (\$3.95) was utilized.

As readers would recall, The Reporter last spoke with Minister of State Christopher Coye on the program back in August. At the time, the duty rate was at \$3.07, a figure still below the original charge of \$3.95 per imperial gallon. "We continue to incur mounting excise tax losses [due to the price stabilization program]. Recall that immediately before the Government started the stabilization program, the excise tax [was]... \$3.95 per imperial gallon for regular gasoline," informed Coye.

Coye added that as long as the rates were below their pre-COVID levels, the Government of Belize



The Sept 6th Order sets the excise is at \$4.41

(GOB) will continue to incur "losses" relative to what was budgeted. Speaking specifically to Regular fuel, at \$3.07, the government was forgoing \$0.88 per imperial gallon.

Consequently, the new rate being at \$4.41 per imperial gallon would suggest GOB is attempting to accelerate the rate of recovery of forgone tax revenues at an additional \$0.46 per imperial gallon.

The price stabilization program is the government's policy in which it has virtually fixed the prices for diesel and regular. Under the program, when the international prices and acquisition costs were climbing,

the excise duty was cut in an effort to absorb some of the fuel cost pass-through.

However, the stabilization program also works in reverse. It was designed to help government minimize its overall revenue shortfall by keeping the prices of the two products fixed in the \$13 range even when acquisition costs began to decline, which judging from the higher excise for Regular that is charged at \$13.50, have certainly begun.

It is worth noting that the pump price for Premium fuel has decreased this week from its previously fixed position of \$17.60 to about \$16.60.



Institution: Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)
Country: Belize
Project: Solid Waste Management Project II (SWMPII)
Sector: Waste Management
Abstract: Project Engineer
Loan No.: 3684/OC-BL
Deadline: October 11th, 2022

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), towards the cost of the Solid Waste Management Project II and intends to apply part of the proceeds towards hiring of a Project Engineer.

The objective of the consultancy is to assist the Belize Solid Waste Management Authority in the supervision of (i) consultancy for the Preparation of Tender Documents and Supervision of the Design and Construction of the Additional Cell at the Mile 24 Sanitary Landfill and (ii) supervision of the consulting firm or individual consultant contracted for the intermediate berm at the Mile 24 Regional Sanitary Landfill.

The Belize Solid Waste Management Authority, the Executing Agency, now invites interested eligible individual consultant to submit Expressions of Interest indicating qualification and experience required to provide these consultancy services listed below.

A) SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the Project Engineer (PE) include, but are not limited to:

- Supervision of the consultant hired for the Preparation of Tender Documents and Supervision of the Design and Construction of the Additional Cell at the Mile 24 Sanitary Landfill, including professional review of all submissions and transmittal to the Director and other key stakeholders.
- As part of the professional review the PE must:
- Acquaint him/herself with the tailored solution preliminary proposed by the supervision of design and construction firm.
 - Determine and acquaint him/herself with the format of the remediation cell proposed in the preliminary design: how the cell be made permeated; details on the clay barriers in the berms, porewater indicators, and hydraulic observation wells.
 - Partner with the supervision of design and construction firm in conducting the preliminary waste survey.
 - Review and approve the detailed site assessment generated by the supervision of design and construction firm.
 - Independently review the elevation contours and perimeter drawings that will be submitted by the field surveyor and presented by the supervision of design and construction firm.
 - Provide independent feedback on the supervision of design and construction firm's conceptualized design and editing.
 - Analyze the bill of quantities for the construction of the additional cell and request a detailed breakdown of items constituting the overall budget.
- Supervision of the consulting firm or consultant hired for the intermediate berm including professional review of all submissions and transmittal to the Director and other key stakeholders.
 - Assist in the preparation of the tender documents for the intermediate berm and assist with the evaluation process.
 - Management and administration of the consultancy and construction contracts for the additional cell and the intermediate berm.
 - Keep track and document all relevant documents pertaining to the design and construction of both consultancies.
 - Verify that the design generated for both consultancies are in compliance with the Bank's Environmental and Safeguards Compliance Policy and in particular with the ECP and local environmental laws and regulations.
 - Establish and maintain a close working relationship with all key participants and stakeholders involved in the design and construction of the additional cell and intermediate berm (including contractors, consultants, Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing, Office of the Contractor General, Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining, Inter-American Development Bank, Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Finance) to assist in effective oversight of the processes.
 - Assist in the evaluation of bids and recommendation for award of construction and supply contracts for the additional cell and intermediate berm.
 - Establishment of a task force to assist in the thorough review of all submissions/deliverables/outputs for the additional cell and intermediate berm. Organizing all meetings and activities of the task force.
 - Review, recommend/certify and submit all claims for payment by the consultant (s) for the additional cell and intermediate berm to the Financial Specialist/Director for timely payment.
 - Preparation and submission to the Director monthly progress reports on the consultancies (additional cell and intermediate berm).and subsequent construction within one week after the end of each month
 - Conduct field inspection and participate in any formal discussions, site meetings related to construction and scheduling, or other meeting relating to the additional cell and intermediate berm and prepare and submit timely report of these meeting to the Director.
 - Preparation and submission to the Director of a Construction Completion Report within one month after the date of issue by consultants of a Certificate of Practical Completion of each works contract.

B) QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Education: Prospective candidate will have at least a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering, Construction Engineering, Environmental Engineering, Sanitary Engineering, Geotechnical Engineering, or another related field. A Master's degree in the above-listed fields will be considered an asset.

General Work Experience: At least seven (7) years of general work experience since obtaining the first academic degree.

Specific Work Experience:

- At least five (5) years work experience in earthworks/construction supervision.
 - At least five (5) years of work experience in infrastructure project management, construction management and/or contract management.
 - At least two (2) years work experience in solid waste management, design and/or operations would be an asset.
 - Work experience with investment projects funded by IFIs would be an asset.
- Skills:** Experience using AUTOCAD would be an asset. Excellent oral and written command of the English language. Experience in Report Writing. Proficiency in Microsoft Office and MS Project.

The Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining now invites eligible individual consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested individual Consultants must provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualification and relevant experience to perform the Services.

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the Selection of Individual Consultants method and other procedures set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: *Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank - GN-2350-15*, and is open to all eligible candidates as defined in the policies.

Further information can be obtained at the email address below during office hours: **Monday to Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. local time.**

Expressions of interest may be submitted by hardcopy or electronically. Submission must include a signed application letter, Curriculum Vitae (CV), copies of academic qualification, and the names and contact information of three professional references no later than October 11th, 2022, at 2:00 PM Belize local time. Email application **must be submitted via one consolidated PDF document. Only complete packages will be processed.** Packages must be sent to the address below:

Solid Waste Management Authority
 Attn: Procurement Officer
 3013 Bougainvillea Street, Orchid Garden Area
 City of Belmopan, Belize, C.A.
 Tel: (501) 802 1527 PO Box 285
 E-mail: GladdenM@gobmail.gov.bz

FOR SALE

37.7 acres

along the Philip Goldson (Northern) Highway
 near Mile 17 1/2
 suitable for an industrial
 or housing project.

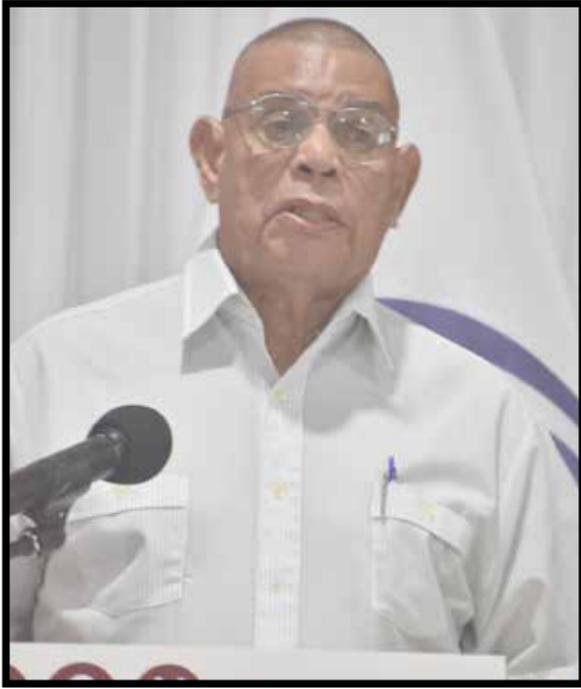
Bordered by the BWS Feeder Road
 and the Northern Highway.

High Broken Ridge land
 Water easily available
 Clear Title Bze. 20,000 per acre

Call Lawrence at phone 610- 4454
 for more details.

Portrait of a Hero – Philip S.W. Goldson

By William Ysaguirre



Author Mr. Lawrence Vernon

Belizean patriot Philip Stanley Wilberforce Goldson was a giant of a leader that the words “national hero” cannot adequately describe, but former chief librarian Lawrence Vernon has documented the life and times of the Father of Belizean Democracy in a new biography “The Time to Save Your Country: Philip S.W. Goldson, Biography of National Hero”, published by the National Institute of Culture and History.

Despite his failing eyesight in his later years, Goldson was a man of great vision, and the book’s title is drawn from one of famous catch phrases: “the time to save your country is before you lose it!”

The National Celebrations Commission and

the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology partnered with N.I.C.H. in launching the book at the House of Culture in Belize City on Thursday morning, September 22. Minister of Education Hon. Francis Fonseca thanked Vernon for his dedication to duty in the years of research he had undertaken single-handedly to prepare this work, which the previous administration of N.I.C.H. had commissioned through the Institute for Social and Cultural Research (ISCR) in 2016. He noted that it will be a valuable resource for university students to better understand the important role that Goldson played in Belize’s path to nationhood.

Goldson rose to the challenge of leadership when he was only 26, when the devaluation of the Belize dollar prompted him and other like-minded patriots to form the People’s Committee on December 31, 1949, and he later joined George Price in forming the People’s United Party. His patriotic fervor burnt with such passion that it drove him to rise from journalist and publisher to trade unionist, nationalist leader, attorney, and eventually statesman and Minister of the Belize Government.

He made no secret of his nationalist sentiments when as editor of the Belize Billboard newspaper, he advocated for Belizean independence. This set him at odds with the colonial power, which sentenced him and Leigh Richardson to a year’s hard labor in Her Majesty’s Prison on a charge of sedition in 1951.

Goldson was undaunted by this setback and continued to write articles against colonialism and advocating Belizean independence on toilet paper, which he then found a way to smuggle out of the prison. A similar fate had befallen another Belizean patriot, Antonio Soberanis, the firebrand labor unionist who refused to live life on his knees. He defiantly declared “I would rather be a dead

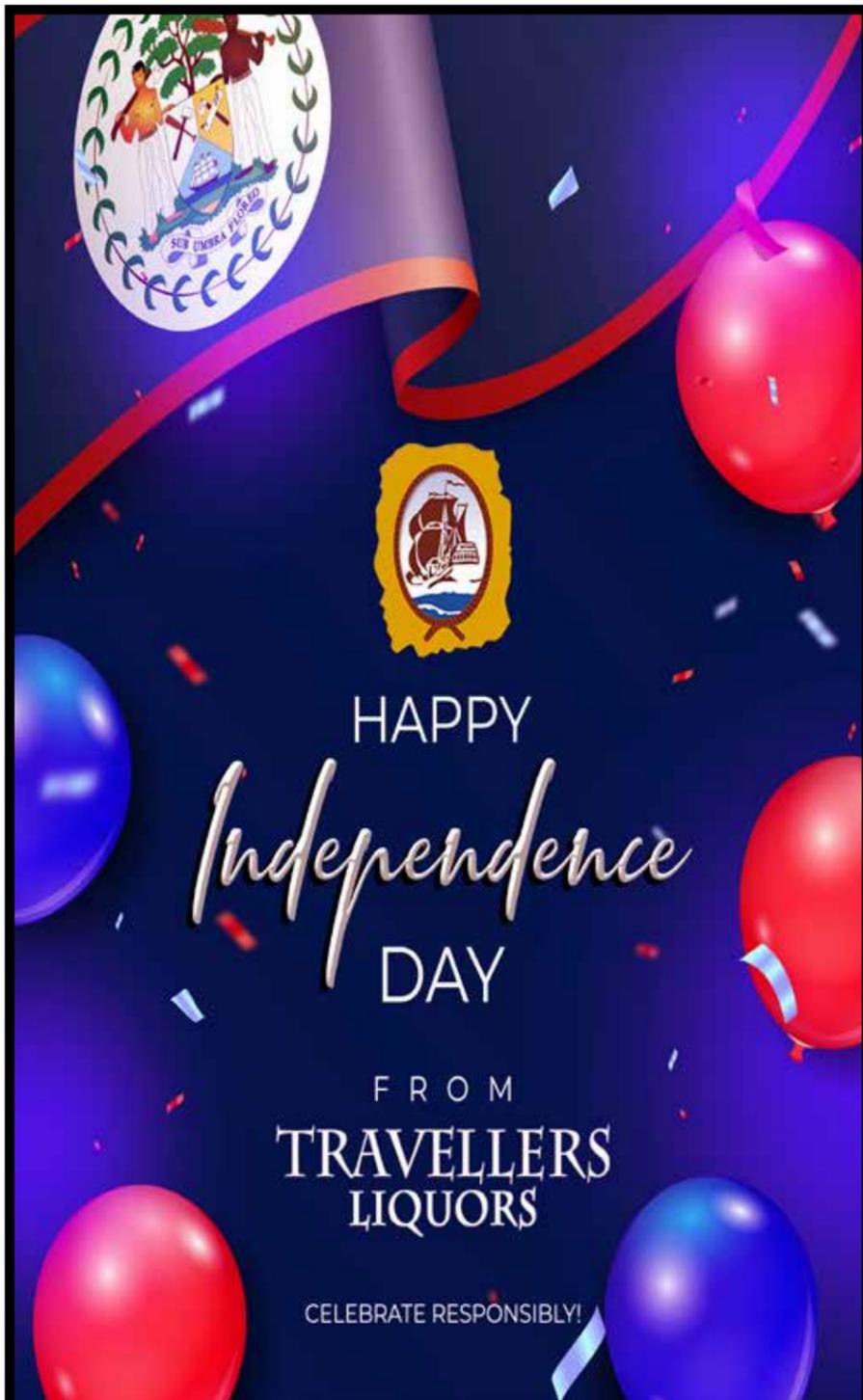
hero than a living coward!” Goldson embraced this sentiment by saying, “I would prefer to be in prison or dead, than muzzled.”

Goldson parted ways with George Price to form the Honduras Independence Party and leader of the National Independence Party, where he was the sole opposition member in the House of Representatives. His fierce defense of Belizean territorial sovereignty led him to address the United Nations in 1967, the first Belizean to do so, when he challenged Guatemala to submit their unfounded territorial claim to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), saying they were reluctant to do so because their claim was in grave doubt of being legally or historically right. Through all this, Goldson also found time to study law, he completed his law studies and was called to the Bar in Belize in 1974.

He would later ally the NIP with the Liberal Party to form the United Democratic Party, but he would also abandon the UDP when a difference of view on the Maritime Areas Act led him to form the National Alliance for Belizean Rights. In 1992, he called on the National Assembly to recognize the NABR as a third political party, setting new precedents for Belizean democracy.

The book is also an eye-opener for his younger son, Adrian Goldson, who attended the launch and remarked that he was only now getting a better understanding of his father’s early life and work and the legacy he left for Belize. Adrian said he has been away from Belize over 30 years, but he was glad to be home and pledged to remain and continue in his father’s footsteps.

Copies of the book are available from NICH for \$30.00. A second book launch is scheduled for Friday evening, September 23 at the Goldson House for Democracy and Patriotism in Belmopan, to highlight the Goldson House as an education and museum space.





VACANCY:JOB OPPORTUNITY

Applications are invited from suitably qualified persons to fill the following post in the Accounts Department. In the Port’s continued effort to promote diversity both males/females are encouraged to apply for the available post.

Procurement Clerk

Reports to: Chief Accountant

Summary of Responsibilities: The Procurement Clerk He/She is responsible for all local and international purchases for the Port. Accurately prepare payment for payables and post accounts payable invoices, assist in the tendering process. File all payment vouchers, receipts and arrange to pick up orders when delivered. He/she works under the direct of the Chief Accountant with the supervision of the Accountant.

Job Responsibilities:

1. Responsible for International Purchasing Process
2. Process and monitor quotations on a timely manner
3. Process and issue all Purchase Orders including change orders
4. Prepare job costing for all International Purchases
5. Responsible to liaise with Vendors for timely delivery of shipments to freight forwarder
6. Follow up with vendors to honor commitments
7. Responsible to liaise with Broker for clearing of shipments from customs and delivery to stores
8. Responsible for all local purchases
10. Process and monitor quotations on a timely manner
11. Process and issue all Purchase Orders including change orders
12. Drive tendering processes
15. Comparison of quotes and preparation of total cost of ownership analysis
16. Deliver tangible cost savings through alternate vendor sourcing
17. Participate in vendor selection strategy
19. Responsible for posting Accounts Payable Invoices
20. Reconcile Supplier monthly Statement
22. Prepare payment for payables
24. Post daily issue of inventory into QBs Accounting system
25. Responsible for market and product research and cost analysis
26. Provide weekly order status report
28. Responsible for Filing of Purchases Records

Job Qualifications/Requirements:

- Minimum of Associate’s Degree in Accounting
- 2 yrs. of Procurement experience

Skills/Competencies

- Strong command of accounting principles
- Able to work under pressure
- Maintain Confidentiality
- High level of integrity

Compensation Package: Will be commensurate (in accordance with the Company’s Salary Structure).

To apply: Provide updated resume, cover letter (addressed to Human Resource Officer), copy of valid social security card, valid police report, vaccination card, name and phone number of two (2) previous employers.

Applications should be emailed to: jobapplication@portofbelize.com
Closing date for receipt of applications is Friday, September 30th, 2022

TASA requests a public hearing for Waterloo expansion project

By Britney Gordon

There is much value to be had in a public hearing on the Waterloo project, Vladimir Andrade, the executive director of TASA, told *The Reporter* this week.

Andrade's point echoed that of UBAB Education Foundation (UEF)'s Chairperson YaYa Marin Coleman, with whom *The Reporter* had spoken in August. Both Andrade and Marin Coleman have indicated that the public consultations are insufficient.

Andrade also noted that a primary basis for the request was the various concerns several environmental organizations take with aspects of the project. For their part, TASA had likewise written to the National Environmental Appraisal Committee



(NEAC) to address these concerns.

TASA's letter read, "We also call out the concern that an apparent relatively fast-tracked process that has been adopted for this review, despite a number of significant concerns on multiple fronts. We, therefore, recommend the convening of a public hearing before any advancement on this proposal."

Andrade explained that the letter was sent

in order to shed light on the issues surrounding the endeavor and the previous EIA that was carried out. He stated, "The reason we chime in is because Belize is a natural resource-based economy. We need to protect all areas that would be affected."

The letter was signed by a total of 12 organizations including The Belize Audubon Society, The World Wide Fund for Nature,

and the Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association.

An issue brought to attention in the previously mentioned letter was the implication of potential dredging. It stated the environmental assessment contained insufficient evidence to support various claims made by the project's developer such as "both the direct impact from dredging and the indirect impacts

associated with the projected increase in turbidity would be 'negligible.'

Andrade also stated that the previous "consultation" lacked an effective distribution of information for online attendees. This was also brought to attention in the letter proposed. According to it, the developers/DOE were unable to field online/virtual questions which were then raised in the Zoom

and Facebook chat but never addressed.

"Until these concerns have been addressed, we are not in a position to support the progression of this project," Andrade concluded.

Historically, a public hearing would be a necessary part of the process as stated by

Regulation 24 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (hereafter "The Regulations"). The Regulations read:

"The Department, on the recommendation of the National Environmental Appraisal Committee (NEAC), may require a public hearing in respect of any undertaking, project or activity in respect of which an environmental impact assessment is required pursuant to these regulations."



IMPORTANT CLOSURE NOTICE

Dear Users of the Port of Belize Ltd.

The port needs to conduct essential maintenance on the trestle which links the pierhead to the land. This is required to preserve port operations for the next few years ahead. The repairs involve replacing three trestle girders, each one expected to take 8, 8 and 10 days to complete. During the period of the repairs, there will be no access to the pierhead and therefore vessel operations (discharge or load) cannot be conducted.

In our attempt to provide the earliest notice of the pierhead operation closures, we can advise that the following periods are presently the targeted dates for the repair works:

July 28th to August 05th, 2022
September 01st to 09th, 2022
October 06th to 16th, 2022

We very much regret and apologize for the potential supply chain disruption and inconvenience that these closures might cause you.

The Container Yard and Warehouse will remain open during these periods.

Thanks

Andy Lane
 Chief Executive Officer

BELIZE CITY,

Estate of EVADNE ALBERTHA HERTULAR, deceased

STATUTORY NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Pursuant to Section 36 of the Administration of Estates Act, Chapter 197 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that all creditors and other persons having any claims or demands upon or against the Estate of EVADNE ALBERTHA HERTULAR, late of Ladyville, Belize District, Belize, are required to send particulars in writing of their claims or demands to the Executrix of the said estate SANDY TORRES of #336 Lake Gardens, Ladyville Village, Belize District, Belize, and to send such particulars not later than the 24th day of December, 2022, AND NOTICE IS HEREBY ALSO GIVEN that at the expiration of the last mentioned date, the Executrix will proceed to distribute the assets of the said EVADNE ALBERTHA HERTULAR, deceased, amongst the parties entitled thereto having regard only to the claims or demands of which particulars have been delivered and the Executrix will not be liable for the assets of the deceased or any part thereof so distributed to any person or persons of whose claims or demands she shall not then have had notice.

DATED this 20th day of September, 2022.

Philip Zuniga
 PHILIP ZUNIGA, S.C.
 Attorney-at-Law for the Executrix

ISRAELI FORCES DELIBERATELY KILLED PALESTINIAN AMERICAN JOURNALIST, REPORT SHOWS

By Alice Speri

Sept 2022, (The Intercept)— Palestinian American Journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, who was killed by Israeli forces in May while reporting from the occupied West Bank city of Jenin, was deliberately and repeatedly targeted, along with her colleagues, despite being clearly identified as a member of the press, a new report released Tuesday concludes.

The report, a collaboration between Palestinian human rights group Al-Haq and the U.K.-based research agency Forensic Architecture, confirms the findings of half a dozen earlier independent reviews of the incident, including by the United Nations, which have found that Israeli forces were responsible for Abu Akleh's killing, with the U.N. noting that the bullet that killed her was "well aimed." But the new report, which includes a detailed digital reconstruction of the incident based on previously unseen footage recorded by Al Jazeera staff at the scene, in addition to witness testimony, open-source video, and a drone survey of the area, offers the most conclusive account yet of what transpired that day.

The report directly contradicts the final conclusions of a review by Israeli authorities issued earlier this month, in which officials conceded there was a "high possibility" that Abu Akleh was "accidentally hit by [Israel Defense Forces] gunfire." In that report, Israeli officials claimed that the IDF soldiers were firing toward "suspects identified as armed Palestinian gunmen, during an exchange of fire in which life-risking, widespread and indiscriminate shots were fired toward IDF soldiers."

But the new reconstruction clearly shows that there were neither armed gunmen nor shots fired in the minutes leading up to Abu Akleh's killing. Instead, the reconstruction shows that Abu Akleh's and her colleagues' "PRESS" insignia was clearly visible from the position of the IDF shooter; that the shooter had a "clear line of fire," indicating "precise aim"; and that the firing continued as the journalists sought shelter. After Abu Akleh was hit, a civilian attempting to provide aid to her was fired upon each time he tried to approach her.

"This is literally the last nail in the coffin of what the army is arguing," the Forensic Architecture researcher in charge of the investigation, who asked not to be named because of fear for their safety when working in the region, told The Intercept.

"We can prove conclusively that there was no one — zero persons — in between the occupation forces and Shireen," they added. "There were no bullets, in sound



or visually, so it's not that the army was responding to anything. We can also show using visibility analysis that we've done in our model, that the shooting only happened when they were within the visible range of the army, which means that it was fully intentional."

The IDF did not immediately respond to questions about how the new evidence contradicts its claims. Al Jazeera did not respond to a request for comment, including questions about the footage it had not previously made public, which shows the last moment in which Abu Akleh was alive. The network is considering legal action in the case.

The new report was presented at a press conference in The Hague, the seat of the International Criminal Court. On Tuesday, the International Federation of Journalists, the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate, and International Center of Justice for Palestinians filed a complaint with the court on behalf of Abu Akleh's family and journalist Ali Al Samoudi, who was also shot during the same incident. In April, the groups had submitted another request for the court to launch an investigation into the systematic targeting, maiming, and killing of journalists in Palestine. Abu Akleh's killing came just days after the ICC acknowledged receipt of that complaint.

"Israel's failure to carry out an effective investigation into the killing of Shireen amounts to a shielding of perpetrators and highlights the need for the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to expedite the investigation in the Situation in Palestine," Susan Power, Al-Haq's head of legal research and advocacy, said in a statement, referring to an investigation the court opened last year. Al-Haq is one of

six Palestinian civil society and human rights organizations that Israel has targeted over the last year, after baselessly designating them "terrorist organizations." In August, Israeli forces forcibly broke into and vandalized several offices, including Al-Haq's.

An investigation of the raid was published by Forensic Architecture earlier this month.

Members of Abu Akleh's family also traveled to The Hague on Tuesday to submit the complaint. "The evidence is overwhelming. It's been over four months since Shireen was killed. Our family shouldn't have to wait another day for justice," they wrote in a statement. "It's obvious that Israeli war criminals cannot investigate their own crimes. The US still has an obligation to investigate and take meaningful action for one of their own citizens. But when an individual state fails to protect its own citizens, it's the responsibility of the international community to protect them instead."

Since day one, Abu Akleh's family, along with a number of U.S. legislators, have called on the U.S. government to conduct its own independent investigation of the killing. Some members of Congress are seeking to force the U.S. government to investigate the incident by introducing legislation requiring the State Department and FBI to do so. But so far, U.S. officials have merely reviewed the findings of Israeli and Palestinian investigators, failing to reach a "definitive conclusion."

While Secretary of State Antony Blinken also called for an "independent, credible investigation" following Abu Akleh's killing, there is no indication that the department has done anything to secure one. In a scathing statement last week, Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., criticized the administration for its failure to do more about the killing of a U.S. citizen.

"No one can credibly think that the [Palestinian Authority], which does not have access to the IDF soldier who likely fired the bullet that killed Ms. Abu Akleh or to other IDF personnel who may have information about it, or Israel which has a history of investigations of shootings by IDF soldiers that rarely result in accountability, can be completely relied on to determine and make public all the facts of what happened in this case," Leahy said in a statement. "There is an increasing foreboding that, as in so many other cases and like the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, there will never be the independent, credible investigation and accountability that Ms. Abu Akleh's family, the Secretary of State, I, and others have called for."

NOTICE OF COMMENCED DISSOLUTION

HOLLINGER LIMITED

("the Company")

"Notice is hereby given to all interested parties that HOLLINGER LIMITED; A Company incorporated under the IBC Act of Belize commenced dissolution on September 16th, 2022.

And

Kulikova Elena of Alexandra Monackhova Street 93, Block 3, Flat 163 Moscow, Russia is the liquidator of the company.

Frontier International Business Services Limited

Registered Agent

Enabling a Green-Investment Environment for Belize

Belmopan, September 22, 2022. 11:50 a.m.

Hon. Christopher Coye, Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment, was invited to speak at the Green Climate Fund's (GCF) Private Investment for Climate Conference in the Republic of Korea. This high-level session was geared towards bringing together a group of government ministers and development organizations to discuss the importance of an enabling policy environment that will allow private markets for climate investment to develop citing specific actions.

During his presentation, the minister highlighted

that Belize is synonymous with nature. Its natural capital, both marine and terrestrial, is intact and although Belize has one of the highest climatic risk indices, we continue to do more than our fair share to protect the planet. The Government of Belize (GOB) is working diligently to change our economic development outlook and ambition to a more climate-conscious sustainable development pathway.

In becoming a resilient and export-led economy, the GOB has anchored several public sector initiatives, inclusive of public sector reforms; full implementation of the Paris Agreement and Nationally Determined



Minister of State Hon. Christopher Coye spoke at the GCF event.

Contributions' commitments; diversification of our productive sectors; strengthening the Blue Ocean economy; upgrading to digital infrastructure and education; scaling up investments in health and social protection

systems; improved crisis response and preparedness, and most importantly, the transformation of the energy sector. To this end, Belize's government undertook an extensive debt restructuring exercise involving its external commercial debt. Through a successful Blue Bond debt-for-marine-conservation swap, for example, Belize's debt-to-GDP ratio was reduced by 25% in 2021.

While Belize is fully committed to

continued public sector development, it also has a focus on recognizing the private sector's critical and efficient role in driving economic transformation. To do so, the GOB wishes to facilitate capital formation and economic growth; provide protection to investors from unfair, improper or fraudulent practices; foster the development of fair and efficient capital markets and develop a Public-Private Partnership Policy to mobilize private sector capital that supports

large-scale investment in infrastructure and other developmental projects that are aligned with the government's policy priorities for public benefit.

Minister Coye expressed that with the right scale and the right partners, Belize can conceivably reduce the cost of power in Belize to fuel its transformative economic ambitions and highlighted that the GOB is doing its part legislatively and administratively to create a more attractive investment climate.

Decrease in cost of freight not expected to reach Belize until Next Year

By Michelle Sutherland

For the past consecutive weeks, international freight rates been trending downward as a result of the shrinking demand for goods and the easing in supply chain disruptions across the globe; however, according to one local customer broker, Belize is not expected to feel that relief anytime soon.

Delroy Fairweather, the vice president of the Belize Customs Brokers Association, told the Reporter this week that he is expecting that decrease in freight rates to reach Belize until March of next year.

He noted that in this scenario when the prices of goods/freight increases in the international market smaller countries such as Belize will be the first to get the impact and are usually the last to witness the relief when the prices fall.

"Remember when we order goods here in Belize, it takes between 30 to 90 days, depending on where the goods are ordered from," advised Fairweather. "Therefore, if in transit at that time, it is not going to have any bearing or effect on the cargo because they have already been bought at a set price."

He added, "We must



Delroy Fairweather, VP Customs Brokers Association.

take into consideration that the majority of our items on the shelves were ordered during the shipping crisis. Belize will, therefore, need to deplete its present inventories first at that price before it could even decide to change its prices. With new orders being placed at the reduced freight rates we may be seeing some relief in the first quarter of 2023."

But even as those reliefs are expected to come in at a later date, Fairweather is projecting that those reductions will be minimal and would range somewhere between US\$1,000 of a container that is currently priced at US \$17,000. A change that he says will not have any major effect on consumers.

"Even at a 10%

reduction in the freight rates, that will not reduce the cost of these items significantly. We need to remember that the products we are purchasing may already have an increase in cost from the manufacturer or producers. Having to rely on primary importation and the significant small quantities we purchase as it relates to other larger economies of scale, we will always be at a disadvantage as it relates to that trickle down in cost effect," reiterated Fairweather.

Earlier this year severe congestion in ports, labor shortages, shortages of shipping containers, an increase in demand for goods as well as the pandemic are only some of the contributing factors that pushed up shipping rates by over 300%.

BELIZE CITY,

Estate of TA CHUAN HO also known as DAVID HO, deceased

STATUTORY NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Pursuant to Section 36 of the Administration of Estates Act, Chapter 197 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that all creditors and other persons having any claims or demands upon or against the Estate of TA CHUAN HO also known as DAVID HO, deceased, late of Belize City, Belize, are required to send particulars in writing of their claims or demands to the Administratrix of the said estate, PI CHIU HO (also known as PATRICIA HO) of #3591 Joy Avenue, Buttonwood Bay, Belize District, Belize, and to send such particulars not later than the 24th day of December, 2022, AND NOTICE IS HEREBY ALSO GIVEN that at the expiration of the last mentioned date, the Administratrix will proceed to distribute the assets of the said TA CHUAN HO also known as DAVID HO, deceased, amongst the parties entitled thereto having regard only to the claims or demands of which particulars have been delivered and the Administratrix will not be liable for the assets of the deceased or any part thereof so distributed to any person or persons of whose claims or demands she shall not then have had notice.

DATED this 20th day of September, 2022.

PHILIP ZUNIGA, S.C.

Attorney-at-Law for the Administratrix

Belize not the only country looking to turn Sargassum to energy

By Britney Gordon

Earlier this month, the prime minister and a delegation traveled to Germany to meet with the company Variodin to discuss the possibility of converting sargassum to energy. Mexico-based company, Nopalimex, announces they will be striving to do the same.

Nopalimex is a biodigester powered by nopal widely found in Mexico. Nopal is a type of prickly pear cactus with biogas conversion properties. The company opened multiple biogas plants in Mexico, including one in Quintana Roo, which suffers the most from sargassum pollution.

While cacti remain their primary source of biogas, the company has plans to use sargassum as a second source. They claim that the seaweed can be converted similarly to cacti.

In 2019, Nopalimex's technical director stated that raw biogas with a methane content of up to 72% can be produced from sargassum.

Electrical engineer, Miguel Aké Madera remarked, "We found that the [methane] content ... is very acceptable... which makes [sargassum biogas] ideal for energy generation."

Variodin, the German-based company Belize is seeking to work with, processes

waste and residual materials of all kinds into electrical, thermal, cooling, and hydrogen energy. Their main objective is to produce green energy, and biodiesel and to supply green heating and cooling from waste.

Variodin has finished projects in countries such as South Africa, China, Denmark, Norway, Afghanistan, and Germany and is currently partnering with Belize and the Dominican Republic.



Mexico-based company, Nopalimex, will use sargassum for energy.

Travelers Liquors launches Belize Blue Rum

By William Ysaguirre

Travelers Liquors launched its new aged rum, Belizean Blue Rum at the

Travelers Heritage Museum in Belize City on Friday afternoon, September 16.

Named after the



Travelers CEO Magali Perdomo-Gabb and Belizean Blue Rum

world-famous Blue Hole coral atoll and the Blue Morpho butterfly found in Belize and which are featured in the label design, Belizean Blue Rum is a blend of rums which have been aged from five to 12 years in oak casks which previously held bourbon. The amber liquid has a delicate aroma of vanilla, caramel, cinnamons and nutmeg, and contains 40 percent alcohol by volume Gay-Lussac (80 proof). It is being marketed as a sipping rum for the palate of the discerning connoisseur, to sip and savor, undiluted by ice or any other mixer.

Travelers Chief Executive Officer Magali Perdomo-Gabb explained that the company partnered

with Jacco Krohn of the Netherlands to produce this Blue Rum.

Perdomo said they first met Krohn at an international rum expo in Europe 12 years ago, and it was he who suggested that Travelers produce an aged rum for the European market. He first introduced the rum under the "1731 Fine and Rare" label in the European Union a year ago, and it is now available in Belize.

Travelers Liquors Ltd has produced several other rums which have won international acclaim, including Don Omario aged rum, the 1981 Rum and Kuknat Rum, which won a silver medal at the Fifth Best rum tasting in New York City in April this year.

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum, and Mining

1. The Government of Belize (or GOB) acting through the Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum, and Mining, now invites sealed Bids from eligible and qualified Bidders for the Services mentioned below in the table.

Contract No.	Name	Contract Period
60 of 2022/2023	Loading, Trucking, and Other Heavy Equipment Services for the Dangriga Solid Waste Transfer Station Facility	36 months

2. Procurement will be conducted through open tendering in accordance with the provisions of the laws governing public procurement within Belize.
3. This invitation is open to all eligible Bidders as described in the Bidding Documents.
4. Qualification requirements are provided in Section II of the Bidding Documents. Prospective Bidders' attention is drawn to the Instructions to Bidders in the Bidding Documents.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be obtained by interested Bidders by way of email application to the email address below.
6. The Bidding Documents will be emailed to the Bidder at the email address specified in the email application.
7. Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before **October 14th, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Electronic bidding shall not be permitted. Late bids will be rejected.** Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives, who choose to attend in person at the address below at **10:30 a.m. on October 14th, 2022.** Interested public/civil society entities and NGOs may also attend the Bid opening.
8. All bids shall be accompanied by a Bid-Securing Declaration as specified in the Instructions to Bidders.
9. The Government of Belize will declare a firm ineligible, either indefinitely or for a stated period, to be awarded a contract funded by the Government of Belize, if it at any time determines that the firm has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent, coercive, or collusive practices in competing for or in executing a contract.
10. The address referred to above for:
 - (i) Application for Bidding Documents,
 - (ii) Submission of Bids, and
 - (iii) Opening of Bids, is:

Belize Solid Waste Management Authority, 3013 Bougainvillea Street, Belmopan, c/o Ms. Lumen Cayetano, Director, 828-4864, cayetanolu@gobmail.gov.bz.

11. Bidders are required to submit as part of the bid "the Statement of Ethical Conduct and Fraud and Corruption". In case of misleading information or non-adherence to the Fraud and Corruption provisions of the Bidding Documents, the Bidder shall be pursued by the GOB.

7.6 magnitude Earthquake strikes Mexico on the anniversary of two deadly quakes

A mere hour after a drill was held in Mexico City on September 19th, a 7.6 magnitude struck on the anniversary of two deadly earthquakes.

The quake occurred around 1:05 p.m. and was centered 23 miles southeast of Aquila near the boundary of Colima and Michoacan states. It was recorded at a depth of 9.4 miles.

On September 19th, 1985, Mexico experienced a devastating 8.0 magnitude earthquake that killed at least 9,500 people. The event cost



The earthquake came 1 hour after a drill.

noted that there is no correlation to the 6.5 magnitude earthquake that occurred just a day prior.

Citizens noted that the sirens of the earthquake alarms were heard shortly after the drills occurred. Some were unsure whether or not they were genuine alarms or yet another drill. As evidenced by the low number of deaths, citizens heeded to protocols and sought safety.

Belize is not prone to earthquakes. Typically, the country is only affected by the tremors of surrounding nations' quakes. The largest being the Swan Islands earthquake recorded in 2009 with a 7.3 magnitude.

NEMO details what to do in the case of an earthquake in their step-by-step guide on their website. The guide urges readers to "Drop, Cover, and Hold on". It also advises what to do after the shaking has stopped to remain safe.

Mexico between US \$3 and 4 billion in repairs. By unfortunate coincidence, in 2017, on the same day, an earthquake struck with a magnitude of 7.1. There a recorded 370 deaths as a result and an estimated economic loss around US\$3 and \$4 billion.

Fortunately, the 2022 earthquake resulted in significantly fewer losses.

Two people were recorded to have passed as a direct result of the incident and the damages are still under evaluation.

Paul Earle, the U.S. Geological Survey seismologist, assured the public that these earthquakes are mere coincidences and there isn't any notable data to connect the events to each other. Earle also



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST CONSTRUCTION SERVICES FOR THE PLACENCIA AND INDEPENDENCE VILLAGE FIRE STATION BUILDINGS

Institution: BELIZE NATIONAL FIRE SERVICE
Country: BELIZE
Project: TRIAL FARM, PLACENCIA AND INDEPENDENCE
VILLAGE FIRE STATION BUILDINGS PROJECT
Project ID No.: NFS-2022/PL01
NFS-2022/IND02
NFS-2022/OW03
Deadline: October 3rd, 2022



The Government of Belize has committed funding to contract an experienced and qualified contractor **FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF a FIRE STATION BUILDING** to be located in Placencia and Independence Villages or in Trial Farm, Orange Walk District.

General requirements of the Bidders:

- 1) Bidder's Company must be incorporated in the country of Belize a minimum of five years;
- 2) Bidders must have experience in works of a similar size, scope and nature;
- 3) Bidders must present two references from projects recently completed in the last two years
- 4) Bidders must confirm access to minimum resources (technical, financial, human resources)
- 5) Bidders are required to present Certificates of Good standing from the Companies Registry, the Belize Tax Service and the Belize Social Security Board.

Interested contractors please note that above requirements are mandatory, and this information must be included within any final submitted bid. The deadline for submission of **Expression of Interest is Monday, October 3rd, 2022.**

Interested contractors may obtain bidding documents scope of works electronically at the email address below from Monday to Fridays starting **Thursday September 15th 2022** between the hours of 9:00 am and 3:00 pm. Printing of documents is at the intended Bidder's expense.

Belize National Fire Service
Attn: Mr. Colin Gillett
Fire Chief
#3578 Sunrise Avenue, Belize
Tel: 501-223-1183
E-mail: chief@fire.gov.bz/seniorsec@fire.gov.bz

NOTICE

GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE TREASURY BILLS ISSUE NUMBER 10/2022

Tenders are invited for an issue of Government of Belize Treasury Bills. The amount of the issue will be \$83,200,000.00.

The Bills will be issued in electronic form only evidenced by an electronic book entry in the Central Securities Depository of the Central Bank of Belize in multiples of \$200 and will be repayable at par 91 days after issue. They will be issued on Wednesday, 5 October 2022 and will be redeemed on Wednesday, 4 January 2023.

Each tender must be for \$200 or a multiple of \$200 and must specify to five decimal places the amount, which is offered for each one hundred dollars face value of the Bills sought.

Members of the public who wish to participate in the auction must submit their bid to the Central Bank of Belize electronically or at the designated drop off box no later than 12:00 noon on Friday, 30 September 2022.

The Auction in the Central Securities Depository System (CSD) will be opened from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm on Wednesday, 5 October 2022.

Successful bidders should arrange to settle via the Automated Payment & Securities Settlement System of Belize (APSSS).

Bank: Central Bank of Belize
Account: GL1CORP0402627

The Government of Belize reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all tenders in whole or in part.

CENTRAL BANK OF BELIZE

Notices are placed on Central Bank of Belize Website (www.centralbank.org.bz)

'The Guatemalan Military Stole our Flags: BTV Leader

By Michelle Sutherland

"The Guatemalan Military Stole our Flags," Leader of the Belize Territorial Volunteers (BTV) Wil Maheia told local reporters on Tuesday following a trip on Sunday to Sarstoon Island.

Maheia dubbed this latest incident as one of the most violent encounters he has had with the Guatemalan Armed Forces (GAF) thus far.

According to Maheia, the BTV, accompanied by scouts, as well as several other Belizeans, had traveled out to Sarstoon Island to plant two flags as they would do annually to display nationalistic pride as part of the September festivities. While Maheia concurs that this is not the first time that they have been met with resistance by the Guatemalans, Maheia



BTV Leader Will Maheia planted flag.

said that this time the group appeared to be larger and more confrontational.

Maheia explained that the Guatemalan military had attempted to halt the excursion from proceeding from the entrance of the

Sarstoon; however, the group was still able to traverse around the gunboats and made their way to the island, where they planted the flags and sang the national anthem, despite five Guatemalan gunboats



Guatemalan Armed Forces patrolling the Sarstoon area.

hovering in the distance.

Following their departure, Maheia said that the GAF immediately went to the island, where they proceeded to remove the two flags that Maheia and his group had just planted. Maheia said that this prompted his group to sail back to the island to demand the immediate return of the Belize flag from the Guatemalans.

In cell phone video footage, Maheia could be heard telling the Guatemalan military, "If you want me to leave, please give me my flag. I am not leaving here until you give me my flag. I am not leaving; I want my flag. That's my flag from my country," which was followed by a response from a member of the GAF who told Maheia, "You put your flag in my country."

Despite that back and forth continuing for nearly an hour, Maheia said that the GAF refused to return the two flags and so he decided to withdraw from the area in the

interest of safety and then proceeded to make a complaint to a BDF and Coast Guard Patrol that was shadowing them on the waters.

Following the incident, the Ministry of National Defence and Border Security issued a press release confirming the chain of events as was reported by Maheia. In the release, the Ministry quoted Maheia had "informed the joint patrol that they had placed two Belizean National Flags on the Sarstoon Island, which members of the Guatemalan Armed Forces later removed.

The Guatemalans informed the joint patrol that the entire area belongs to Guatemala; however, the joint patrol commander informed the Guatemalan Armed Forces that they were in Belizean territory and that they should leave.

The release then went on to say that, thereafter, the BTV and the Guatemalan Armed Forces vessel both departed the area

while they proceeded to the Sarstoon Forward Operating Base to maintain a military presence.

While the release did not condemn the latest actions of the GAF or demand the return of the Belizean Flag, the United Democratic Party called on the Government of Belize to demand the immediate return of the Belizean flags from the GAF.

"We call on the Government of Belize to officially condemn the actions of the Guatemalan Armed Forces and to ensure the return of the Belizean Flags," the UDP said via press release. The UDP reminded that they had established the Forward Operating Base near the Sarstoon island in an effort to protect Belizeans' right to navigate the area, deter transnational illegal activity, and assert ownership over Belize's entire territory.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is yet to take an official position on the matter.

Weh Wi Ga Fi Seh

Kip op yu helt! Stay pahn di lukowt!

Hapi 41^s Bertday, Bileez!

Yes, Bileez yong!
Yes, Bileez schrang!
Ahn, yes, wi ku du beta.
Laik eniting, nobadi perfek
Nat eevn wahn konchri.

Bot disya tweni-fos Septemba
Mee deh rait ya di sata
Hapi fi reech siksti-too
Afta COVID (wel, ih stil deh rong, memba!)
Afta nof gud gud GUD fren ahn faamli ahn famili ahn kompni
Wayk op ded eena dehnya paas lee yaaz.

So, wid mi bertday eena sayhn mont
Wid wi preshos Bileez,
Mee dehn rait ya di prayz Faada Gaad/Mada Gaad
Fi dis day weh Hihn/Shee mek.

Ahn dis 2022, Bileez ton faati-wan.
Mee soh proud fi-mi dehdeh
Wen di Yoonyan Jak mi kohn dong
Bak eena 1981, midnait fi greet Septemba 21.
Da-mi bai Koathows Waaf eena Bileez Siti.
Ah memba seh Ah mi geh koalseed anaal.

tweni-fos num. twenty-first. Bileez Indipendans Day da di twenifos a Septemba. Belize's Independence Day is the twenty-first of September.

Hapi 41^s bertday, wi preshos Bileez!

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The U.S. Embassy Belmopan is seeking eligible and qualified applicants for the following position:

Position Name: Procurement Agent
Vacancy number: Belmopan-2022-20
Closing date: September 3th, 2022

Interested applicants must submit their application via the Electronic Recruitment Application (ERA) system, a web-based system. To view and apply for this vacancy, visit the ERA site at: <https://erajobs.state.gov/dos-era/blz/vacancysearch/searchVacancies.hms>

Please visit the Embassy's website for instructions on how to apply via the ERA system: <https://bz.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/>

Note 1: Resumes will not be considered. Candidates must note all work experience when completing the ERA application. Insufficient or incomplete information will result in an ineligible application.

Note 2: Candidates must submit applicable required documentation by the closing date of this announcement. Failure to provide the required documentation will result in an ineligible application.

MSMEs star at biggest BCCI Expo ever

By William Ysaguirre

Belizean entrepreneurship is alive and well, with over 62 medium, small and micro enterprises showcasing their products and services at the largest annual Expo Belize Market Place ever hosted by the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry since the event first started in 1996.

Close to 13,000 visitors enjoyed the wide variety of products offered by local businesses over the two days of the event.

Chief Executive Officer Narda Garcia of the Office of the Prime Minister elaborated on the government's plans and policies to promote sustainable economic growth by empowering Belize's MSMEs and inspiring local artisans in new ventures, when she addressed the opening ceremony at the Marion Jones Stadium in Belize City on Saturday, September 17.

The BCCI held a "Best Booth" Competition in which exhibitors were awarded points based on the creativity, professionalism, innovation, and efficiency of their booth. Courts Belize Ltd won the award for Best Overall Booth, while Carol Ramos won the award for Most Creative Booth with her specialty in handmade children's clothing for

girls aged 2 to 6 years, which she markets under brand "CK Girls".

The Gomez family of Belize City won the award for Most Professional Booth, offering handmade clay jewelry under the "SOL" brand. The Solid Waste Management Authority was awarded for the Most Innovative Booth, while Nika's Sea Moss products won the Best Female Entrepreneur award. Andrew Lord won the Best Male Entrepreneur award for the exquisite zericote furniture, handicrafts and carvings created by Lord Designs.

One positive result of the pandemic was that it stimulated Belizean creativity and innovation born of necessity, and many of these new startups have been marketing their wares on Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and other social media. Khy's Creamy Kreations started offering an assortment of pastries in January 2021, and these now include cupcakes, baked cheesecake and no-baked cheesecake, larger cakes and chocolate covered treats. Ashlee's Baked Creations also offers pastries for health food fanatics.

Amira Correa Pelayo began making her tropical "SangriaMia" in 2020, which she sells in 10 ounce and 24 oz. bottles, now available at many popular



Julie's Zucchini Salsa



Rossy Bran handmade shoes



Sweetheart Studios jewellery

supermarkets. The bottles can have customized labels for special events, and are available in half gallon and gallon sizes for large events. Another newcomer on the beverage scene is "Wine Time", offering locally crafted wine in chardonnay, Moscato, sangria and rosé flavors.

Marie Sharp's is a household name for hot sauces, fruit juice concentrates, jams and jellies, and she has further diversified by making fruit wines from cashews, plantain, Malay apple and jackfruit, primarily for the tour-

ist trade, and expos. Julie MacRae began making her hot "Julie's Zucchini Salsa" in Santa Elena, Cayo in 2019, with all natural ingredients produced in San Ignacio, and she has now branched into making bottled cocktails under the "Baby Maker" label, in pina colada, apple, minty pineapple mojito, mango-habanero and blue kamikaze flavors. Jamie Vasquez won an award from BELTRAIDE last December to start his small business "Wild Roots", bottling natural organic juices without sugar or

additives. Oma Organix produces tonics, pastries and handmade soaps from elderberry.

Carlos Chavez of Camalote Village, Cayo, established "Kankrete Aestetiks" a year ago to manufacture concrete pavement tiles, garden dividers, planters and fountains. Rossy Bran of San Ignacio only began her business, Rossy Shoes, a couple months ago, producing handmade sandals and work boots from natural Belizean materials.

A number of artisans are producing jewelry for the tourist trade,

including Zaadia Flores of Sand Hill, who is marketing handcrafted jewelry under the "Sweetheart Studios" brand. Kaj Expressions offers nose rings and mini heart studs. Ale Cho of Toledo district first began making her "Ale Beach Treasures" jewelry from sea glass in 2014, and she has now relocated to offer her wares for the tourist trade in San Ignacio

B.M.A., Boris Mansfield and Associates, is a new start-up Belizean real estate company based in Placencia, offering properties for sale to anyone who wants to own a piece of the jewel. They are presently hiring young Belizeans willing to learn the real estate business.

The BCCI thanks all exhibitors, sponsors and its secretariat staff who helped this year's Expo achieve success on such a grand scale after its two-year hiatus.

S U D O K U

Medium Puzzle

	6		7		9			
4		2		9	8			
7		5	2		6			4
			5	7	6			1
		6					2	5
								2
9				4	1			
				1	4			7

Answer to Puzzle

7	9	4	1	5	6	3	8	2
8	3	1	4	2	9	7	5	6
2	5	9	3	8	7	4	1	9
9	4	3	2	6	8	1	7	5
5	2	7	9	1	3	6	4	8
1	8	6	7	4	5	9	2	3
4	1	8	6	3	2	5	9	7
6	7	5	8	9	1	2	3	4
3	9	2	5	7	4	8	6	1

Sudoku rules are extremely easy: Fill all empty squares so that the numbers 1 to 9 appear once in each row, column and 3x3 box. Tip: Use a soft erasable pencil. Start with the easy puzzles, then move on to the harder ones. Make small pencilmarks to show which numbers are allowed in empty squares. This will come handy when analyzing techniques are used. Never guess! Only make moves based on logical deductions. There is only one unique solution for each puzzle.

Smaller Economies in Latin America and Caribbean Face a Bigger Inflation Challenge

By Emine Boz, Ilan Goldfajn, Jaime Guajardo, and Metodij Hadzi-Vaskov

As inflation continues to be elevated across Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), the impact on real incomes and purchasing power remains a key challenge, especially for the most vulnerable. We looked into this challenge from the perspective of smaller economies in LAC by analyzing recent inflation dynamics for three sub-groups: Central America, Panama, and the Dominican Republic (CAPDR); the Caribbean; and the smaller economies in South America—Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

Our work shows that high inflation is a bigger challenge in smaller economies because they are less diversified, rely more on imports, and have more limited policy levers at their disposal. The poorest households have been hit the hardest and food insecurity is on the rise. Many of these countries have pegged exchange rates and do not have an independent monetary policy. Thus, they had to rely on temporary fiscal measures, of which about half were targeted to the most vulnerable. Countries with larger pre-existing subsidies tended to introduce smaller measures.

Inflation on the rise
During the first half of 2022, inflation reached multi-decade highs in many of these countries. The latest available inflation data for August reveals that yearly headline inflation exceeded 9 percent in CAPDR and 6 percent in the smaller economies of South America. In the Caribbean, it reached almost 6 percent in March. Core inflation showed similar trends, staying at lower levels than headline inflation since it strips out food and energy prices.

Smaller economies are typically less diversified and rely more on imports, making them more susceptible to inflationary pressures arising from higher im-

port prices. Also, food and fuel—both of which have experienced large price increases since the beginning of the war in Ukraine—account for a larger share in the consumption basket in these economies.

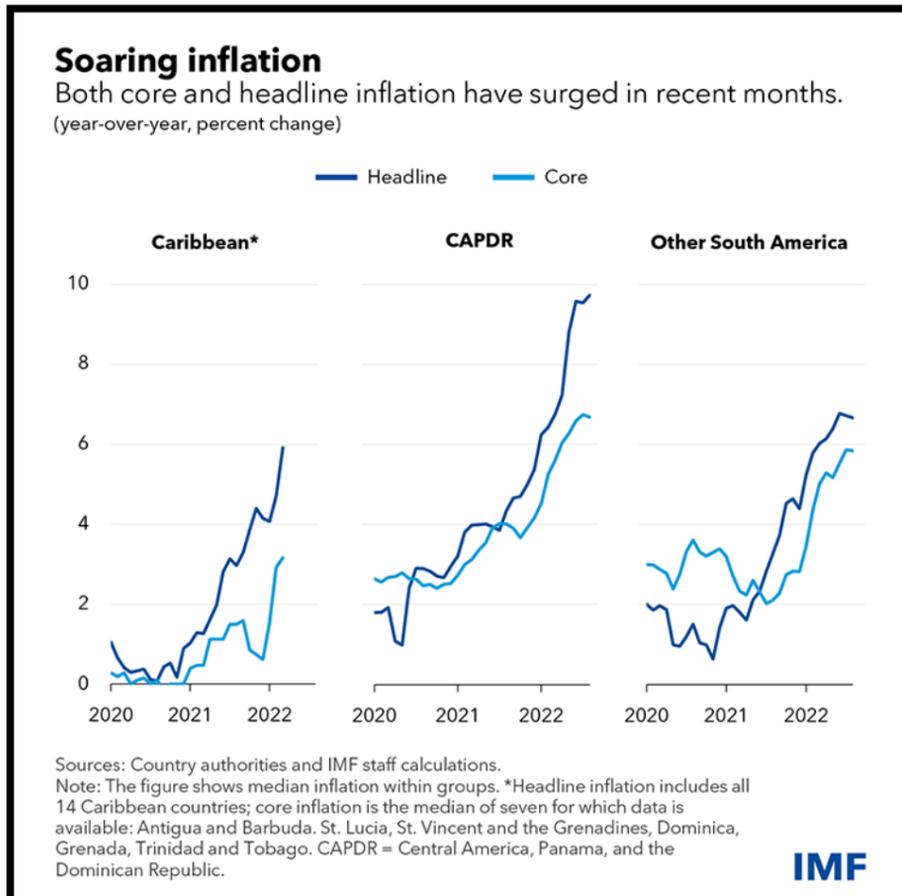
Smaller economies also have more limited policy levers at their disposal. They typically have less flexible exchange rate arrangements, and hence, rely less on exchange rate adjustments. Many of the small countries have high public debt and elevated sovereign spreads, partly a legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic. Facing higher public debt levels, smaller economies have more limited fiscal space and policy options at their disposal.

Poorest hit hardest

The ongoing inflation wave is hurting the poor more given the rapid increase in food prices. Inflation estimates across income quintiles in CAPDR show that over the past few months, the poorest quintiles have faced considerably higher inflation rates than the richest quintiles. The main driver of this discrepancy has been the increase in food prices. These developments may worsen food insecurity further, which had already increased during the pandemic.

Responding to global shocks amid domestic constraints

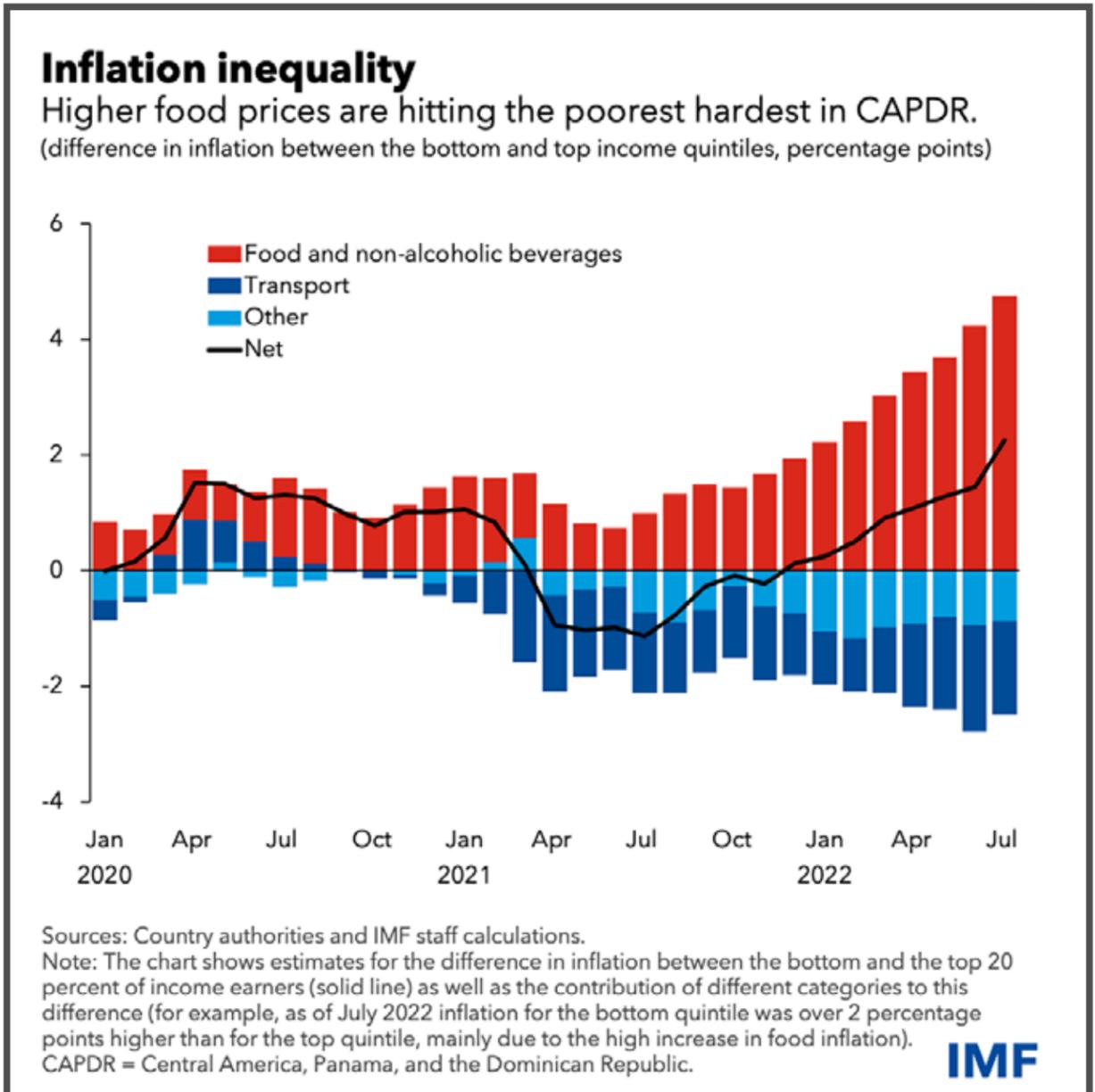
Many countries worldwide have implemented measures to mitigate the impact of higher global energy and food prices in the domestic economy, particularly after the start of the war in Ukraine. To gauge the magnitude of these measures, we estimate the response of domestic fuel prices to a one percent change in the international fuel price—the pass-through from international to domestic fuel prices. We find that the pass-through from international to domestic fuel prices has declined from about 1 before the war (i.e. domestic prices were moving almost one-to-one with international prices on average during 2015-2021) to about 0.8 after the start of the war. A similar de-



picture because some countries already had in place extensive subsidies on food and fuel. When comparing existing energy or food subsidies with the cost of new measures, we observe that countries with larger pre-existing subsidies tended to introduce smaller measures.

Preparing for a possibly more persistent inflationary shock

Policymakers should be prepared for a possible long-lasting inflationary shock. Given the uncertainty around the intensity and duration of the shock, the following general principles can help policymakers navigate through these turbulent times: (i) domestic prices should adjust to international prices,



cline has been observed in the pass-through from international to domestic fuel prices in the smaller countries in LAC.

Several constraints have shaped the policy responses. Many small LAC economies have currency pegs and thus less policy flexibility to address the impact of the price shock. Only a few of these economies

have increased policy rates to contain second-round effects and keep inflation expectations anchored. To mitigate the impact of higher global energy and food prices, they have implemented discretionary fiscal policy measures, most of which were announced as temporary and about half were targeted to the most vulnerable.

The size of the fiscal measures has varied across economies—they have been larger for economies with larger weights of food and transportation in their consumer price index (CPI) basket, weaker social safety nets, or lower income per capita.

Looking at the new measures and their costs provides a partial

while providing targeted and temporary support to the most vulnerable; (ii) if targeted measures are not feasible, price smoothing mechanisms with clear exit strategies could help while social safety nets are strengthened; and (iii) consider offsetting revenue or spending measures to limit overall fiscal impact.



Nine healthy foods that contain fat

If you're on a mission to eat healthier, more nutritious meals, you might think you need to reduce your fat consumption. But fat is an essential component of a healthy diet, and focusing on including lots of healthy foods that contain fat is important for so many reasons.

First things first: dietary fat is not always the enemy, and not all fat is created equal. Unsaturated fats, often referred to as the 'healthy' fats, when eaten in moderation can be part of a balanced diet and enhance your fitness goals. Fat helps to keep hair and skin healthy, protects organs, contributes to brain development, and enables us to store the fat soluble vitamins A, D, E and K.

Saturated fats, on the other hand, while not completely bad for you, are much better to eat in smaller amounts. It's this form of fat that is generally associated with high cholesterol, hypertension, and other health issues.

It is, however, always advisable that you seek medical advice before you commence any changes to your diet or exercise routine, and the following is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice or supervision.

1. EGGS

As well as being rich in protein, eggs are a great source of fat, with one egg containing around 5g. The majority of this is unsaturated fat, with just 1.6g being saturated.

With about 6 g of protein per egg, eggs are packed with essential amino acids, the building blocks of protein. Your body needs nine essential amino acids, and you can get all nine of them in eggs — along with other key nutrients such as Vitamin B12, phosphorus and antioxidants.

Eggs are an easy food to incorporate into your diet. Enjoy them for breakfast, poached, scrambled or soft boiled; use them to make a frittata loaded with vegetables; or mix into a stir fry dish for dinner. You can even hard boil them for a nutritious snack to eat on the go.

Close up image of a person's hands holding a freshly broken raw egg over a bowl and dumping the egg white into the bowl while keeping the yolk in the broken egg shell. A second bowl with only egg yolks in it sits nearby.

2. NUTS

Nuts contain their fair share of fat — about 15g in a 1oz serving. Not only are these fats beneficial for your overall health, they can satisfy your palate and provide you with vital nutrients, such as protein and iron.

Along with being a significant source for monounsaturated fats, one ounce of nuts also includes vitamin E, copper, manganese, phosphorus and fiber.

You can simply enjoy nuts on their own for a satisfying and nutritious snack, or sprinkle them on salads and stews for added crunch.

You can also enjoy natural nut spreads (that are palm oil free), including peanut, almond and hazelnut butter. Just remember to enjoy them in moderation — nuts are very healthy, but they do contain their fair share of calories.

3. SEEDS

If you think seeds are for the birds, think



again. Seeds can do the body a lot of good, and in them you'll find iron, calcium, magnesium and fiber. They can become a regular part of a healthy diet.

One serving of seeds (around 1oz) contains 12g of polyunsaturated fat. Sunflower, flaxseed, pumpkin and chia are examples of seeds highly lauded for their nutritional value. Enjoy them in soups, salads, cereals or add them to yogurt or, as with nuts, enjoy them on their own as a snack.

4. DARK CHOCOLATE

If you're looking for a sweet treat that still supports your health goals, grab a piece of dark chocolate. As with the other foods on this list, it contains healthy fats, some 8.9 g in a 1oz serving, but it is a healthy alternative to other snacks that can't say the same — especially since it contains 2mg of iron and 158mg of potassium.

Dark chocolate also has its share of important minerals such as magnesium, iron, zinc, copper, phosphorus and fiber.

5. OILY FISH

Tuna, salmon and other oily fish are a fantastic source of beneficial omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3 fatty acids are necessary for the maintenance of brain and heart functions.

Along with protein, vitamins and minerals, you'll get 4.5g of fat per serving, as well as potassium and calcium.

Add to this the fact that fish is a great source of zinc, iodine, magnesium and potassium, you have yourself a great reason for enjoying a good salmon fish cake or tuna sandwich on

wholemeal bread.

6. YOGURT

There's been a lot of research into the benefits of probiotics, including probiotic foods like yogurt, on the digestive system. But it also has its share of other benefits, including healthy fats.

In a 3.5oz (100g) serving of full fat Greek yogurt, you'll get around 4.4g of fat and 9g of protein. The benefits of yogurt may be enhanced by adding healthy ingredients such as nuts, seeds, or fruits such as apple, banana or strawberries.

7. BEANS

Beans provide considerable nutritional value as they are packed with protein, vitamins and minerals and 0.9g of fat per cup size portion.



As well as being a great source of protein, needed for building and maintaining muscle mass, beans also contain lots of fiber believed to have such benefits as lowering cholesterol, reducing your risk of diabetes and heart disease.

Add them to your favorite dish as a side, or even combine them with rice or chili.

8. AVOCADOS

This nutrient-dense food is loaded with nutritional goodness, including magnesium, potassium, protein, fiber, vitamins C, E, K and a number of B-vitamins. They are also a fantastic source of monounsaturated fat.

Avocados are great made into a spread or dip. They can also be added to salads, incorporated into smoothies and desserts, or as an accompaniment to chilis and stews.

9. OLIVES

Olives are loaded with antioxidants, such as vitamin E, which helps to protect bones. Olives also contain 11–15% fat, 74% of which is oleic acid, a type of monounsaturated fatty acid. It is the main component of olive oil.

Incorporate olives into your diet by adding them to salads or using them as dips, pizza toppings or simply on their own as a snack.



FUN FACTS!

The 24 hour clock!

We spend about one-third of our time on planet Earth asleep. Until 25 years ago, scientists knew little about this nighttime habit of ours.

Sleep disorders specialist Michelle Drerup, PsyD, shares some curious and fantastic facts about sleep.

Research shows that in the days leading up to a full moon, people go to bed later and sleep less, although the reasons are unclear.

If it takes you less than five minutes to fall asleep at night, you're probably sleep-deprived. Ideally, falling asleep should take 10 to 15 minutes.

Sea otters hold hands when they sleep so they don't drift away from each other.

Tiredness peaks twice a day: Around 2 a.m. and 2 p.m. for most people. That's why you're less alert after lunch.

Have trouble waking up on Monday morning? Blame "social jet lag" from your altered weekend



sleep schedule.

We are the only mammals that willingly delay sleep.

Stress, physical or mental illness, living or sleeping arrangements, family history, shift work, diet and exercise habits can all contribute to insomnia.

Insomnia is not defined by the sleep you lose each night, but by the drowsiness, difficulty concentrating, headaches, irritability and other problems it can cause each day.

Being awake for 16 hours straight decreases your performance as much as if your blood alcohol level were .05% (the

legal limit is .08%).

In the 17th century, getting up in the middle of the night was normal. People slept in two segments divided by an hour or two of alertness (time for reading, praying, or socializing with others).

Going without sleep is likely to make you hungry as levels of leptin, an appetite-regulating hormone, fall.

One job in early English mill and factory towns was to knock on people's windows to wake them up for work.

Sleeping on the job is less of a problem in Japan. Companies may accept it as a

sign of exhaustion from overwork.

Insomnia is often a normal part of grieving. Taking sleeping pills can disrupt this natural process.

Regular exercise usually improves your sleep patterns. Strenuous exercise right before bed may keep you awake.

Today, 75% of us dream in color. Before color television, just 15% of us did.

Whales and dolphins literally fall half asleep. Each side of their brain takes turns so they can come up for air.

One of our biggest sleep distractions is 24-hour internet access.



Expensive Liquid!



DID YOU KNOW?

The most expensive liquid in the world is scorpion venom. Costing \$39,000,000 (\$39 million) per gallon.



Bloodless Cornea!



DID YOU KNOW?

THE ONLY PART OF THE BODY THAT HAS NO BLOOD IS THE CORNEA OF THE EYE. IT RECEIVES OXYGEN DIRECTLY FROM THE AIR.

COLOR ME



RES PUBLICA

Fuel-price-smoothing mechanism: The 'best' among bad options

By Dyon A. Elliott

Policy measures to smooth fuel prices are hardly without controversy. The first hurdle to overcome is the debate on whether or not such policies are even desirable. The fact is, many economists and policy analysts hold the evidenced-backed view that governments should not subsidize fuel.

Instead, that school of thought promulgates the point that market forces should be left to dominate, because efforts to keep the prices artificially low puts demand higher than they would have otherwise been. This artificially higher level of fuel-product demand actually helps to keep international prices elevated, especially in a global scenario characterized by supply shortfall.

Those who argue against price-smoothing interventions are not economically heartless or void of an appreciation of the need to assist disadvantaged groups. They, instead, make the point that the tax revenues collected should, then, be targeted towards needy households and private-sector support programs. In short, they suggest that in lieu of governments cutting taxes to keep the price (relatively) stable, there should be full "pass-through" of the international prices fluctuations to the local consumers, and the taxes gained should be earmarked towards social assistance and business-support programs.

The Max-Min Rule

Of course, that's the market-oriented, non-interventionists' vantage point. However, there are several interventionist policies that have been utilized to smooth fuel prices by controlling the international prices' pass-through ("pass-through").

As Federico, Daniel, and Bingham (2001) explained in their paper, "Domestic Petroleum Price Smoothing in Developing and Transition Countries," there are three general categories: (i) rules based on a moving average of international spot prices; (ii) trigger rules, in which local retail prices only change if international prices increase or decrease beyond a predetermined band; and (iii) the maximum-minimum (max-min) rules, which sets retail price between a ceiling and a floor.

The max-min rule has been utilized in countries like Chile. There the Chilean government operated the Chilean Stabilization Fund, which had undergone several reforms and redesigns between 2000 and 2010 (see Oliveira and Almeida, 2015, p. 10). A detailed discussion on those reforms is beyond the scope of this article, but there is value in explaining its initial design. Oliveira and Almeida explained the model thus:

"The [Petroleum Price Stabilization Fund] included gasoline, diesel, LPG, and other oil products and was initially capitalized with US \$200 million borrowed from the Cooper Stabilization Fund. The mechanism was based on a max-min price rule set at +/- 12.5% of reference price, which was defined by the energy authority. If prices were above the ceiling of the band, the fund would pay a subsidy equal to the difference between the two prices. In contrast, if import prices were below the floor, 60% of the difference would be taxed and deposited into the fund."

Eventually, the revision of the program saw the subsidies and taxes both being 100%, and the price band was narrowed to 5% in an effort to make the program more fiscally sustainable. See. The thing that the non-interventionists tend to caution against is the fact that when prices are coming down internationally, the tax-recovery components of such programs work fine. However, the reverse isn't necessarily as ideal. Sharp and steady increases in world-market prices can easily strain governments' budgets and create sharp fiscal deficits. This is because in order to "smooth" the price under the

max-min rule when prices are high, governments are expected to subsidize either directly or indirectly. These subsidies, unsurprisingly, come at a cost.

Belize's Version of the Max-Min Rule

Since April this year, the Government of Belize (GOB) has implemented its own max-min-based fuel price smoothing program, which is based on a Fuel-Price Stabilization Fund ("The Fund") akin to the Chilean brand.

Unlike the Chileans, Belize's stabilization initiative did not provide a band, but has operated a hard fix for Diesel fuel and Regular gasoline, effectively making the "reference prices" both the floor and the ceiling. Without the band, Diesel's and Regular's prices have been fixed at \$13.41 and \$13.50 for months, while the excise duties have varied as necessary to hold the prices constant.

At its lowest point, the excise duty for Diesel was reduced to \$0.01. For Regular gasoline, the lowest was \$0.90. Of course, these low points for the duty coincided with the period of time when international prices had peaked. For example, around mid June 2022, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) reported that US price for Regular gasoline was over US\$5.00 per gallon. It must be understood that only a year earlier, this fuel product's price was US\$3.07, according to the EIA. That's a year-on-year growth of approximately 63%.

In terms of the month-to-month change, the average change between May 2022 and June 2022 for the US market was about 11%.

What was the corresponding change to local pump prices? Well, there was none, given the price stabilization program. Prices for both Diesel and Regular remained largely unchanged via the government's lowering of the excise tax. Had there been full pass through, the price for Regular gasoline would have been closer to \$15.00 (instead of at \$13.50).

But please understand. That unchanged price did not come for free. Given that the original excise duty for Regular was \$3.95, the lowered rate of \$0.90 meant that for every gallon of Regular gasoline sold during that time the government "lost" \$3.05 per imperial.

Let's put that into perspective. For the month of June, Belize imported close to 1.3 million imperial gallons of Regular gasoline. At the original \$3.95, the government would have collected \$5.13 million in excise tax revenues. However, at \$0.90, the actual take in June would be closer to \$1.2 million, a difference of almost \$4 million for Regular.

Let's recall that the story, in June, was fairly similar for Diesel, the excise for which was lowered to \$0.01, down from \$3.57 per imperial gallon. That's a loss in tax revenues of \$3.56 per imperial gallon.

Had the prices continued to climb there would have been little to no excise-tax levers left to pull. Fortunately, the gamble paid off and world prices for energy started to decline, with the EIA already placing Regular gasoline in the US at US\$3.65 as of September 19th.

On the Way Down

The Price Stabilization Fund ("The Fund")'s capitalization is at the heart of the program. Therefore, as prices fall internationally, the max-min design of the Fund requires that it be replenished by matching increases in the excise duties charged. It is for this reason that the excise on Regular gasoline, for instance, as of September 3rd, 2022, has climbed to BZ\$4.41, a figure that is roughly 12% above the \$3.95 per imperial gallon that had been in place since 2017.

While clearly unpopular with average consumers who figure that prices should come down, the fact of the matter is that the Fund must be replenished for

the max-min-styled program to work. In many ways, it is literally the price paid for stability at the pumps.

Loss and Recovery

One way to look at things is to say that with all the excise tax reductions between April and August, on average, GOB had forgone about \$1.28 per imperial gallon of Regular gasoline. This amounts to an estimated loss in potential excise-tax revenues of about \$9.1 million on Regular fuel alone for those five months.

If the goal is to replenish the Fund within the short term, even if the excise was raised to \$5.23 per imperial gallon, it could take approximately an additional five months or more, all things remaining constant, before that forgone sum is recovered as it pertains specifically to Regular gasoline.

Of course, for Premium fuel no such recovery is necessary, because this product's price was left to the ebbs and flows of the market, a fact that would make the non-interventionists proud. It is for this reason that in recent weeks, Premium's pump price has dipped from \$17.50 to \$16.60.

Was it the 'Best' Policy Choice?

In matters of public policy, "best" is quite the subjective term. Frankly, policies can only be judged on the degree to which they achieve their objectives and solve the identified problem. Consequently, one must ask what "problem" was the smoothing program intended to solve. Honestly, the answer is in the very description of the program: Price stabilization and/or price "smoothing."

Did the price-stabilization program steady prices for the relevant fuel products? The conspicuous answer is "Yes."

With all policy options, there's always the question of fiscal sustainability. Was it sustainable? In theory, "yes, it is." However, it must be understood that the recovery elements for The Fund only works as long as the prices trend on the low side. Chile had learnt this lesson the hard way in the early 2000's, when energy prices were relatively high. For now, with lower international prices, the Fund must strike while the proverbial iron is hot, because a blend of geopolitical and economic events could easily disrupt those trends, yet again.

Naturally, problem definitions exist in the normative space. Someone could argue that the chief problem was not to simply "stabilize" prices, but to provide relief for the disadvantaged. That would suggest a strategy that applied the market-based logic that would have seen tax revenues directed towards social assistance programs and business-support initiatives where needed. That, too, would be a sound "redistributive" argument to make.

However, in Belize's political space, the discussion is not between "smoothing" and market-supported "redistributive" strategies. The rhetorical call is seemingly for both to somehow exist simultaneously. That is to say, the call has been for government to BOTH lower (subsidize) fuel prices and, at the same time, provide the social assistance programs. The latter are transfer programs that are by nature costly ventures.

Fundamentally, the question of "best," as was said before is qualitative. But, it is possible to say that among a series of bad options, the goal was to choose the policy path that could be considered the least "bad" among the list of bad choices from among which to select.

Disclaimer: the opinions expressed by our columnists are theirs alone, and are not necessarily reflective of the newspaper's stance on the issues touched. We believe it is critical that our columnists be allowed freedom to generate discussion through their expressions on any number of topics.

The Belizean Revolution

By Fr. Scott Giuliani, SOLT

“Valiant and Bold, Proud and Strong! Belize Rebounds @ 41!” What makes Belize strong? God blesses us. “If the Lord does not build the house, in vain do its builders labor” If we reject faith or the blessing of God by turning from virtue to vice, we lose all strength. We must remember Belize is valiant and bold because Belizeans are to be revolutionaries under God. In the land of the free, Hon George Price saw every generation to take part in a revolution of peace. At the wreath

laying ceremony at the grave of Hon. George Price, Prime Minister John Briceno reminded Belizeans, that “the peaceful, constructive, Belizean revolution can only be fulfilled when we truly become a nation of free people whose heart beats with social justice.” The constitution reminds us that people and institutions are free only when “freedom is founded upon respect for moral and spiritual values, and upon the rule of law.” Once morality is considered personal preference, as promoted by the new ideologies of this generation, and the rule of law becomes the arbitrary will of

those of influence, the protections in law that keep Belize free will erode, and there will be nothing to protect Belize from the effects of ideological colonization. The peaceful, constructive revolution would be lost. When Hon.

we will overcome,” he understood the risk of every independent nation falling prey to ideologies and losing their freedom. The National Prayer opens our heart to the “might of truth and the grace of God” and is the gift that opens the heart

Although the prayer calls on divine assistance, the expectation is not that these virtues will fall from heaven without our participation. On the contrary, we recognize that “by the might of Truth and the Grace of God,” each one of us is to use one’s gifts to build a civilization of love in Belize.

George Price said in an interview late in his life, “...look to our National Prayer and follow and protect our constitution and

of each generation of Belizeans to take part in this peaceful, constructive revolution. The National

Prayer has three main sections. The beginning addresses the Triune God, the closing reveals the hope we have to reach heaven, and in the heart of the prayer are particular petitions for the nation. The first section is calling for protection and assistance from the Almighty God, revealed as the Most Holy Trinity through Jesus Christ. This Christian prayer has Christ at the heart, and therefore is rooted in the incarnation of God as man. This profound Christian mystery forever professes the transcendent dignity of the human body, and the unbreakable bond between heaven and earth. Ideologies of gender that deny the body or its transcendence, is incompatible with the Christian faith, universal human rights and the land of the free. Saint John Paul II, in his social justice teaching, Centesimus Annus, explains, “The root of modern totalitarianism is to be found in the denial of the transcendent dignity of the human person who, as the visible image of the invisible God, is therefore by his very nature the subject of rights that no one may violate...” The National Prayer is rooted in faith in Jesus Christ, and it is love of Jesus that impels us to create a more just and loving civilization on earth as it is in heaven.

The conclusion of the prayer calls to mind our destiny. We encourage love of country while knowing our hope extends to another eternal homeland. Our faith in the transcendent dignity of Belize increases our honor and love of the Jewel. In the conclusion of the National Prayer, we remember that our peaceful revolution is destined for eternal rewards. It is a reminder to us all that the independence we celebrate does not mean independence from God. The Catholic Church, which

influenced the social thought of Hon. George Price, asserts this in its Social Teaching. “The Church [continually invites civil leaders] to measure their judgments and decisions against the inspired truth about God and Man. ‘Societies not recognizing this vision or rejecting it in the name of their independence from God are brought to seek their criteria and goal in themselves or to borrow them from some ideology. Since they do not admit that one can defend an objective criterion of good and evil, they [assume] to themselves an explicit or implicit totalitarian power over man and his destiny, as history shows.’”

By writing the National Prayer, and overseeing the constitution, Hon. George Price recognized that public morality guides a free society to its final destination. For Belizeans of 1981, morality was not some vague personal opinion; otherwise, it would have never been put in the constitution. In truth, objective public morality meaning “an objective criterion of good and evil” is essential for democracy in the land of the free envisioned by Hon. George Price.

Although the prayer calls on divine assistance, the expectation is not that these virtues will fall from heaven without our participation. On the contrary, we recognize that “by the might of Truth and the Grace of God,” each one of us is to use one’s gifts to build a civilization of love in Belize. So when we list our petitions for the nation in the National Prayer, we pray that the peaceful, constructive, Belizean revolution that Hon. George Price envisioned will live on in this Belizean generation.

Ps 127:1
Preamble of Belize Constitution
CCC 2244; C.A. 45,46

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum, and Mining

1. The Government of Belize (or GOB) acting through the Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum, and Mining, now invites sealed Bids from eligible and qualified Bidders for the Services mentioned below in the table.

Contract No.	Name	Contract Period
59 of 2022/2023	Loading, Trucking, and Other Heavy Equipment Services for the Belmopan Solid Waste Transfer Station Facility	36 months

2. Procurement will be conducted through open tendering in accordance with the provisions of the laws governing public procurement within Belize.
3. This invitation is open to all eligible Bidders as described in the Bidding Documents.
4. Qualification requirements are provided in Section II of the Bidding Documents. Prospective Bidders’ attention is drawn to the Instructions to Bidders in the Bidding Documents.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be obtained by interested Bidders by way of email application to the email address below.
6. The Bidding Documents will be emailed to the Bidder at the email address specified in the email application.
7. Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before **October 14th, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Electronic bidding shall not be permitted. Late bids will be rejected.** Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders’ representatives, who choose to attend in person at the address below at **10:30 a.m. on October 14th, 2022.** Interested public/civil society entities and NGOs may also attend the Bid opening.
8. All bids shall be accompanied by a Bid-Securing Declaration as specified in the Instructions to Bidders.
9. The Government of Belize will declare a firm ineligible, either indefinitely or for a stated period, to be awarded a contract funded by the Government of Belize, if it at any time determines that the firm has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent, coercive, or collusive practices in competing for or in executing a contract.
10. **The address referred to above for:**
 - (i) Application for Bidding Documents,
 - (ii) Submission of Bids, and
 - (iii) Opening of Bids, is:

Belize Solid Waste Management Authority, 3013 Bougainvillea Street, Belmopan, c/o Ms. Lumen Cayetano, Director, 828-4864, cayetanolu@gobmail.gov.bz.

11. Bidders are required to submit as part of the bid “the Statement of Ethical Conduct and Fraud and Corruption”. In case of misleading information or non-adherence to the Fraud and Corruption provisions of the Bidding Documents, the Bidder shall be pursued by the GOB.

Prime Minister's Independence Day Address

My fellow Belizeans,

We gather on this hallowed Independence Hill, in front of Parliament, in the capital City of the sovereign state of Belize, to mark the 41st birthday of our beloved nation.

I am privileged, for a second year now, to acknowledge the presence of so many distinguished guests and friends of Belize, and to offer my heartfelt congratulations to the citizens and residents of our Jewel, our blessed land.

This year we celebrate our independence in a time of global upheaval.

There is unthinkable conflict in Eastern Europe with talk of nuclear weapons.

In Asia, our close ally, the Republic of China on Taiwan, is menaced constantly by the military threats of its mammoth neighbor.

In Latin America, democratic principles are stressed by the lure of autocracy in addressing injustice, while the passing of Queen Elizabeth II in the United Kingdom will force a rethink of constitutional tradition in Belize, the Caribbean and African Commonwealth.

And of course, even as the Covid pandemic and its massive ramifications recede, the demon of high inflation has been let loose upon the global economy.

This demon devours the purchasing power of the poorest people.

It raises the cost of financing to a point that sovereign debt burdens stand at historical highs.

And rising interest rates, according to World Bank President David Malpass, will inevitably precipitate a punitive global recession, and possibly stagflation, starting in 2023.

Apart from these unprecedented threats to people's economic welfare and to participatory democracy, the climate crisis is wreaking havoc in every corner of our planet.

Today our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Mexico and of Taiwan where two separate earthquakes caused the loss of life and limb and billions in loss and damage.

As we enter the active period of the Atlantic hurricane season, we in the Caribbean have to deal with the annual shocks caused by ever increasing violent storms.

An IMF assessment showed that two thirds of the 511 disasters to hit small countries since 1950 have occurred in Caribbean countries.

Whether wildfires and droughts in North America, monsoons and flooding in Asia, deforestation in Latin America or crop failure in Africa, the world is unarguably less hospitable to humanity today than anytime in living memory.

Looking in the mirror at 41 and considering the current state of our nation, I believe that this backdrop of apparent worldwide upheaval gives all of us here in Belize plenty of reasons to be simultaneously proud, confident and resolute.

Belizeans can be proud that our Constitution is unblemished in 41 years.

Six times since Independence, there has been an orderly transition of political power, without violence or even the threat of violence.

Just two weeks ago, a new Chief Justice was sworn in and she will oversee an entirely independent Judiciary, free of political control or interference.

The Belizean public square, buttressed by myriad freedoms, and a vibrant, independent press corps, is more lively and more animated than ever.

In just the last few months, two unrelated national petitions have attracted tens of thousands of individual signatures.

This is but one example of Belizean democracy in action.

These are ample reasons for national pride and national confidence.

All of this is in partial fulfillment of Plan Belize.

Equally significant is the fact that Belize's fiscal and economic health have proven spectacularly resilient.

This year's National Budget, with a neutral primary balance, will see total spending of 29 percent of GDP.

Thirty point five percent of total spending will flow to the human development pillars of education, health and community welfare.

The public debt, at 132 percent of GDP two years ago, has been slashed to 90 percent of GDP, by a combination of debt restructuring, GDP growth, spending restraint and a revaluation of economic productivity.

This year, in fact, interest on the public debt will represent seven cents of every dollar spent by Government.

Our resiliency is home-grown, not IFI-imposed.

When we look in the mirror at 41, Belizeans should see a country on the cusp of being able to feed itself, a goal so many of our peers yearned to attain at the peak of the Covid pandemic.

Domestic production of various food staples has reached truly impressive levels.

For example:

In 2021 rice production was over 33 million pounds

beans was over 20 million pounds

corn was over 215 million pounds

chicken was over 42 million pounds.

over five million dozen eggs

16.5 million pounds of milk

the national cattle herd stood at 170 thousand heads of cattle

and in Citrus, it has been announced that our growers are getting the highest payment in more than 15 years. Citrus farmers are once again replanting their groves and Government has set aside \$15 Million for this purpose.

With an estimated 1,280 acres of vegetable production, Belize is almost self-sufficient in this important measure.

And this agricultural productivity is derived from farmers large and small alike – 14,307 of them, harvesting more than 613,000 acres across this country.

The prospect of national food self-sufficiency has not compromised our sacred pact with

Cont'd on pg 19



CENTRAL BANK of BELIZE



CAREER OPPORTUNITY

STRATEGY and ENTERPRISE RISK ANALYST

The Central Bank invites qualified individuals to join its Office of Strategic Management.

The Strategy and Enterprise Risk Analyst will assist the Manager, Office of Strategy Management (OSM), in coordinating strategy management and enterprise risk management (ERM) activities. The Strategy and Enterprise Risk Analyst will support the annual strategy re-fresh exercise, monitor, assess, and report on the execution of Central Bank's approved strategic programme, and support the planning, organizing, and executing of the ERM framework.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

1. **To support the Manager, OSM, in the annual review of Central Bank's strategy**
 - Collects and analyses the historical performance-against-targets data
 - Documents the proceeding and outcomes of the strategy review exercise
 - Assists in designing and implementing the required measurement and reporting systems
2. **To monitor and assess the timely execution of Central Bank's strategy and strategic programmes**
 - Reviews action/project plans for Central Bank's strategic programmes
 - Liaises with management to determine causes and corrective actions for operational and programme performance variances
 - Reports on progress of strategic programme execution and overall strategy execution
3. **To assist the Manager, OSM, in managing ERM activities**
 - Assists in maintaining and operating Central Bank's ERM framework in accordance with leading practices
 - Prepares materials to communicate ERM requirements to all divisions and departments
 - Assists in prioritizing and integrating functional plans into overall ERM plan for the Central Bank
 - Assesses and reports on the adequacy of ERM Plans, including Business Continuity Plans and Disaster Preparedness Plans
 - Periodically assesses and reports on enterprise-wide compliance with ERM framework, including Business Continuity Plans and Disaster Preparedness Plans

The applicants should possess the following:

Education and Experience

- A Master's Degree in Business Administration, Management, or a related field from a recognized university with three (3) years relevant experience, or
- A minimum of a bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Management, or a related field from a recognized university with at least six (6) years' relevant experience.

Technical Knowledge

- Knowledge of the Central Bank of Belize Act and other banking legislation; Knowledge of strategy management and the balance scorecard; Ability to engage with stakeholders to gather various types of performance measures and targets; Knowledge of ISO 31000:2018 and ability to define and apply risk prioritization and develop, implement, and maintain benchmark standards or scoring; Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite.

Competencies

- Strong Communication Skills; Results Orientation; Initiative; Thoroughness; Analytical and Critical Thinking; Managing Change; Performance Management; Building Collaborative Relationships; Strategic Thinking; Personal Credibility/Integrity.

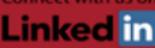
Submit the following documents by **Thursday, 28 September 2022**:

- CBB Employment Application Form (available online)
- Curriculum Vitae
- Three (3) current references (one must be from a previous employer)
- Certified copies of university transcripts, degrees, and any other personal certificates

Applications should be addressed to:

Manager, Human Resources Department
Central Bank of Belize
P O Box 852 or Gabourel Lane
Belize City, BELIZE

Ref: Strategy & Risk Enterprise Analyst – Office of Strategy Management
Email: hr@centralbank.org.bz or online at www.centralbank.org.bz
(All applications will be held in strict confidence.)

Connect with us on


Prime Minister's Independence Day Address

Cont'd from pg 18

nature.

A third or more of our land and our seas are protected sanctuaries, immense stores of wealth safeguarded for the benefit of our children and for their children.

Our recent debt for conservation exchange is now serving as a global model for debt relief and environmental reform.

These are, at 41, immeasurable sources of national pride and confidence.

It is not without irony, I believe, that half a century after the Father of our Nation George Price cautioned us about the risks of unchecked capitalism and unrestrained markets, his caution is being vindicated on a much wider stage than Belize.

So-called developed countries have reconsidered what development truly entails if that development is to be sustainable beyond this year's profit and beyond this generation.

The social justice of George Price's "mixed economy," radical thinking in the Cold War setting, now seems like common sense when we witness the European Union capping the profits of energy firms or the United Kingdom placing a ceiling on household energy bills.

Whether in the case of constant financial support starting with capping the cost of fuel by reducing fuel taxes, subsidies for our cane farmers, further subsidies for our bus companies, tour operators and bakers, Belize can be proud that our public policy makes creative accommodations for the common good, notwithstanding external pressures.

Of course, a nation's life, its evolution, does not end at 41, and pride and confidence must, as I said earlier, be matched with resolve to address those facets of national development that remain unconquered.

And it is this requisite resolve that has led to the launch of the People's Constitution Commission, whose work shall commence shortly, to consult far and wide and to recommend constitutional changes that will enhance national unity and upliftment as well as good governance.

It is our resolve to peacefully secure every square inch of territory, land and sea that led us, upon approval in a referendum, to the ICJ for final determination of any claim to Belize by Guatemala.

We are also resolute in rolling back the plague of poverty, so that every Belizean can enjoy the many bounties of our homeland.

THIS IS WHY IN JANUARY THE \$5 PER HOUR MINIMUM WAGE WILL BE IMPLEMENTED.

It is why the introduction of free secondary school education has begun at four major high schools on the Southside of Belize City and will eventually be rolled out countrywide.

It is why we continue to hand over the keys to new starter homes heavily subsidized by your government to needy Belizeans in every corner of Belize.

And it is why job creation sits at the apex of importance within Government's investment policy framework.

That framework is off to a magnificent start, with 332 million dollars of new foreign direct investment anticipated in 2022, principally in the areas of tourism, agriculture, agro-processing and in the BPO sector.

And it is why thousands of hard-working Belizeans are benefitting from new land grants or the regularization of land titles that have been outstanding for far too long.

Granting land to the needy is a unique transfer of wealth, and one that we are devoted to expanding.

On the heels of last year's historic investment conference, this year, Government is spearheading the first ever MSME Road Show,

to bring the enabling tools for small business to every major district and community in our country.

Today there is more than 400 million dollars in the banking sector in excess liquidity.

The Belize Enterprise Revolving Fund (BERF) will diversify the national economy by strengthening and improving MSME competitiveness, through financing and technical assistance.

There is the earmarking of MSME loans, of which 60 percent is to be designated for women.

The MSME Enhancement Program (MEP) seeks to strengthen the competitiveness of Belize's MSME Sector by fostering exports via the removal of Custom Import duty for a shortlist of packaging and labelling materials; making Legislative changes by establishing a program to grant MSME businesses operating informally a four-year exemption from Business Tax and GST after registering with the Belize Tax Services and BELTRAIDE.

The Government will also award 20 percent of its procurement tenders by 2025 to MSMEs.

The total annual purchase of goods and services for the government is 225 million dollars, 20 percent of this is 45mn dollars.

Registered MSMEs will be able to tap into this 45 million dollar market.

I am confident that the 16.3 percent growth in GDP in 2021 and the 5.3 percent growth in the first quarter of 2022 is but the start of an extended surge in economic expansion and prosperity.

Our focus, our insistence, is that this growth be equitable, across districts; focused on job creating industry and export-oriented businesses, to further fortify the Belize dollar.

At present, our fixed peg is backed by well over four months of import cover.

We are resolved to transforming the national infrastructure, not with extravagant spending that provides one-time jobs but with targeted, prudent investments that enable product to market transfers and that build intra-community wealth.

At present, 213.3 miles of paving construction is underway as we expand the Primary Road Network.

239.8 miles of improved secondary roads is this year's goal, as town and village connections are prioritized.

And 11 bridges are under construction, including the 30 million dollars to be invested in a new Haulover Bridge along the Phillip Goldson Highway.

Recently, I led an official mission to Germany to examine an exciting new process for converting sargassum to clean energy.

How inventive a prospect for the coastline litter of sargassum to be transformed into power.

Any power from sargassum will complement the additional solar power that our PUC soon expects to sanction as part of the national generation system.

Soon to commence as well, is a phased, 250-million-dollar expansion and remodeling of the Phillip Goldson International Airport to begin along with improvement to several municipal facilities.

A recent Master Plan for the PGIA envisions 3 million passenger movements by 2040, triple the current level.

A national Ports Policy will lay out the requirements for urgent improvements to the Belize City Port, complementing recent expansion at the Big Creek Port.

And, Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has committed to linking Northern Belize with the multi-billion-dollar Tren Maya Initiative in Southern Mexico.

Tourism, the up-market high-end brand, is Belize's preferred niche and the BTB is

resolved to exceed the 2019 overnight arrivals next year, two years ahead of the global trend.

And our resolve to further suppress crime and violence on our streets and in our communities has never been stronger.

A new radar will help in the fight against transnational drug trafficking.

New intakes to the Police and Defense Forces will augment the already elevated cadres of law enforcement officers and expanded training in prevention and prosecution is being funded.

Pride, confidence, resolve.

This is our mantra at 41, writ large and bold across every Belizean sunrise.

Hoy celebramos la independencia de un pueblo...

un pueblo del cual estoy muy orgulloso de reclamar como: "mi pueblo" Belice.

Un pueblo pequeño que hace cuarenta y un años obtuvo su independencia política pacíficamente...

sin derrame de sangre.

Este gran objetivo se logró con mucha astucia diplomática y apoyo internacional.

Y en el año 1981 se logró una identidad para nosotros los beliceños.

Compatriotas beliceños, como solía decir el Padre de esta gran nación, hoy en el 2022 estamos, como pueblo, logrando lo que es un objetivo muy real y práctico.

Después de la pandemia estamos recuperando y empezamos a lograr lo que llamamos la independencia económica.

La libertad económica, que hoy es lo que cuenta y es de suma importancia para la sobrevivencia y dignidad de nuestro pueblo.

Para nuestros conciudadanos, poder trabajar o poder ganarse la vida en su propia empresa, por muy pequeña que sea, es un sueño y una aspiración general.

Es por lo que este gobierno ha tomado la responsabilidad de crear un entorno...un ecosistema propicio.

En los dos últimos años es exactamente lo que hemos estado haciendo y hoy podemos declarar que el plan esta funcionando.

Con nuestro PlanBelice se le está creando la oportunidad a todo beliceño para poder trabajar de un modo u otro.

Con esto se está logrando la independencia real de nuestra población.

En 1981 George Price, el padre de la patria nos brindó la independencia política.

Hoy perseguimos la independencia económica que el tanto anhelaba para todo beliceño.

Esto, paisanos míos, me hace retomar los pensamientos del Apóstol de la independencia de Cuba, el célebre Jose Martí, que dijo que "La Felicidad general de un pueblo descansa en la independencia individual de sus habitantes" y que "una nación libre es el resultado de sus pobladores libres".

And so, to every Belizean student, from kinder to university,

To every Belizean worker, from the public officer to office staff to those in the fields,

To every Belizean homemaker and retiree,

To our entrepreneurs and artists, salute you today.

This happy birthday is your collective achievement.

This is your day.

By your pride, your confidence, your resolve, you show the world that small is special, that undeveloped is rich and that third world is first rate.

And so with the guidance of our creator, let us march forward to 42 and beyond, with that singular Belizean faith, that unshakeable belief that the greater glories of tomorrow are sowed today.

To Belizeans at home and abroad I say

Long live Belize.

Que viva Belice.

Happy Independence Day!

The Righters Write

Article 16: Right to Marry and to Found a Family

Contributed By *The Human Rights Commission*

Taken from Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 70: 30 Articles on 30 Articles

Most of the 30 Articles in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) begin with gender-free language: “Everyone,” “All” or “No One. But Article 16 states that “men and women” have the right to marry, with the women drafters of the UDHR succeeding in their determination that it should spell out clearly that women had equal rights in marriage, given there was still very widespread discrimination in matters relating to marriage at the time.

Some subsequently interpreted the wording as limiting marriage rights to heterosexual couples, although nowadays it is increasingly interpreted as simply referring to both sexes having an equal right to marry, rather than stipulating they must marry someone of the opposite sex. Various UN human rights mechanisms have urged all States to legally recognize same-sex unions – whether by making marriage available to same sex couples or through other arrangements, such as civil partnerships – and have also called for the same benefits and protections for all. And an increasing number of states are bringing in legislation along these lines.

Article 16 delves into the intimate lives of humans. It says every adult has the right to marry and have a family if they want to. Women and men also have the same rights during their marriages, and if they divorce. In addition, for the only time in this document, it explicitly invokes the duty of the State to provide protection, underscoring the high regard the drafters had for the family.

“Denying people access to marriage ...it’s denying them the status and dignity of being ordinary citizens in society.”

– **South African Judge Albie Sachs, in Constitutional Court decision striking down statute defining marriage as “between one man and one woman.”**

As Pakistani drafter Begum Shaista Ikramullah put it, “it was imperative that the peoples of the world should recognize the existence of a code of civilized behaviour which would apply not only in international relations, but also in domestic affairs.”

These rights have cascaded down and been amplified in a number of other UN instruments: The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as the Conventions that protect women, people with disabilities and migrant workers.

The drafting of Article 16 involved reconciling different world views (the Communist bloc was critical of what it saw as U.S. restrictions on women’s rights at the time) and overcoming religious objections. World War II, just ended, “had shown the equality of the sexes,” said Polish drafter Fryderyka Kalinowska, and it was important to reflect that.

The Article was also a response to Nazi laws prohibiting inter-racial marriage, bestowing the right to marry and to found a family on “men and women of full age without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion.” Equal rights are guaranteed “during marriage and at its dissolution.” This was a milder word for “divorce,” which had caused heated debate during the drafting. Some argued including it would send a signal to

the general public that the UN “approved of divorce on the same footing as marriage.” In the end, divorce was treated as an issue of non-discrimination rather than as a basic human right. As one commentator put it: “No one has to contract marriage, but once one is in that state, certain rights become operative.”

Paragraph 2 of Article 16 says “marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.” This, together with the phrase “of full age” in Paragraph 1, amounts to a ban on child and/or forced marriage because children may not be in a position to give free and full consent. However, child marriage continues to be a problem affecting huge numbers of girls, with around one million girls under 18 getting married every month.

Closely related is the issue of forced marriage, where girls are married off to a man, often much older, for a “bride price.” Faced with international outrage, in June 2018, Sudan overturned the death sentence on Noura Hussein for killing her husband, who was some 16 years older than her. The man had approached her parents when she was just 15 and in Grade 8. On their “honeymoon,” the court heard, the husband raped her while three of his male relatives pinned her down. When he tried to rape her again, she killed him with a knife – in self-defence, she argued.

In neighbouring South Sudan, in November 2018, the father of a 16-year-old girl auctioned her off to the highest bidder on Facebook. The sale provoked a storm of condemnation, including against Facebook, with many people afraid the record amount paid for the girl would stimulate more sales of child brides via social media.

“That a girl could be sold for marriage on the world’s biggest social networking site in this day and age is beyond belief.”

– **George Otim, director of Plan International in South Sudan**

A recent ruling by the International Criminal Court (in the case against Dominic Ongwen of the Lord’s Resistance Army) that forced marriage, when part of a widespread or systematic attack against civilians, may amount to a crime against humanity

was, for many, a welcome development in jurisprudence.

In a 2018 report on the Kyrgyz Republic, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concluded the Government had failed to protect women and girls from abduction for forced marriage and related sexual violence, thus violating their right to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent. It also found that the Kyrgyz Republic had knowingly failed to take effective measures to address discriminatory stereotypes and norms that legitimize bride kidnapping, as well as to enforce existing laws criminalizing the practice alongside child marriage.

On another topic, Article 16’s language on the “right to found a family” reflects the prevailing morality of the time associating families with marriage. Since then, it has been argued that the right to “found” a family implies a conscious decision, so it should extend to rights to plan births and control one’s reproduction – and even to a “right” to in-vitro fertilization, as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights held in the 2012 case of *Artavia Murillo v. Costa Rica*. Also more recently, the rights laid down in Article 16 have been re-interpreted to try to ensure equality and non-discrimination for all people who want to marry, and all families, however they are constituted.

In 2012, then UN Human Rights Chief Navi Pillay discussed how sexual violence and denial of contraception are frequently used against women. “Ensuring that women have full autonomy over their bodies is the first crucial step towards achieving substantive equality between women and men,” she said. “Personal issues – such as when, how and with whom they choose to have sex, and when, how and with whom they choose to have children – are at the heart of living a life in dignity.”

Disclaimer: the opinions expressed by our columnists are theirs alone, and are not necessarily reflective of the newspaper’s stance on the issues touched. We believe it is critical that our columnists be allowed freedom to generate discussion through their expressions on any number of topics.

FORTIS BELIZE

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San Ignacio Town
Cayo District
Belize, Central America
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PRESS RELEASE

FORTIS BELIZE LTD, in collaboration with the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), the Department of Environment (DOE), and the Ministry of Health (MOH) will host a virtual public discussion for communities downstream of the FORTIS BELIZE hydroelectric facilities and the general public on Thursday, September 29th, 2022. The virtual public meeting will take place from 2pm to 4:30pm and will be live-streamed on the Government of Belize Press Office Facebook page, the Love FM Facebook page, and on Love TV. This interactive discussion is aimed at educating and informing residents and stakeholders on issues such as the Early Warning System (EWS) and related emergency procedures, mercury-in-fish data, water quality of the Macal, and other topics that may be of concern to stakeholders.

This exercise is an ongoing effort by FORTIS BELIZE LTD/NEMO/DOE/MOH to inform and educate the public and to safeguard the wellbeing of the communities along the Macal River. All stakeholders and the general public are encouraged to tune in to the live broadcast.

Chickens and eggs still safe to eat

Public and private sector stakeholders in the poultry industry are assuring Belizeans that poultry products are safe for human consumption and that there will be no shortage of these products despite the recent detection of avian influenza (bird flu) at poultry farms in Orange Walk.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security, and Enterprise held a press conference on Thursday, in collaboration with the Belize Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA) and the Belize Poultry Association (BPA) to address the issues arising from the detection of the virus in Belize.

Dr. Miguel Depaz, BAHA's Technical Director for Animal Health explained that in August, samples were sent to the University of Georgia for testing and the PCR tests came back positive for the AIH5 strain of the virus. De Paz said that positive cases were detected at seven farms in Blue Creek and one in Ship Yard, prompting immediate quarantine at these locations. Depopulation of contaminated birds have already begun in two farms, and more testing is being done to determine the extent of depopulation activities in the others.

He noted that the actions being taken are measured as the World Organization of Animal Health Reference Laboratory have not fully identified the virus for final determination because some of the tests that had come back from that laboratory came back negative. Those test results were expected to come back negative because time had elapsed, however, the laboratories in Belize are detecting viral antibodies.

BAHA has placed sentinel birds in affected farms, which will assist them with providing test samples to determine the subtype and pathogenicity of the virus, to determine if the strain is low or highly pathogenic which will determine the severity of the impact on



Representatives from BPA, BAHA, and Ministry of Agriculture say poultry is safe.

birds. Expectations are that, with the low mortality of birds observed currently, the virus strain is low pathogenic.

BAHA has also instituted movement controls on birds, and anyone trying to move birds will need a permit from BAHA, which will only be granted after the birds test negative for avian influenza.

"We are giving the public lots of assurance that we will have this disease under control and that poultry and poultry products are safe for human consumption," de Paz said.

Dr. Natalie Gibson, Deputy Director of Food Safety, BAHA, also said that there is no scientific evidence to show the virus can infect humans. She also noted that the virus cannot survive cooking and would not survive the human digestive system if ingested.

Armando Cowo, president of BPA, explained that there will be a thorough cleaning and sanitization of all poultry barns in Blue Creek, not just infected ones. Under a current proposal the association is looking at the hatchery in Blue Creek could be shut down for

a week, this would cause some supply disruptions into November. The depopulation of birds at infected farms will also cause some disruption

"We are hoping that by the first of December this will be all over; all our barns would have been disinfected and decontaminated, together will all the hatchery, together will all the of the equipment involved, all the trucks that move around, all the equipment that move the feed. Therefore we are asking the public to bear with us," Cowo said.

He added that farmers in Spanish Lookout has assured that it has enough poultry to sustain the country in the interim, with 80,000 fertile eggs that can be sent to the hatcheries in areas that have not been contaminated to ramp up production those areas.

"If there will be a shortage it will be very minimal at most," Cowo said. "I can safely say that the closing down of the hatchery in Blue Creek will affect the farmers of Blue Creek. It will not affect the rest of the country the way people might want to make it sound," Cowo added.



For more information or appointments contact us at 630-8703 or visit us on Cemetery Road next to Rogers Stadium.

 **Anodyne Therapy**
Center of Belize

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- Sprains
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- Diabetic ulcers
- Stress Fractures
- Diabetic peripheral neuropathy
(loss of sensation or feeling)

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Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining
NOTIFICATION OF CONTRACT AWARD

Financing Institution: Inter-American Development Bank/ Government of Belize
 Procurement Type: Consulting Services
 Sector: Water & Sanitation
 Country of project (or Beneficiary country): Belize
 Project name: Solid Waste Management Project II
 Loan/Credit/Grant No.: 3684/OC-BL
 Contract/Bid No. : SWMP #1/2021
 Bid/Contract Description: Contracting of Firm for the Preparation of Tender Documents and Supervision of the Design and Construction of the Additional Cell at the Mile 24 Sanitary Landfill

During the selection process for the consulting services indicated above, under the Quality and Cost Based Selection Method (QCBS) the consulting firms listed below submitted proposals. The scores evaluated for the Technical and Price Proposals of each consulting firm, and their final scores follow below.

List of consulting firms

Name and nationality of the consulting firm: **Hydea S.p.A. (Italy)**
 Technical proposal score: **76 pts (weighted: 60.8 pts)**
 Price proposal: **US\$411,140.00**
 Price proposal score: **100.00 pts (weighted: 20.00 pts)**
 Combined final score: **80.8 pts**
 Rank: **1st**

Name and nationality of the consulting firm: **Hydroplan Ingenieur- Gesellschaft mdH. (Germany)**
 Technical proposal score: **68.17 pts**
 Price proposal: **Not open. Return**
 Price proposal score: **N/A**
 Combined final score: **N/A**
 Rank: **N/A**

Name and nationality of the consulting firm: **Anthony Thurton & Associates/ AECOM (JV) (Belize/UK)**
 Technical proposal score: **60 pts**
 Price proposal: **Not open. Return**
 Price proposal score: **N/A**
 Combined final score: **N/A**
 Rank: **N/A**

Any Consultant is entitled to a debriefing to ascertain the grounds on which its proposal was not selected, by making a formal request at the address listed below.

Awarded Bidder:

Name of the awarded bidder: **Hydea S.p.A.**
 Contract Price: **US\$411,140.00**
 Country of Awarded Bidder: **Italy**
 Scope of the contract: The objective of the consultancy is to prepare preliminary design and bid documents for the Design Build construction of an additional cell at the Mile 24 Regional Sanitary Landfill with its axillary leachate treatment systems, assist the Owner in the bidding process, and perform the function of the Design Build engineer supervisor for the provisions of the final designs and construction of an additional cell at the Mile 24 Regional Sanitary Landfill.

Date contract signed: **August 31st, 2022**

UNDB Reference number: **IDB-P619341-12/20**

Address:

Solid Waste Management Authority
Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining
Attn: Project Director
3013 Bougainvillea Street, Belmopan, Belize C.A.
Tel: (501) 802-1527
E-mail: CayetanoLU@gobmail.gov.bz



Institution: **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)**
 Country: **Belize**
 Project: **Solid Waste Management Project II (SWMP II)**
 Sector: **Waste Management**
 Abstract: **Monitoring Specialist for the Solid Waste Management Project II(SWMP II).**
 Loan No.: **3684/OC-BL**
 Deadline: **October 12th, 2022**

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received financing from the Inter- American Development Bank (IDB), towards the cost of the Solid Waste Management Project II and a Non - reimbursable Technical Cooperation Agreement - Innovation in the Solid Waste Management Sector in Belize and intends to apply part of the proceeds for a Monitoring Specialist.

The Objective of the consultancy is to support the Belize Solid Waste Management Authority in the efficient and effective monitoring of the Solid Waste Management Project II.

The Belize Solid Waste Management Authority, the Executing Agency, now invites interested eligible individual consultant to submit Expressions of Interest indicating qualification and experience required to provide these consultancy services listed below.

A) SCOPE OF SERVICE

The responsibilities of the Monitoring Specialist include, but are not limited to:

1. Review and regularly updated (monthly) the Program Operating Manual (POM) including the Environmental and Social Management Plan, Project Execution Plan (PEP), Annual Operating Plan (AOP) and other program documents to ensure complete and comprehensive understanding of the intended goals, activities and results of the program. The specialist shall undertake his/her work with the guidance of the POM and in accordance with the loan contract, Annual Work Plan and IDB policies;
2. Monitor the day-to-day program activities with the support from the Procurement Officer and Financial Specialist, and the Project Assistant.
3. Implement the Monitoring and Evaluation Operational Guidelines for the SWMP II among key stakeholders.
4. Assist the BSWaMA and the MoNRP&M so that their information needs on the execution of the SWMP II are satisfied.
5. Identify and prioritize relevant information needed to achieve the project's goals.
6. Coordinate and assist in the collection and management of information and data produced and required by BSWaMA.
7. Prepare and distribute project reports regarding implementation progress and project's achievements.
8. Ensure that the Director is kept abreast of all Project related updates and interventions
9. Contribute to the improvement of project implementation through feedback to executing entity.
10. Conduct field visits to project intervention areas and other relevant locations to the project.
11. Coordination support for the independent project evaluation at project close as necessary;
12. Monitor the deliverables due dates of each contract and follow up with the consultant as necessary.
13. Daily monitoring all project activities in order to detect and assist in resolving problems/bottlenecks that may arise during a process.
14. Disseminate project results to key stakeholders.
15. Identify and report the lessons learned during project execution.
16. Participate in all meetings regarding the execution of the project.
17. Prepare the following reports to facilitate the monitoring of the progress of SWMP II and the TC and the fulfillment of the indicators identified in the Results Matrix:
 - i) a minute after every executing team meeting/conference call, assessing project management and implementation matters.
 - ii) a semi-annual Progress Report within 30 days after the end of each six-month period.
 - iii) Pluri-annual Execution Plan (PEP)
 - iv) an Annual Operational Plan by November 15 of each year.
 - v) Portfolio Review presentation of results twice yearly as stipulated by the IDB.
 - vi) Progress Reports as required.
 - vii) Final report for the TC.
18. Responsible for the timely updating of all project planning tools (PEP, WBS, etc.)
19. Perform other related work as may be required.

B) QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

1. At least five (5) years general work experience.
2. Minimum of a bachelor's degree in management, economics, engineering, public policy, Project Management or similar. Master's degree in any of the above or related field will be considered an asset.
3. Knowledge in monitoring concepts and tools (MS Project or similar) for program implementation will be an asset.
4. Working experience with internationally funded projects, is a plus.
5. Knowledge in the use of MS Excel, MS Word, and MS Project.
6. At least three (3) years experience in monitoring social or infrastructure programs, including the gathering and analysis of data.
7. Managerial experience.
8. Speak and write fluently in English.

The Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining now invites eligible individual consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested individual Consultants must provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualification and relevant experience to perform the Services.

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: **Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank** - GN-2350-15, and is open to all eligible candidates as defined in the policies.

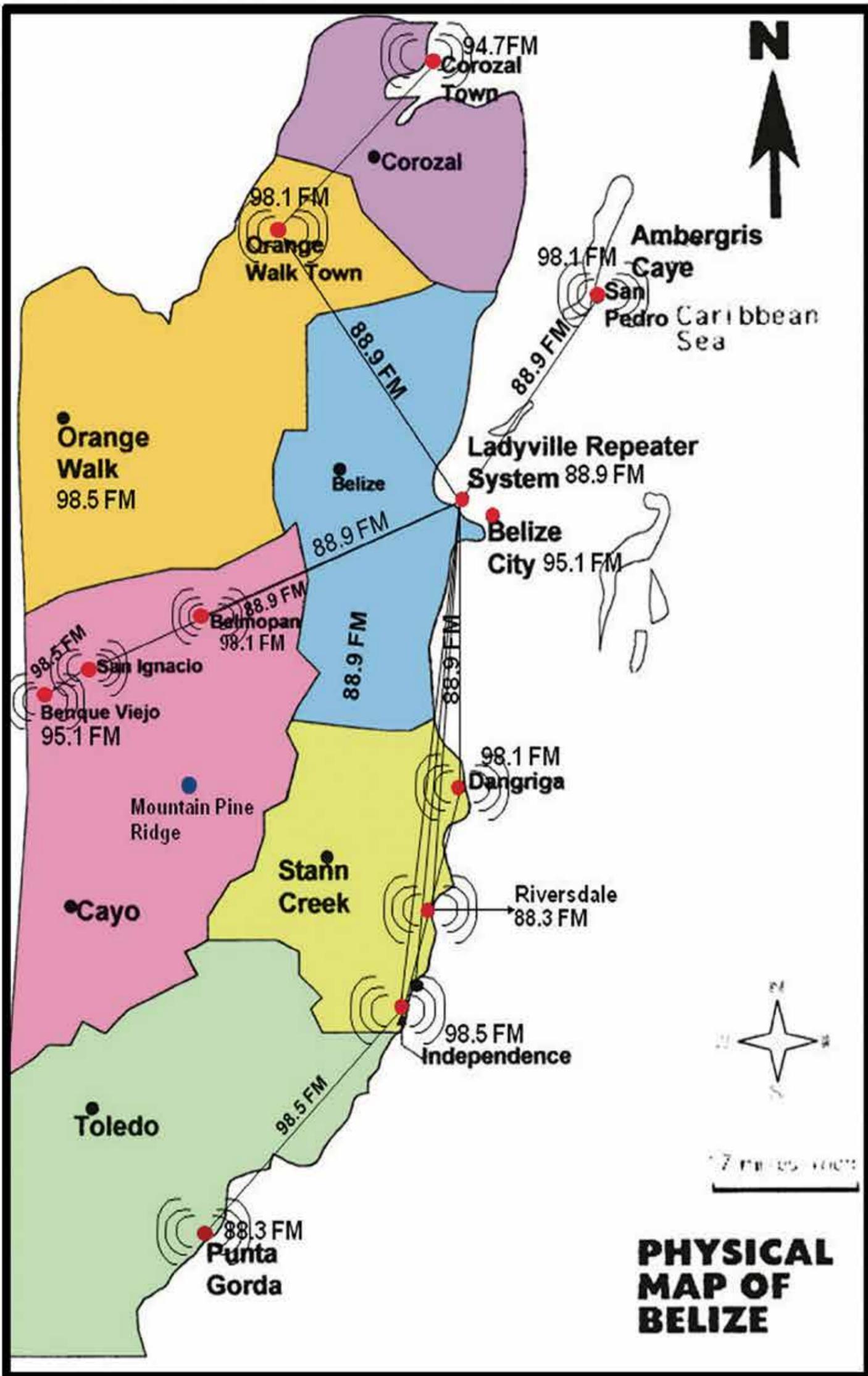
The individual consultant will be selected in accordance with the Selection of Individual Consultants method set out in the Consultants Policies.

Further information can be obtained at the email address below during office hours: **Monday to Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. local time.**

Expressions of interest may be submitted by hardcopy or electronically. Submission must include a signed application letter, Curriculum Vitae (CV), copies of academic qualification, and the names and contact information of three professional references no later than **October 12th, 2022, at 2:00 PM Belize local time**. Email application **must be submitted via one consolidated PDF document. Only complete packages will be processed**. Packages must be sent to the address below:

Solid Waste Management Authority
Attn: Procurement Officer
3013 Bougainvillea Street, Orchid Garden Area
City of Belmopan, Belize, C.A.
Tel: (501) 802 1527 PO Box 285
E-mail: GladdenM@gobmail.gov.bz

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Belize Water Services Limited
and
The Belize Water Services Workers Union



Press Release

September 22, 2022-For Immediate Release:

Memorandum of Understanding signed between BWS and BWSWU

On Tuesday, September 20, 2022, Belize Water Services Limited (BWS) and Belize Water Services Workers Union (BWSWU) signed a Memorandum



of Understanding (MOU) to implement the newly revised Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The signing ceremony took place at BWS' Corporate Headquarters in Belize City.

Both parties, having recognized the expiration of the CBA dated November 1, 2018, embarked on the renegotiation of this agreement.

BWS and the Union have mutually and voluntarily agreed to the terms of the new CBA but recognize that it needs validation by the Labour Department before final signing. Once this is completed, the official signing of the new CBA will take place between BWS and BWSWU.

The terms of this new CBA will benefit over 250 employees for the next three years. This agreement aims to maintain and increase the good relations between BWS, Union and staff.

BWS – Delivering Water and More ...

For more information regarding this or any other BWS Release, please contact:

Public Relations Department at Tel: 222-4757 Ext. 1405

Or via e-mail at pr@bws.com.bz