

Reporter

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Bus Strike!?

Bus owners threaten strike against high gas price, inability to raise bus fares 25%



The Association informs that they are no longer able to absorb the higher fuel prices.



Pg. 3

Belize Bus Association v. Floralia Ltd! Association opposes newcomer's Road Service Permits

By Michelle Sutherland

The Belize Bus Association (BBA) is making a move against newcomer Floralia Limited and has filed a Judicial Review for the court "to quash" various Road Service Permits that were awarded to the new bus company.

In a letter addressed to the Chief Transport Officer and the Minister of Transport Hon Rodwell Ferguson, the BBA—represented by Barrow and Williams law firm—reads, "We have filed an application for permission

for judicial review" to declare illegal and quash various Road Service Permits "awarded" to Floralia Limited by the Transport Board.

That application also seeks a stay of the last decision of the Board granting permits to Floralia Limited regarding, among others, Dangriga Belize City runs.

On Thursday, BBA's Secretary Ewart Metzgen told The Reporter that while he would prefer to withhold comments on the matter since the paperwork has already been filed and the matter is now

Pg. 4



BBA representative says they take issue with the way in which the permits were issued.



In the third week of the Russian invasion of her smaller, weaker neighbor Ukraine, the devastation from the air bombardment and non-stop rocket attacks on cities and towns has been barbaric.

Friends from the west have been sending military support and help. But the United States, the North American Treaty Organization (NATO), the U.K. and the European Union have declined to intervene directly, out of concern that this two-nation conflict could balloon out of control to become a world war involving the possible use of nuclear weapons.

President Putin of Russia knows this and he is determined to bring Ukraine to her knees by hook or by crook. He has not ruled out nuclear action. In fact, he is keeping the West at bay by pointing to his nuclear options.

The United States and NATO have done the same. The war is taking a heavy toll on the people of Ukraine. Two million persons, mostly women and children have fled from their war-battered country, creating the biggest exodus of refugees since World War II.

Defending Ukrainians have put up unbelievable resistance, delaying a 20 mile long column of tanks and troops which has snaked its way into Ukraine to surround and isolate Kiev, the capital. Most western observers are now convinced that even if Russia succeeds in conquering the port City of Odessa in the south and the capital Kiev in the east, her troops will not be able to hold on to their gains. They will suffer death from a thousand cuts.

Economic sanctions imposed by the West have bitten deeply into the Russian economy, preventing her from using any of her large reserves because these have been frozen, and may be needed to pay for war reparations.

With the Russian economy plunging, western nations expect that Russia will not be able to keep up her war effort for much longer. She will then have to look for a way out of her dilemma, but no one knows how long this will take.

Russian troops fighting in Ukraine need food and water and other logistical support. The old saying that an army marches on its belly is still true, even in this jet age of instant communication. There is evidence that the Russian overland supply line has been buckling under stress.

But it keeps on advancing, even if it at a snail's pace. It has become unbearable to watch the systematic bombing by the Russians of civilian centers, and to continue to base our hope on economic sanctions which may or may not prevail.

Putting an economic leash on Mr. Putin and his dogs of war is not a strategy for success. It is at best a probable hope for survival.

What the West needs to do now is to up the ante! Give Russia an ultimatum to stop the bombing!

Belarus, Ukraine's neighbor to the east, has been overtly complicit in Mr. Putin's war on Ukraine by allowing Russian troops to violate her sovereignty. If the United States and Europe start shelling Belarus selectively with conventional weapons on the scale that Russia is shelling Ukraine, that would even up the odds, and give Mr. Putin something to think about.



Gouging!

Dear Editor,

Yesterday a close relative taxied from Swing Bridge to Queen Square. The little ride cost him ten dollars (\$10.00) - \$3.00 dollars more than last week. If that isn't gouging, I don't know what is - trying to gouge the higher price in fuel from one customer!

We too, the spectators of this war in Europe must be wise and remember that all men are our brothers and sisters. In this chapter of world history Russia perhaps is a cruel ugly bear perhaps needing a bit of disciplining. Is it possible that the rest of nations can find a way for them to retreat from their misadventure while preserving some bit of their dignity?

How did Belize vote in the United Nations General Assembly - for or against? I don't think we should have had any difficulty walking with Ukraine considering we are somewhat in the same position as they are - claimed by a more powerful neighbour.

When will rulers learn the lessons that many of us have lived through the past five decades. America intervened in Vietnam trying to keep their people faithful to American values. That country rejected their influence and liberated (or enslaved) themselves. Cuba and Afghanistan did somewhat the same. When will the powerful people learn that you CANNOT enslave a person that is determined to be free. Beat Him today, but tomorrow he or his grandson will rise up against you.

Sometimes people surprise you in the most unexpected ways! Didn't Cuba abstain from supporting Russia; it abstained!

Though I pray for the good and conversion of Russia, I cannot possibly find it acceptable to not condemn their invasion of their neighbour. Russian soldiers should as graciously as possible turn around and march back to their country.

It is deplorable that the fight in Ukraine is so one-sided, with Russia using the most sophisticated weaponry in air, sea and land. But no weapon can match the power of the man who completely surrenders to right over wrong, freedom over servitude, goodness rather than evil.

The world's number one problem is that often we humans choose the easy way out rather than standing firm for the right and justice.



We will never forget the courage and bravery of the President of the Ukraine who when offered a flight to safety by the US answered: I want weapons not a ride!

Sir, Mr. Zelensky, You are a hero in the eyes of all of us who love freedom, liberty, democracy and goodness!

Finally, I hear preparations are being made for this year's CARNIVAL. I hope it will be a real artistic cultural expression as it was when first introduced in the Seventies by Henry Young and Mayor Paul Rodriguez. Unfortunately, during the past four decades it has become a degenerative sexual spree; and if you know the jouvert, the mudbath of introduction, you know what I mean.

Closing on a glorious upbeat note, the government promise of making good public servants deprivation of ten percent is very deserving of a WELL DONE!

Sincerely: Paul Rodriguez

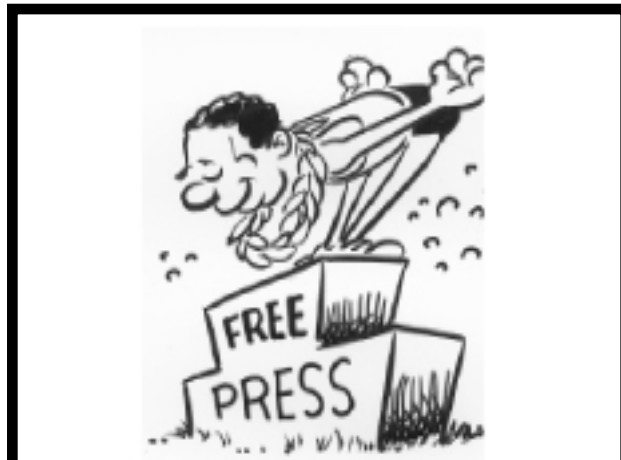
Dear Editor,

In the month dedicated to women, Belizean communities should start eradicating the widespread practice of catcalling. The problem with this action is hidden in its very name: catcalling. The "men" of Belize are catcalling a human being who deserves respect, not objectification. Cat-calling is harassment, pure and simple: an evil which must stop. After speaking to numerous women about this phenomenon, every single one expressed that they are tired of it, disgusted by it, and even numb to it, having learned to tolerate it as an unavoidable part of their life.

A woman here is being conditioned to believe she is more a body than a person, unworthy of deep and faithful love. The only ones who can change this shameful situation are you, the men of Belize. Instead of cat-calling, call out your fellow men as if they were cat-calling your wife, your daughter, or your mother!

What differentiates the gaze and cat-calling of lustful men from the look and bark of dogs who see a female in the heat of day? Will you stand up as real men to protect and honor women or will you lay down like a dog and roll around in the dust of lust? Your answer will affect the lives of countless girls and women. Your answer will determine whether you more closely resemble a dog or a man. Your answer will reveal the strength or weakness of your character. Choose wisely.

Signed: Noe Cooch



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Bus Strike!?

Bus owners threaten strike against high gas price, inability to raise bus fares 25%

By Michelle Sutherland

Belizean bus owners have decided to strike against high fuel costs that have diminished their profits, Belize Bus Association (BBA)'s Secretary Ewart Metzgen told The Reporter Thursday.

"Our membership has decided that we will strike," Metzgen explained. "We are in the process of putting together our plan of action, and after we are through with that then we will move."

Nevertheless, the bus association maintains that they would still welcome dialogue with the government. "We are hoping that between now and when that happens that we at least can go back to the table and sit down with somebody from the government to try and see how we can work something out, because we are very serious about doing this."

Metzgen would not give us an exact date of the BBA's strike action, as he says divulging the date could undermine the effectiveness of their plan of action. However, he did inform that the decision was taken as a last resort and that it had become necessary since their pleas to the



BBA Secretary Mr. Ewart Metzgen

government have fallen on deaf ears.

According to Metzgen, on Tuesday of this week, the BBA met with the Minister of Transport Hon. Rodwell Ferguson and senior officials in the Ministry of Transport to discuss the devastating effects that the consecutive increases in fuel prices have been causing on bus owners. Something which he says the BBA can no longer continue to absorb.

Metzgen said that during the meeting the BBA requested that Ferguson either provided some sort of relief at the pumps for bus owners or approve a 25 per cent increase in bus fares. That request, according to Metzgen,

was met by a flat-out "no" from the Minister who informed them that bus owners cannot increase tariff fares on their own, and neither could he as the Minister, and that it had to go through Cabinet for discussion before it could be approved.

Metzgen said that Ferguson indicated that that would take approximately two weeks before it can be tabled in front of Cabinet.

When we ask him his response to Ferguson's time frame, Metzgen said that the BBA and its members have collectively decided that they simply cannot wait any longer since they have been exercising extreme patience since 2018 when the UDP was in Gov-

ernment. He further indicated that every time there is a meeting between the BBA and transport officials they discuss the same issue, raise the same concerns, and in the end, nothing is done about it.

Metzgen said that, this time, the need for relief for bus operators is critical since apart from still reeling from the economic effects of the pandemic, the price of fuel has seen an increase of 38% in the past couple of months alone, sending bus owners to a "breaking point."

"Man we can't wait

two weeks. By then the cost of fuel would be over 15 dollars a gallon. We need the relief now; we are punishing now, bus operators are taking a licking now. In fact, we have been for over the past 22 months with this pandemic. We were the only industry that was never looked at by the previous administration or this one for any sort of relief. Still, we know that the fuel cost is no fault of the government, but we know that something can be done to alleviate the cost somewhere not only for the operator but for the

country as a whole."

While Metzgen explained that bus operators do not want to go on strike, nor do they want to increase tariffs, neither can they continue to serve the public under the present situation. He concluded that it is time for the government to step in and work out an amicable solution for all parties involved.

"I would like to say through this medium my sincerest apologies to the Belize people and the commuters who will be affected by our actions but somebody has to stand up," reiterated Metzgen.

WHO warns of falsified "Remdesivir" in circulation

By Javam Flowers

The World Health Organization (WHO) has issued an alert to notify of two falsified batches of DESREM "Remdesivir" for Injection 100mg/vial.

According to the Alert, the falsified batches have been identified in Guatemala and India and were reported to WHO in February of this year.

The report adds that the genuine manufac-



turer of DESREM, Mylan Laboratories Ltd., has confirmed that the products identified in this Alert are indeed falsified.

Furthermore, the WHO has confirmed that the laboratory analysis of these falsified products, which the genuine manufacturer conducted, established that "they do not contain any of the stated active pharmaceutical ingredient (remdesivir)."

The analysis goes on to highlight that the physical features of the vials of these "falsified products" may be "smaller than genuine DESREM, and the labels have multiple spelling errors and use the wrong font styles and colors."

Notably, a similar alert was issued in August of 2021 where batches of falsified

remdesivir injection 100mg/20ml (5mg/ml) were identified in Mexico.

In this report, the products were claimed to be manufactured by GILEAD. However, GILEAD has since confirmed that the remdesivir products listed in this Alert are falsified and were not manufactured by them.

The WHO closes the report by citing that "Remdesivir is a broad-spectrum antiviral medication that has been approved or authorized for emergency use to treat COVID-19 in several countries." Adding that falsified remdesivir products "pose a risk to global public health and hamper efforts to treat patients with COVID-19 and places an additional burden on vulnerable populations and health systems."

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Belize Bus Association v. Floralia Ltd!

Cont'd from pg. 1

before the courts, he explained that the BBA's main contention stems from the way that the new company was brought in.

"We have no problem with competition, but it must be done properly. The way that they were brought in was wrong. They were brought in to piggyback on operators who have been in this industry for years. I mean if you want to bring in someone new then you bring them in to build their runs at a certain time; you don't put them in front of a man that took years to build the runs to where it is now. That is our issue and that is our main contention," explained Metzgen.

While Metzgen had also indicated that the BBA was informed that Floralia Limited was also branching out their service in the north and that they were going to take

possession of existing runs from seasoned operators in the north, the Minister of Transport Hon. Rodwell Ferguson told the Reporter that he is not aware of that.

While Ferguson noted that he does not know what will happen in the future, he says that all due process was followed prior to the granting of the Road Service Permits to Floralia.

"We have a very capable transport board and they review every application and determine if it is appropriate or not appropriate. Competition in this country is very fluid and from time to time any new bus that wants to come on the highway has the opportunity to do so because we have a free economy. In Belize, everybody has an opportunity to see how they can participate and provide services to the people of this country."

In fact, Ferguson

noted that from the very beginning when he took over the Ministry of Transport, he made it no secret that the transport industry was outdated, inadequate, lacked standard, and was in dire need of improvement. That Improvement, according to Ferguson, will not sit well with everybody, but he is prepared for the backlash since it might be the only way that the public transportation system in Belize will get an overhaul.

Barrow and Williams closed off their letter by disclosing that while they have learned that the Department of Transport had approved additional runs for Floralia, which are to commence as early as Monday 14th, March 2022, they were asking the department not to proceed with that implementation. If that should occur prior to the hearing then they say that their clients will take such actions as may be necessary.



NOTICE OF COMMENCED DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given to all interested parties that the company

Listeka Business Corp.

("the Company") incorporated under the IBC Act of Belize commenced dissolution on the **10th day of March 2022**; and **Mr. Dmytro Dovgaliuk of Derevoobrobna str., bld. 3v, 01013, Kyiv, Ukraine**, is the Liquidator of the Company, and any claims against the Company should be forwarded to the Liquidator by 30 days from commencement.

Alpha Consulting (Belize) Ltd.
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NOTICE OF COMMENCED DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given to all interested parties that the company

Viland Invest Limited

("the Company") incorporated under the IBC Act of Belize commenced dissolution on the **10th day of March 2022**; and **Mr. Dmytro Dovgaliuk of Derevoobrobna str., bld. 3v, 01013, Kyiv, Ukraine**, is the Liquidator of the Company, and any claims against the Company should be forwarded to the Liquidator by 30 days from commencement.

Alpha Consulting (Belize) Ltd.
Registered Agent




The Belize Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BCCI)

Workshops will be Facilitated by
University of the West Indies, Open Campus Belize (UWI) and
Belize Training & Employment Centre (BTEC)

For more information contact BCCI at
 (501) 614-3138 | bcci@belize.org | (501) 223-5330

Effective Business Communication (considering teleworking and the new digital age)	February 24th	UWI
Marketing and Sales (Inclusive of digitization)	March 2nd	UWI
Digital Records Management	March 17th	UWI
Professional Etiquette	March 23rd	BTEC
Employee Engagement & Productivity during COVID-19	March 30th	The Connection Group
Telephone Etiquette	April 6th	BTEC
Advanced Customer Service	May 10th	BTEC
Service Recovery Handling Difficult Customers	May 17th	BTEC
Disciplinary Action - The Importance of Documentation	May 25th	BTEC
Marketing and Sales (Inclusive of digitization)	June 7th	UWI
How to Build New Habits and Break Old Ones.	June 16th	The Connection Group
Conflict Resolution: How Conflict Can Empower Healthy Relationships	June 30th	The Connection Group
Balancing Priorities: How to Successfully Manage Healthy Relationships	July 14th	The Connection Group
Crisis Management	July 21st	BTEC
Managing Anxiety and Uncertainty	August 11th	The Connection Group
Strategic Planning & Management	August 24th	UWI
Disciplinary Action - The Importance of Documentation	October 6th	UWI
Brain Management for Stress Management	October 20th	The Connection Group
Planning and Decision Making	October 20th	The Connection Group
Advanced Customer Service	November 2nd	BTEC

BELIZE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

Digital Records Management Workshop

ZOOM EVENT
 March 17th, 2022 at 8:00am to 12:00pm
 Member: \$150.00 Non-Member: \$250.00
 (GST Included)

Course Description:



The success of a records management system, both traditional or hybrid, is based in the foundation of records management approaches and skills through a thorough understanding of professional principles and concepts that records are managed throughout their life cycle, from creation to disposition.

Course Objectives:

- Understand the foundations of records and information management.
- Understanding and managing current and non-current records in a hybrid system.

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To register contact the
 Belize Chamber of Commerce & Industry at
 email: bcci@belize.org | tel: 223-5330 | cell: 614-3138

Belize honors Heroes and Benefactors

By William Ysaguirre

It has been almost 96 years since the late Baron Bliss was buried at sea from his yacht "Sea King" on March 17, 1926, without ever having set foot on Belizean soil. Belize honored its greatest benefactor and two national heroes, the Father of the Nation George Cadle Price, and the founder of the National Independence Party (NIP), Philip Stanley Wilberforce Goldson, with a wreath-laying ceremony in front of the Baron Bliss lighthouse in the Belize City on Monday morning, March 7.

The 4th Baron Bliss of Portugal bequeathed his entire fortune of over a million pound sterling to the fledgling nation of Belize, asking only



that a sailing regatta be held in the harbor in his honor, so the secretary of the Baron Bliss Har-

bor Regatta Committee, Roberto Pott, read the Baron's memoriam. Born Henry Edward

Ernest Victor Barretts in Buckingham County, England, on February 16, 1869, Bliss became a professional engineer, but amassed his vast wealth through shrewd investments, trading in stocks and bonds. When paralysis of his legs confined him to a wheelchair in 1911, he took to the sea in search of adventure aboard his yacht, the "Sea King", and he decided to try fishing Belizean waters in 1926.

He became seriously ill shortly before his 57th birthday, and he executed his will on February 17, 1926 a day after his birthday. His will laid out how his fortune was to be used for Belize's benefit, with the formation of a Trust, with the Governor, the

Colonial Secretary and the Attorney General as its trustees. He died on March 9, 1926, and the Trust helped establish several libraries around the country, the Bliss Nursing School, and many other institutions.

After a thanksgiving prayer service led by Bishop Rev. Lawrence Nicasio, the Governor General H.E. Froyla Tzalam laid a wreath at the Baron's tomb, along with Minister of State Hon. Louis Zabaneh, deputizing for the Prime Minister John Briceño, who is out of the country. Wreaths were also laid before portraits of the National Heroes by their many descendants.

George Price's nephew, Dr. John Waight read his memoriam. The Father of the Nation had humble origins as a schoolboy at Holy Redeemer and St. John's College at Loyola Park, where the 1931 hurricane force him to test his mettle as he swam through the flooded city to somehow reach his home and survive. He studied for the priesthood, but returned to secular life where his rise in local politics led to his true destiny, to form the People's United Party in 1950, of which he became Leader in 1956. He went on to become the Mayor of Belize City, and to be elected to then to the Legislative Assembly from 1954-1961 as First Minister, and to serve as Premier until 1981, when he became Belize's first Prime Minister after Independence until 1984, and for a second term in

1989-93. His diplomatic efforts on the road to independence won him many accolades from the Privy Council in London, from CARICOM, Cuba, Mexico and Venezuela.

Senior research and education officer Rolando Cocom of the National Institute of Culture and History (NICH) read Goldson's memoriam.

Goldson had equally humble origins, joining the Civil Service, then he became a journalist in the 1940's, writing for the Belize Billboard, which was the most prominent newspaper in British Honduras at the time. He eventually became the publisher of the newspaper.

He was also active in the growing labor movement, serving as the General Secretary of the General Workers' union in 1949. He entered local politics, founding the People's Committee, and helping Price to form the PUP in 1950, serving as its Assistant Secretary.

The British colonial masters sentenced Goldson and Leigh Richardson to a year in prison on a charge of sedition in 1951, for their efforts to achieve greater self-governance. Goldson was not discouraged, continuing to write for the newspaper in prison. His articles written on toilet paper, were smuggled out of the prison and published. He also founded the NIP, serving as the only Opposition member in the 18-member Legislative Assembly for many years.

New Chief Environmental Officer Appointed

By Javan Flowers

The Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change, and Disaster Risk Management announced this week that Mr. Anthony Mai has been promoted to the post of Chief Environmental Officer of the Department of the Environment.

The Ministry notes that "Mai has over 15 years experience working with the department and recently as the senior environmental officer." It continues to highlight Mai's

qualifications, stating that "Mai possesses a graduate degree with a concentration in sustainable development from Galen University and an undergraduate degree in biology from the University of Belize."

The ministry's release ends by emphasizing what his skill set will bring to the department. "His combination of experience and academic qualifications is expected to aid in bridging the environment-development nexus in Belize."



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

Institution: [Belize Water Services Limited](#)

Country: [Belize](#)

Project: [Independence to Seine Bight Transmission line](#)

Sector: [Water](#)

Abstract: [The general objective of this publication](#) is to engage eligible construction companies to install a new potable water transmission pipeline from Independence Village to Seine Bight Village (Stann Creek District) as per design.

Project Number: [225511171739/ BWS-55-1618](#)

Deadline: [March 14, 2022](#)

The construction services ("the Services") include, but are not limited to, installation and commissioning of 3 miles of 10" PVC transmission line in the mainland and 3 miles of 10" HDPE transmission line through the lagoon:

- Identification of established Benchmarks and Setting out of new works;
- Excavation of trenches along the route, placement and compaction of embedment, backfill, and road base, and reinstatement of works
- Installation of pipeline and various assemblies, concrete anchors, and other components and
- Commissioning, including final connections, pressure (hydrostatic) testing, flushing, and disinfecting.

[Belize Water Services Limited](#) now invites eligible construction companies ("Bidders") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Companies should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

Companies must qualify on two major work categories:

- Civil and ancillary works** including, but not limited to, construction and refurbishment of buildings, construction and refurbishment of roads and streets, major and minor roads chip and seal works, earthworks, fencing, concrete works, facility maintenance, retaining walls, drainage, security huts, shelters and canopies, railings, bins, signage, plastering, painting, etc.
- Water Supply Systems** including new and renewals of transmission, distribution mains and service connections; installation of pump stations; installation of headworks; water treatment plant works (including mechanical/electrical and civil); and construction and/or restoration of reservoirs.

Financial category of the project:

- Large** contract estimated more than \$1,000,000.

Financial resources of the company shall be BZ\$300,000 monthly.

Shortlisting of contractors will be based on the [Application pack – Expression of Interest for Independence to Seine Bight Transmission Line Tendering process](#) and is open to all eligible contractors as defined in the document.

The short list shall comprise of minimum of three (3) and maximum of eight (8) companies.

Companies may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications.

Interested parties should contact the Engineering procurement representative, via email to obtain Application Package and other information.

Expressions of interest and application package must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by e-mail) by [March 14, 2022](#), no later than 3:00 P.M.

Belize Water Services Limited
Attn: Engineering procurement
7 Central American Boulevard
Belize City, Belize, C.A.
Tel: +(501) 222-4757, Ext. 1713

E-mail: engineeringprocurement@bws.com.bz

No busting of sanctions against Russia

By Sir Ronald Sanders

The Caribbean cannot escape the economic and financial consequences of the Russian Federation's invasion of the sovereign, independent nation of Ukraine.

The effects of these consequences are already being felt in higher oil prices (at the time of writing, on March 3, the global oil benchmark, rose to \$113.94 a barrel, the highest since June 2014), and they will intensify if the Russian action continues, forcing the world community to show its displeasure through the many sanctions that have been imposed on Russia, not only by countries but also on bodies responsible for international sport.

Rightly, Caribbean countries have participated fully in expressing their disapproval of Russia's infringement of the United Nations Charter, the Charter of the Organization of American States and of international law by its unlawful, unjustified, and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.

On February 24, all CARICOM states jointly issued a statement, making it clear that "the hostilities against Ukraine go counter to the principles of respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of another sovereign state and the prohibition on the threat or use of force, and the peaceful resolution of disputes, which are the bedrock of this Community".

On February 25, all but four CARICOM countries, joined in co-sponsoring an OAS Declaration by more than two-thirds of its member states, led by Antigua and Barbuda and Guatemala, that "strongly condemn(ed) the unlawful, unjustified, and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation and call(ed) for the immediate withdrawal of the military

presence and the cessation of any further military actions in that country".

On that same day, the UN Security Council failed to issue its own condemnatory resolution because Russia, exercised its veto, as one of five permanent members, to stop the resolution. The continued existence of a veto by any one of only five countries is a serious anomaly in today's world. Each of these countries can halt binding UN action against their own violations, crippling the ability to censure them, as is evident from the Russian veto.

After hesitation by some CARICOM countries to participate in the UN General Assembly meeting on Ukraine two days before the invasion, all of them were among the 141 nations at the Special Emergency Session, on March 2, that deplored "in the strongest terms the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine" and demanded "that Russia immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its military forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders".

It is, of course, right that CARICOM countries should adopt a strong position on any country that violates international law by invading other nations, and by seeking to alter the settled borders of countries by force. Within CARICOM, Venezuela threatens Guyana's territorial integrity and Guatemala threatens Belize's. In the case of Guatemala and Belize, they have both agreed to seeking a peaceful settlement through the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and Guatemala has led from the front in condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine. However, Venezuela has refused to accept the jurisdiction of the

ICJ, and its President is reported to have stated his support for Russia's unlawful actions against Ukraine.

At the meeting of the OAS, where the overwhelming number of countries made a declaration condemning the Russian invasion, I stated on behalf of Antigua and Barbuda the following: "Small and military powerless states depend upon adherence and respect to the agreed and settled principles that are set out in the UN Charter and in international law. When these principles are flouted and international law is violated, small states are obliged to speak out loudly in our own interest as much as in the interest of nations that are the actual victims of aggression".

And, that is the crux of the matter. When international law is breached, the wall that safeguards the interest of small states crumbles, exposing them to the aggression of others; and that aggression can come in many forms, not only military.

In any event, the action of Russia in Ukraine is now so vicious, so inhumane and so alarming that no right-minded society anywhere in the world can do anything but forcefully condemn it. Innocent people, including

children and babies, are being killed in their homes as Russia bombards them with long-range missiles in the Russian government's attempt to seize control of their country. Nothing could justify such brutal and cowardly behaviour.

In standing up for an immediate end to the unjustified violence and slaughter in Ukraine, and for the sanctions that have been imposed on Russia, the 141 countries that voted at the UN, and the 25 that voted at the OAS, including all CARICOM states, were also standing up for the protection of themselves from the tyranny of more militarily powerful countries. They were standing up for human values of the right to life and the right to live in peace

within secure borders.

In every society, there are those who seek to gain from misfortune and misery. Sadly, there is already some speculation in the Caribbean that governments should allow private companies to profit from busting sanctions against Russia by accommodating, for instance, the yachts of the Russian Oligarchs who have become billionaires through their cosy relationships with the Russian government.

Still others complain about the higher prices that they will have to pay for commodities, such as oil and its related uses. But such persons should be reminded that freedom and the protection of human life and dignity comes by defending

what is right and by some sacrifice.

Higher prices will have to be paid for a time, but it is worth the freedom and rights that all humanity deserves. To see the sacrifice for rights and freedom, we need look no further than the courage of the Ukrainian people – men, women and children – who are confronting Russian military tanks and weaponry with nothing in their hands but the flag of their besieged nation.

In the Caribbean, we should remind those, who advocate sanctions-busting for short term gain, of the biblical admonition: "What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul".

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

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

Position Name: Engineering Technician (Building Automated System)

Vacancy number: Belmopan-2022-04

Closing date: March 18th, 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.htm>

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.



MINISTRY OF FINANCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND INVESTMENT

NEW GAMING MACHINE LICENSE MORATORIUM NOTICE

The Gaming Control Board of Belize would like to inform the public that New Applications for Gaming Machine (Establishment) Licenses for the period of April 1st, 2022, to March 31st, 2023, will only be accepted for those that will be located at the following tourism destinations: Ambergris Caye, Caye Caulker and Placencia.

A **Moratorium** will be placed on applications from all other locations until further notice. Please note that this applies only to new applicants and not renewals.

License Holders that received approval for the period of 2021/2022 may submit renewal applications.

We can be contacted via:

Telephone: (501) 828-6704/ 828-9046

Email: belizeinvestment@invest.gov.bz

Facebook: Investment Policy & Compliance Unit



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) invites applicants for the functions of National Consultant to support the Strengthening Climate Resilient Health Systems Project

Duty station: Belize City

Qualifications: *Essential:* A Bachelor's degree in Environment Science or Public Health from a recognized university

Desirable: A Master's Degree in Environmental Studies, Climate, or related field

Experience: *Essential:* At least 5 years of national experience in public health, environmental health, climate change or related field

Desirable: Experience in development of H-NAP

Skills:

- Experience developing HNAPs and conducting impact assessments and sensitivity analyses
- Demonstrable current knowledge of climate health risks and adaptation policies and programs
- Knowledge about health systems' operations
- Experience in data collection and analysis
- Strong research, problem-solving and organizational skills.
- Ability to work collaboratively (in person or virtually) with other team players
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills and sensitivity to political and cultural issues
- Ability to meet deadlines
- Strong professional oral and writing skills, including the development of reports, oral presentations, and technical/persuasive documents for consideration at the highest levels of the Organization.
- Demonstrated ability to effectively use a computer and utilize software programs such as Microsoft Office Word, Excel, PowerPoint, SharePoint, and Outlook. Other IT skills and knowledge of other software programs for Statistical Analysis, Data Exploratory Analysis and Project Management would be an asset.

Languages: Very good knowledge of English and working knowledge of Spanish

Deadline: Letter of application, Curriculum Vitae, and two current letters of recommendation should be sent to blzmail@paho.org or to P.O. Box 1834, Belize City no later than **March 25, 2022**

For further details visit our website <https://www.paho.org/en/vacancies> An interview will be held for this position and only candidates under serious consideration will be contacted.

PAHO/WHO has a smoke-free environment and does not recruit smokers or users of any form of tobacco.



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) invites applicants for the functions of National Consultant in the area of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and Risk Factors under European Union grant

Duty station: Belize City

Qualifications: *Essential:* A Bachelor's degree in one of the health, social or management sciences from a recognized university
Desirable: Postgraduate studies in public health or related field with emphasis on Nutrition Chronic Diseases and Health Promotion

Experience: *Essential:* At least 5 years national experience in the related field.
Desirable: working experience in health services project management.

Skills:

- Theoretical and practical expertise in all aspects related to surveillance, prevention, and control of Noncommunicable diseases, and the promotion of health, as well as a thorough knowledge of epidemiology, prevention, and control methods.
- Ability to analyze factors, trends, and forecast scenarios based on current surveillance systems and possesses the capability to develop and plan innovative and appropriate solutions for their improvement.
- Strong public health and strategic thinking background showing resourcefulness, initiative, leadership qualities and skills to deal with difficult situations and sensitive areas.
- Ability to plan and carry out technical cooperation initiatives on NCDs with emphasis on health promotion, nutrition related chronic diseases, mental health disorders, substance abuse, violence and injuries, rehabilitation, aging and palliative care.
- Knowledge of Global Strategies for the prevention and control of NCDs as well as regional, subregional, and national situation on NCDs.
- Knowledge of health services policies and administration within the framework of the model of family and community health.
- Knowledge and skills in the formulation of technical cooperation interventions and in the development of criteria and instruments for evaluating program interventions, including resource mobilization and grant management.
- Strong professional oral and writing skills, including the development of reports, oral presentations, and technical/persuasive documents for consideration at the highest levels of the Organization.
- Demonstrated ability to effectively use a computer and utilize software programs such as Microsoft Office Word, Excel, PowerPoint, SharePoint, and Outlook. Other IT skills and knowledge of other software programs for Statistical Analysis, Data Exploratory Analysis and Project Management would be an asset.

Languages: Very good knowledge of English and working knowledge of Spanish

Deadline: Letter of application, Curriculum Vitae, and two current letters of recommendation should be sent to blzmail@paho.org or to P.O. Box 1834, Belize City no later than **March 18, 2022**.

For further details visit our website <https://www.paho.org/en/vacancies> An interview will be held for this position and only candidates under serious consideration will be contacted.

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How Empowering Women Supports Economic Growth



By *IMFBlog*

International Women's Day, first recognized by the United Nations in 1977, grew from early 1900s labor movements for better working conditions and women's right to work. Now, as the continuing pandemic puts female roles in the labor market again in flux, attention to gender has never been more urgent.

IMF research has consistently underscored the benefits of equality, including greater productivity and financial stability. To mark this International Women's Day, we present a roundup of our most recent blogs, podcasts, and research on gender.

Why jobs are plentiful while workers are scarce: Prolonged school closures and scarcity of childcare services put an extra burden on mothers of young children, pushing many to leave the labor force—the so-called “she-cession.” A new IMF staff research paper estimates that the excess employment contraction for mothers of children younger than 5 compared with other women accounted for around 16 percent of the total employment gap in the United States versus pre-pandemic levels.

Gendered Taxes: How does tax policy affect gender equality? New IMF research considers implicit and explicit gender biases and corrective taxation, looking at household taxation, capital and wealth taxes, as well as consumption taxes.

Tackling legal impediments to women's economic empowerment: Laws can often perpetuate gender norms that limit women's economic participation. In a recent working paper, staff outline the different

types of legal barriers to women's economic empowerment, and elaborate on how reforms, such as parental leave can effectively promote gender equality and incentivize women to participate in the workforce.

Unleashing women and girls' human capital: a game changer for Africa: Across most of sub-Saharan Africa, females fall behind males in human capital and related measures. As part of F&D's special feature on Africa, World Bank economists highlight how investments in women and girls unlock the region's potential and spur recovery.

Diane Coyle on making economics better: The British economist speaks on how a lack of diversity within the profession is holding it back. Economists need to start working with other disciplines if they are to live up to the influence they have in public policy and help deliver solutions to the complex challenges the world is now facing.

How domestic violence threatens economic development: It's called the “shadow pandemic”—an increase in physical, sexual and emotional abuse of women and girls amid the lockdowns and societal turmoil. New IMF staff research shows how such violence imperils economic development in sub-Saharan Africa. An increase in violence against women by 1 percentage can reduce economic activities by up to 8 percent, an estimate derived from satellite data on nighttime lights.

Jayati Ghosh on unpaid care work: The professor of economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst discusses how our notion of productivity is skewed because gross

domestic product measures fail to capture unpaid work, primarily by women, caring for children, the elderly and other populations.

Advancing gender equality through climate action: When climate adaptation intervention ignores gender inequalities—including reduced access to education and employment—it only encourages new types of exclusion. Anne-Marie Trevelyan, the United Kingdom's international champion on adaptation and resilience for the COP26 presidency, writes for F&D on why women and girls are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change and pay a higher price.

Lisa D. Cook on how racism and sexism hurt us all. The professor of economics and international relations at Michigan State University, recently nominated to serve on the Federal Reserve Board of Governors, speaks about her studies of how violence affects innovation and economic growth. Cook, known for her groundbreaking research on how racism, sexism and violence impact economies, made her mark as a black woman economist in a field dominated by white men.

COVID-19: The Mom's Emergency: IMF estimates confirm the outsized impact of the pandemic on working mothers. Data from three countries—the United States, the United Kingdom, and Spain—shows that women with young children have suffered larger job losses than other women and men.

For more on how the IMF is working in support of women's empowerment, see our gender page and proposed gender strategy.

Lamanai Archeological Reserve Named on 2022 World Monument Watch

By Michelle Sutherland

The Lamanai Archeological Reserve and its surrounding cultural landscape have made it on the 2022 World Monument Watch list, as it is among a selection of 25 world heritage sites that need immediate attention due to pressing challenges.

According to the World Monument Watch list, the various sites were chosen out of a selection of 225 as they were all identified to be among the most at-risk heritage site across the globe, that were facing imminent threats, ranging from economic challenges, climate change,

under-representation, imbalanced tourism, and conflict.

According to the official World Monument Watch list site the, Lamanai Archeological Reserve, which is "an international tourist destination encompassing an ancient Maya city requires a more inclusive heritage management plan to help reinforce the relationship between the site and local residents." The site also noted that while the archeological site is home to a wide range of species and wildlife it is also being threatened by agricultural deforestation. Additionally, while the archeological site, like

many others around the country, is financed by revenues derived from tourism, it does little to benefit the local community.

The site further notes that the inclusion of Lamanai on the 2022 World Monuments Watch underscores all the above challenges and the need for sustainable tourism management that integrates the local community, ensuring enhanced interpretation of diverse narratives, strengthened protection of the natural environment, and improved local benefit for all.

The Heritage Network in Belize also issued their own press release highlighting the



occurrence and noting that a sustainable future for Lamanai is contingent upon the progressive collaboration and balancing tourism management, natural and cultural protection, and cultural and community quality of life.

The release also pointed out that the Lamanai Archeological Reserve and its physical attributes represent the diverse and contested

history of the Maya, Spanish, Chinese and British descendants in Belize and as such functions as a "outdoor classroom" for local and international tourists.

Sylvia Batty, Director of the Heritage Education Network in Belize also agreed that Lamanai has an intricate story to tell, and the nomination of the site by the group aims to highlight that the site

is more than just the ancient Maya site core, but tells the rich history of Belize on a whole and as such needs to be documented and preserved for generations to come.

Batty and her team will be meeting with the caretakers of the site as well as community members to develop a holistic plan that will be rolled out over the next two years.

Ministry of Home Affairs to host Belize's 3rd Forensic Science Symposium

By Javan Flowers

The Ministry of Home Affairs announced that it is set to host Belize's 3rd Forensic Science Symposium, this week, under the theme "Fostering Community, Pursuing Innovation and Instilling Confidence: The Role of Forensics in the Justice Ecosystem."

The Symposium, co-funded by the Government of Belize and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), would be held virtually via ZOOM and would see participants from Belize and countries in other regions of the world.

This professional forensic science conference, organized this year with support from

Infosegura Project—implemented in Belize through the Ministry of Home Affairs and New Growth Industries in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme—is "geared toward continuing professional development/continuing medical education for forensic, judicial, legal, medical, law enforcement and academic practitioners, among others."



Guest Speakers invited to the Symposium include Judges, Forensic Pathologists, Forensic Analysts, Crime Scene Experts, Legal Medicine Experts, Professors, Managers, and Laboratory Directors.

Furthermore, the release adds that the specific objectives of the Symposium are to

"increase stakeholder awareness of the role forensic science and forensic medicine both play in the justice system; to disseminate knowledge from forensic professionals regarding innovations in the field, shared experiences and procedural successes that aim to strengthen local forensic systems; and to expand local and international forensic partnerships for targeted impact, increased public confidence, and sustainability."

The Ministry's release ends by highlighting that "these initiatives have, since their inception, been oriented towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 which aims to achieve Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions."



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) invites applicants for the functions of National Consultant for the Surveillance of NCDs and risk factors

Duty station: Belize City

Qualifications: *Essential:* A Bachelor's degree in one of the health, social or management sciences from a recognized university
Desirable: Postgraduate studies in public health or related field with emphasis on Epidemiology and Surveillance of NCDs and risk factors

Experience: *Essential:* At least 5 years national experience in the related field
Desirable: working experience in health services project management

Skills:

- Theoretical and practical expertise in all aspects related to surveillance, prevention, and control of Noncommunicable diseases, and the promotion of health, as well as a thorough knowledge of epidemiology, prevention, and control methods.
- Ability to analyze factors, trends, and forecast scenarios based on current surveillance systems and possesses the capability to develop and plan innovative and appropriate solutions for their improvement.
- Strong public health and strategic thinking background showing resourcefulness, initiative, leadership qualities and skills to deal with difficult situations and sensitive areas.
- Ability to plan and carry out technical cooperation initiatives on NCDs with emphasis on epidemiology and surveillance of NCDs and risk factors
- Knowledge of Global Strategies for the prevention and control of NCDs as well as regional, subregional, and national situation on NCDs.
- Knowledge of health services policies and administration within the framework of the model of family and community health.
- Knowledge and skills in the formulation of technical cooperation interventions and in the development of criteria and instruments for evaluating program interventions, including resource mobilization and grant management.
- Strong professional oral and writing skills, including the development of reports, oral presentations, and technical/persuasive documents for consideration at the highest levels of the Organization.
- Demonstrated ability to effectively use a computer and utilize software programs such as Microsoft Office Word, Excel, PowerPoint, SharePoint, and Outlook. Other IT skills and knowledge of other software programs for Statistical Analysis, Data Exploratory Analysis and Project Management would be an asset.

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Our Strength is our Unity:

Putin Chose War. We Remain United with Ukraine

By: U.S. Embassy Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. Leyla Moses-Ones

This is a dangerous moment for Europe and for freedom-loving people around the world. By launching his brutal assault on the people of Ukraine, Vladimir Putin has also committed an assault on the principles that uphold global peace and democracy. But the people of Ukraine are resilient. They've had a democracy for decades, and their bravery is inspiring the world. The United States, together with our Allies and partners across the globe, will continue to support the Ukrainian people as they defend their country. By choosing to pay for a war instead of investing in the needs of Russians, Putin's invasion of Ukraine will be a strategic failure for the Kremlin and ravage the future of the Russian people. When the history of this era is written, it will show that Putin's choice to launch an unprovoked, unjust, and premeditated attack left the West more unified and Russia exponentially weaker.

United in Our Response

This will not end well for Vladimir Putin. Together, the United States and our Allies and partners are taking action to hold Russia accountable. As a result of unprecedented global sanctions coordination, the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union, Japan, and Canada have removed selected

Russian banks from the SWIFT messaging system and imposed restrictive measures on the Russian Central Bank. President Biden announced sweeping financial sanctions and stringent export controls that will damage Russia's economy, financial system, and access to cutting-edge technology. After Putin began his invasion, the ruble hit its weakest point in history, and the Russian stock market plunged. Along with the United Kingdom and European Union, the United States imposed sanctions on the architects of this war, including Putin himself.

By moving in close coordination with a powerful coalition of Allies and partners representing more than half of the global economy, we have magnified the impact of our actions to impose maximum costs on Putin and his regime. In response to Putin's war of choice, we will limit Russia's ability to do business in dollars. We will stunt Russia's ability to finance and grow its military. We will impair Russia's ability to compete in the global economy. And we are prepared to do more.

In addition to economic penalties, President Biden authorized an additional \$350 million of security assistance to immediately help Ukraine defend itself, bringing America's total security assistance to Ukraine over the past year to more than \$1 billion. We also stand ready to defend our NATO Allies. Our Allies have also added their own forces and capabilities to ensure our

collective defense. There should be no doubt about the readiness of the greatest military Alliance in the history of the world: NATO is more united than ever.

The United States has also coordinated with major oil-producing and -consuming countries to underscore our common interest in securing global energy supplies. We are working with energy companies to surge their capacity to supply energy to the market, particularly as prices increase.

Putin's Unprovoked and Premeditated War

This was an attack that Vladimir Putin has planned for a long time. He methodically moved more than 150,000 troops and military equipment to Ukraine's border. He moved blood supplies into position and built field hospitals, demonstrating his intentions all along. He rejected every good-faith effort by the United States and our Allies and partners to address his fabricated security concerns and to avoid needless conflict and human suffering by engaging in diplomacy and dialogue.

Putin executed his playbook exactly as we had warned he would do. We saw Russia's proxies increase their shelling in the Donbas. We saw the Russian government launch cyber-operations against Ukraine. We saw staged political theater in Moscow and heard outlandish and baseless claims made about Ukraine in an attempt to justify Russia's aggression. Russia continues to justify its military aggression by falsely claiming the need to stop "genocide" in Ukraine – despite there being no evidence that genocide was occurring there. We saw Russia use these tactics before when they invaded Ukraine in 2014 and Georgia in 2008.

And then, at almost the very same moment the United Nations Security Council was meeting to stand up for Ukraine's sovereignty and forestall disaster, Putin launched his invasion in violation of international law. Missiles began to rain down, striking historic cities across Ukraine. Then came air raids, columns of tanks, and battalions of troops, all riding a renewed wave of disinformation and outright lies.

We have been transparent with the world. We declassified our intelligence about Russia's plans so there could be no confusion and no cover up. Putin is the aggressor. Putin chose this war. And now his people will bear the consequences of his decision to invest in war rather than in them.

Transatlantic Unity and Resolve Stronger Than Ever

Putin's goal of dividing the West has failed. In the face one of the most significant challenges to European security and democratic ideals since World War II, the United States and our Allies and partners have joined together in solidarity. We have united, coordinating intensively to engage as one with Russia and Ukraine, provide assistance to Ukraine, develop a broad and massive response, and reaffirm our commitment to NATO.

Putin has failed to divide us. Putin has failed to undermine our shared belief in the fundamental right of sovereign nations to choose their destiny and their allies. And Putin will fail to erase the proud nation of Ukraine. The next few days, weeks, and months will be incredibly difficult for the people of Ukraine. Putin has unleashed great suffering on them. But the Ukrainian people have known 30 years of independence, and they have repeatedly shown they will not tolerate anyone who tries to take their country backwards. The world is watching this conflict closely, and if Russian forces commit atrocities, we will explore all international mechanisms that could be used to bring those responsible – whether members of the military or their civilian leadership – to account.

Putin's aggression against Ukraine will cost Russia profoundly, both economically and strategically. The Russian people deserve better from their government than the immense cost to their future that this invasion has precipitated.

Liberty, democracy, and human dignity are forces far more powerful than fear and oppression. In the contest between democracy and autocracy, between sovereignty and subjugation, make no mistake: Freedom will prevail.

Eulogy for Derek Zenon Paul Saldivar

Sunrise: June 4th, 1959
Sunset: December 30, 2021
In him was life and the life was the light of men.
John 1:3



the United States of America.

There was an adjustment to a different culture, but Derek wasted no time after getting accepted to Evander Child's High School, to make a name for himself as an arts major. He won a Regents Scholarship and went on to City University of New York for two years. Then the family faced a huge challenge when a fire broke out in the home. Derek was devastated when as he lost his precious collection of artwork which he had been preparing for an exhibition. The family had to find a new residence and Derek's dreams were shattered and uprooted.

For a while Derek worked at different jobs, as he felt an obligation to help the family. Finally he went off on his own and joined the navy. He adapted himself to military training and endeared himself to his colleagues with his jovial manner. When his time came to an end, Derek finally renewed life in his homeland. He started having medical challenges but that did not knock him down.

Derek had given his life to Christ at Grace Chapel Church while still a boy and went on to involve himself in church groups helping in various ways.

Derek loved life and people. People loved talking with him, He made them laugh. And through his medical challenges, had never given up. Asked how his courage never wavered, he said, "next to God, his family was his safety net." He kept in touch at home and abroad at all hours. After a protracted stay in the hospital, Derek succumbed quietly and peacefully, with his family at his side, as his Lord and Saviour gently took him home to be with him. We will miss his jokes and his laughter. He was always hopeful and thankful for each day, embracing it as a new adventure.

Derek's mission on earth is complete. "On Christ the solid rock, I stand. All other ground is sinking sand." That was a line from one of his favorite songs. The war is over and the victory won. Our happy warrior is at rest. Derek would tell you, "The one who said I have overcome

the world goes before you. He fights your battles with you." Finally Derek has laid down his weapon and taken up his new residence in glory. This is hallelujah time! Sleep on Der. Take your rest. We will meet again in that land that is fairer, where our God reigns!

Derek is survived by his mother, Mrs. Marie Saldivar, (His father Philip Sr. predeceased him), sisters Mrs. Charlene White, Mrs. Phillippa Tillett, and Ms. Marjorie Saldivar. Brothers David, Philip Jr., Andrew, Jonathan and Marc John. Aunts Charlotte Williams Richards, Florence Dillett and Rosalind Meighan and Myrtle Ellis. One uncle Clarence Williams. Several cousins and other relatives among whom Aunt Myrtle stands out as it was in her home that Derek and his brother learned to play the guitar, taught by Uncle Charles (deceased), while Aunt Myrtle sang to the music. Now Derek is singing with the celestial choir in heaven. Hallelujah to our God and King!

May his soul rest in peace and rise in glory.

Health Minister: 'Belizeans taking things for granted'

Authorities concerned over drunken brawls, mass gathering over the weekend



Mass gatherings and brawls occurred over the holiday weekend.

By Michelle Sutherland

for the health system.

Bernard told our newsroom, "I think that Belizeans take things for granted. They need to understand that the virus is still here and we need to protect ourselves and others around us. I believe that while we agreed that we needed to open up a bit, ease off some of the restrictions, these were done with the hope that Belizeans would still be able to abide by the rules."

... I saw images of people gathering in huge numbers, no mask being worn, and while I agree that they were outdoors, I think that if you are self-conscious you would know that if you are in a crowd you are to wear your mask. I think that it is a really critical situation."

The Commissioner of Police Chester Williams who was also monitoring the

events of the weekend also confirmed that there were multiple brawls in Belize City and Burrell Boom which stemmed from the La Ruta Maya race. Williams reminded the public that in the majority of instances those individuals were not wearing their masks and as such posed a threat to the health of the officers who had to intervene in the situation.

"I want to appeal to people: celebrate, enjoy yourselves, but for Christ's sake, let us act like civilized people. We cannot be enjoying ourselves and be fighting with each other because it's no longer enjoy-

able. Some people are operating seemingly with no regard to the fact that we are still in a pandemic. While yes, it is clearly the intention of the government to relax the measures, at the same time we still need to act responsibly, either individually or collectively," reiterated the Commissioner.

Williams also noted an increase in the number of restaurants that are now operating as nightclubs and bars, as well as persons who are not abiding by the indoor mask mandate for being in a crowd, or while inside any shops, offices, and restaurants. Williams

said that he have instructed his officers to be on the lookout for these occurrences and take actions against the owners, either under the COVID regulations or under the intoxicating liquor license act.

Williams said that the police will also be out monitoring mass gatherings and events such as those that managed to slip through over the weekend. The Police Department will continue to work along with the Ministry of Health, event organizers, restaurant owners, and the public to ensure that they abide by the different protocols that are still in place.

It might have only been a trial period to gauge the reaction of the public for the first weekend since the curfew and mask mandate was lifted, but the events of the extended holiday weekend which saw multiple parties, mass gatherings, and even drunken brawls among women, have been a major cause of concern for officials.

The Minister of Health Hon. Kevin Bernard, who had been monitoring the behavior of the public over the weekend, said that he was not satisfied with what he saw and was equally as disappointed in the actions of the Belizean people. In fact, Bernard said that he is keeping his fingers crossed and is hoping that the events of the weekend do not spiral out of control and create additional problems



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

Institution: *Belize Water Services Limited*

Country: *Belize*

Project: *Seine Bight 500,000 US gallon Water Reservoir and site development*

Sector: *Plant*

Abstract: *The general objective of this publication is to engage eligible construction companies to build a two chamber 500,000 gallon reinforced concrete reservoir in the Seine Bight Village (Stann Creek District) as per design.*

Project Number: *285511191974/BW-55-1858*

Deadline: *March 15, 2022*

The construction services ("the Services") include, but are not limited to, construction of a 76ft x 76ft above ground reinforced concrete potable water reservoir:

- supply all construction materials and construct and commission new reinforced concrete ground water reservoir (500,000 US-gallon capacity), including installation of all pipework and fixtures and
- Construct Chemical, Dosing, and Pump rooms above reservoir including Plumbing and Electrical, Site fill, internal road, parking, site lights, drainage and perimeter fencing.

Belize Water Services Limited now invites eligible construction companies ("Bidders") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Companies should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

Companies must qualify on three (3) major work categories:

- **Civil and ancillary works** including, but not limited to, construction and refurbishment of buildings, construction and refurbishment of roads and streets, major and minor roads chip and seal works, earthworks, fencing, concrete works, facility maintenance, retaining walls, drainage, security huts, shelters and canopies, railings, bins, signage, plastering, painting, etc.
- **Water Supply Systems** including new and renewals of transmission, distribution mains and service connections; installation of pump stations; installation of headworks; water treatment plant works (including mechanical/electrical and civil); and construction and/or restoration of reservoirs.
- **Commercial mechanical and electrical** works including electrical and mechanical installation for buildings and compounds

Financial category of the project:

- **Large contract** estimated more than \$1,000,000.

Financial resources of the company shall be BZ\$200,000 monthly.

Shortlisting of contractors will be based on the [Application pack – Expression of Interest for Seine Bight 500,000 US gallon Water Reservoir and site Development Tendering process](#) and is open to all eligible contractors as defined in the document.

The short list shall comprise of minimum of three (3) and maximum of eight (8) companies.

Companies may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications.

Interested parties should contact the Engineering procurement representative, via email to obtain Application Package and other information.

Expressions of interest and application package must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by e-mail) by **March 15, 2022**, no later than 3:00 P.M.

*Belize Water Services Limited
Attn: Engineering Procurement
7 Central American Boulevard
Belize City, Belize, C.A.
Tel: +(501) 222-4757, Ext. 1713*

E-mail: engineeringprocurement@bws.com.bz



Oración al Espíritu Santo

Espíritu Santo. Tú que me aclaras todo, que iluminas todo mis caminos para yo alcance mi ideal; tú que das el don divino de perdonar y olvidar el mal que me hacen y que en todos los instantes de mi vida estas conmigo, yo quiero en este corto diálogo agradecerte por todo y confirmar una vez más que nunca quiero separarme de ti, por mayor que sea la ilusión material! Deseo estar contigo y todos mis seres queridos por tu misericordia para estar conmigo y los míos. (La persona deba rezar esta oración 3 días seguidos sin decir el pedido. Dentro de tres días será difícil que sea. Publicar en cuando se reciba la gracia.

Gracias Espíritu Santo.

R.M.L.

Women aim for Parity on World Women's Day

By William Ysaguirre

Women must aim for parity, equal representation and participation in the workplace, in government, in the judiciary, in every social and economic arena of life, proclaimed renowned Mexican women's rights activist Cecilia Lavalle Torres.

Governor General Froyla Tzalam was the guest of honor when the Institute of Mexico hosted an event celebrating International Women's Day in Belize City on Tuesday evening, March 8.

Women have an equal right as men to participate and



Ambassador Martha Zamarippa Rivas, Cecilia Lavalle Torres, Governor General Froyla Tzalam

were elected.

In the 2020 General Elections, women won barely 10 percent in the House of Representatives, when only three women were elected of 13 women on the ballot. In this, Belize lags far behind Cuba and Nicaragua that have 40 percent women participating in government, the regional average in Latin America is 30 percent.

Barbados and Suriname stand out with a surprising 70 per cent woman in the seats of government. Jamaica, Cuba and Guyana have 60 percent women in elected office. Among Cabinet ministers, only Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Colombia have parity, with an equal number of women and men as government ministers. In the other 27 countries of Latin America, women do not reach even 30 percent. Cuba, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Mexico and Suriname are the countries who are consistently in the top 10 in achieving advances in women's rights, the rest of the region lags behind.

Mexican women have achieved more through quotas, as all political parties are required to have a minimum of 30 percent women on the ballot. These achievements have come through much blood sweat and tears, and much more needs to be done. Time is of the essence, for at the present rate of advancement, it would take women at least another century to achieve parity, Lavalle cited.

have a voice in the decision-making in every aspect of life, Lavalle—the event's guest speaker—declared, and no longer will women be content to accept that their place is in the kitchen and looking after their children at home. The need for change is most urgent in Mexico and the rest of Latin America. Even as she spoke, she noted that there were mass demonstrations happening throughout Mexico, which is experiencing a crisis of violence against women, which mostly goes unpunished, she lamented.

Belize stood out in the entire region for the number of women elected to local government in the 2018 Municipal Elections, Lavalle noted, when women won 17 of the 67 seats, and gained more ground in 2021 Municipal Elections, when 22 women



CAREER OPPORTUNITY



Belize Sugar Industries Ltd.
Invites qualified and self-motivated individuals to submit applications for the post of:
Human Resources Representative
at Tower Hill, Orange Walk

The responsibility of the **Human Resources Representative** is to manage the day-to-day operations of the Human Resource office and assist with the administration of the human resources policies, procedures and programs.

Qualifications and Experience:

- Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with at least 5 years experience in management or Human Resources field.
- Union Relations experience

Skills and Competencies:

*Self-motivated	*Ability to work well under pressure and meet deadlines
*Team oriented/ willing to learn	*Excellent planning and organizing skills
*Computer literate (Microsoft Suit)	*Ability to adapt well to changes in work environment
*Excellent analytical and interpersonal skills	*Excellent verbal and written communication skills

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Assists with the development and administration of programs, procedures, and guidelines to help align the workforce with the strategic goals of the Company
- Assist with developing department goals, objectives, and systems
- Assist with recruitment, interviews, testing, and selection of employees to fill vacant positions
- Plans and conducts new employee orientation to foster positive attitude towards Company goals
- Keeps records of benefits plans participation such as insurance and pension plan, personnel transactions such as hires, promotions, transfers, performance reviews, terminations, and employee statistics for government reporting

Letter of application accompanied by a Résumé, Police Record, recent transcript and two letters of reference should be submitted to:

Human Resources Manager
P.O. Box 29, Tower Hill, Orange Walk
Or email
HR.Belize@asr-group.com



DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION FORM AND ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS IS MARCH 16, 2022



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The **Port of Belize Limited** hereby gives notice to all those concerned that all cargo listed below that is not legally removed from the **Port of Belize Limited** by **Friday, March 25th, 2022** shall be sold at a **PUBLIC AUCTION SALE** on **Saturday, March 26th, 2022** at **9:00am sharp** at **Port of Belize Ltd. Facility**.



Vessel	ATA	BL NO	Break Bulk Cargo/ Warehouse Consignee Name	Drno	QTY	UNIT	Description
			IDELFONSI ACOSTA	160308			
			ROY THOMAS	6308019			
			RED CROSS	6874168			
VANQUISH 146	14/03/2020	SMLU6088777A	MAHOGANY BAY MANAGEMENT	1626869		PL	BATH TOWEL/BRUSH/PEN/FISHING LINE/HOOKS/LAMPS
ALEXIA 30	25/02/2014	POMBZ100845	COLSON BAY INVESTMENTS	698853	8	PL	KNOCK DOCK BOXES
CARIBE MARINER 342	7/6/2014	PEVBZ108321	WARREN MUDRY	724543	20	PL	APPLIANCE
CARIBE MARINER 342	7/6/2014	PEVBZ108321	WARREN MUDRY	724555	9	PL	GENERAL GOODS
CARIBE MARINER 506	22/04/2018	PEVBZ149944	BRUCE DAVIDSON	1036970	1	PL	STC KITCHEN CABINETS
CARIBE NAVIGATOR 561	22/02/2020	PEVBZ172921	JUAN CARLOS VASQUEZ	1207841			USED PERSONAL GOODS
CARIBE NAVIGATOR 354	14/09/2015	CBOG298809	JOSHUA BUETTNER	623737	1		PERSONAL EFFECTS
CARIBE NAVIGATOR 359	19/10/2015	CBOG298894	JOSHUA BUETTNER	632614			PERSONAL EFFECTSS
VANQUISH 174	20/09/2021	PEVBZ188929	RAMIREZ AC & ELEC	1343049	2		SOLAR EQUIPMENT
BALTIMAR ZEPHYR 19	2/5/2015	CBOG298352	MELINDA DIAZ	588203	1		PERFUMERY PRODUCTS
CARIBE NAVIGATOR 555	15/12/2019	PEVBZ170775	BUSINESS COMPUTER SYSTEM	1191495			COMPUTER SUPPLIES
CARIBE NAVIGATOR 555	15/12/2019	PEVBZ170775	BUSINESS COMPUTER SYSTEM	1191495			COMPUTER SUPPLIES
CARIBE MARINER 397	18/07/2015	PEVBZ115232	FULTEC SYSTEM	814840			COMPUTER SUPPLIES
CARIBE MARINER 375	30/01/2015	PEVBZ111962	HYDE BELIZE EXPRESS	774016			PERSONAL ITEMS
CARIBE MARINER 562	29/12/2019	PEVBZ171258	RUSSELL LONGSWORTH	1194291	1	CTN	PERSONAL ITEMS
JAN CARIBE 447	18/10/2020	SMLU6326563A	ANDRE MAHLER	1715370	1	CTN	JANITORAL EQUIPMENTS
VANQUISH 159	21/06/2020	MIAJ258088	DENNIS JANTZEN	1229497	1	PL	SAID TO CONTAIN PRIMARY CELL BATTERIES
VANQUISH 156	31/05/2020	PEVBZ175526	CHANNEL BROADCASTING	1228645	1		STC REEL
CARIBE MARINER 564	28/01/2020	PEVBZ172046	FERNANDO GIACOMAN	1197202		CTN	GENERAL STORE MERCHANDISE
VANQUISH 6	14/05/2016		STEPHEN MOTT	A42230		CTN	HOUSEHOLD GOODS
PANJANG 3	8/3/2016	BZE1265	WINGSTOP	12867	4	CTN	PERSONAL EFFECTS
VEGA VIRGO 22	5/3/2013	CBOG296108	CITRUS COMPANY OF BELIZE	401696		BX	AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS
BALTIMAR ZEPHYR 15	31/03/2015	POMBZ10886	BZE BILTMORE PLAZA	791704	2	CTN	LAMP SHADES
			MSL LOGISTICS	936815		BX	
VANTAGE 65	13/01/2019	PEVBZ159036	BELIZE BREW CO. LTD.	1103999	1	PL	DIVERGAN-RS DRUMS
CORONA 19	18/12/2015	PEVBZ120502	BELIZE OCEAN CLUB LTD.	850246		BX	GENERAL GOODS
CARIBE MARINER 455	5/12/2016	CBOU12296405	GUERRA ENGINEERING	6616788	11	PC	HAZMAT
JAN CARIBE 434	12/7/2020	PEVBZ176407	JEFFREY DENNIS PIERCE	1232608	4	BX, PL	FURNITURE
VANTAGE 55	30/09/2018	SMLU5417177A	SUGAR FIX BAKERY	1486032	3	BX, PL	RESTURANT EQ SUPLIES
CRIBE MARINER 585	1/11/2020	PEVBZ179578	IONIE SLUSHER	1264936		BX	CLOTHING TV
JAN CARIBE 450	22/11/2020	PEVBZ180164	KEAGAN MOORE	1266236	11	PL	BELT PRIME
CARIBE MARINER 590	13/12/2020	PEVBZ180694	ROGER GABOUREL	1276472		PL	HOUSEHOLD GOODS



VACANCY: JOB OPPORTUNITY

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

ASSISTANT OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR

Reports to: Cargo Operations Manager

Summary of Responsibilities: The Assistant Operations Supervisor will report to the Cargo Operations Manager and will assist with the supervision of all container movement and operations personnel. He or she will be responsible for preparing vessel worked forms to Accounts Department for billing and statistical/Operational reports. Able to check reefer plugins, read and calculate charges. Learn newly implemented Octopi Terminal Operating System, *training to be provided*. Assist COM with preparing gang order for vessels and reefer cargo information. This post is fun and challenging, come prepared for a new venture.

Job Responsibilities:

Summary of Responsibilities: The Assistant Operations Supervisor will report to the Cargo Operations Manager (COM) and will assist with the supervision of all container movement and operations personnel. He or she will be responsible for preparing vessel worked forms to Accounts Department for billing and statistical/Operational reports. Able to check reefer plugins, read and calculate charges. Utilize newly implemented Octopi Terminal Operating System (TOS), inhouse training and opportunity for ongoing self-development to be provided.

Assist COM with preparing gang order for vessels, berth planning, staff scheduling and reefer cargo information.

Leadership Responsibilities:

- Attract, develop, grow and retain the best talents and fill the leadership pipeline.
- Organize, balance and schedule workloads within the department.
- Prioritize, delegate, and set performance objectives.
- Follow-up on performance, provide quality feedback, and objectively appraise differentiated performance levels.
- Empower and inspire staff to achieve high levels of motivation and employee engagement.
- Ensure zero harm, improve safe working processes.
- Provide timely reports for all accidents, incidents and disciplinary incidents.
- Understand Customer requirements and drive the department to achieve these on a consistent basis.
- Track and manage variable expenditure to avoid all cost waste and reduce costs to the bare minimum.
- Continuously lean, streamline, and improve processes.
- Leverage relevant technology to automate processes.
- Maintain high levels of data quality for data and information and reports provided to other functions.

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Remain vigilant and immediately take action in the event any personnel, customers or visitors to the terminal are not wearing PPE and/or any unsafe acts are witnessed.
- Assist with supervising of the movement of inbound and outbound of all containers and break bulk/bulk cargoes.
- Assist with supervising of personnel working in the port compound, container yard and pier.
- Assist with the input, processing and verification of correct and complete upload of vessel and cargo information into the TOS in preparation of vessel arrival. Reconcile planned and executed work prior vessel departure. Provide relief at Gate-In and Gate-Out processes as required.
- Develop and implement a systematic yard plan to accommodate perma cargo flows into and out of the yard; modify as required to meet actual vessel cargo fluctuations.
- Plan, sequence, execute and monitor cargo discharge and load, into and out of the yard in an optimized manner.
- Generate and execute work queues for yard stacker operators; discharge and load; monitor execution.
- Assist with the preparation of gang order for vessels.
- Assist with the preparation and daily maintenance of the staff roster; aligning anticipated operations manning requirements with projected vessel movements, distributing regularly (daily if required).
- Assist with the preparation and daily maintenance and distribution of the Berth Plan.
- Provide relief at Gate-In and Gate-Out processes as required.
- Provide relief at Front-Desk release processes as required.
- Check and sign delivery orders for authenticity to load direct delivery containers.
- Assist with the supervising of the loading and unloading of containers and break-bulk vessels in compound/pierhead.
- Provide reports of vessels worked to Accounts Department for billing.
- Provide reports (work logs) of vessels worked for operations statistics.
- Check and prepare reefer cargo information. Check reefer plug-ins, reading and calculate charges.
- Develop and maintain operational data and operational reporting.

Innovation & Productivity Improvements

- Learn "Octopi" Terminal Operating System (TOS). Initial basic training is to be provided and an inquisitive mind is required to continually learn, adopt and implement new features released within the TOS software on an ongoing basis. Strive to realize both the TOS's and the organization's full potential.
- Proactively drive efficiency and productivity and provide suggestions and recommendations to the Supervisors for continuous improvements.
- Develop and maintain updated processes and procedures for all tasks so that work is 100% standardized.
- Actively seek opportunities to drive innovation and realize efficiencies in the standardized work.
- Ensure all general work areas in a clean, tidy and hazard free condition.
- Any other duties and functions, of a related nature that may be assigned from time to time by the Cargo Operations Manager.

Requirements:

- Demonstratable supervisory and leadership skills required
- Proactive in addressing safety issues, hazardous practices and operational emergencies
- Ability to challenge standard practice and drive operational improvements
- Ability to work independently
- Able to work flexible hours
- Strong mathematical and analytical skills, critical thinking
- Microsoft office proficiency required
- Computer literacy including familiarity with data base entry and reporting, TOS utilization.

Job qualifications/Requirements:

- Experience in Cargo & Container Operations, Production or similar would be an asset.
- Associates Degree or higher
- Math & English CXC passes would be an asset.
- Experience supervising a blue-collar team would be an asset.

Skills/Competencies:

- Ability to work independently
- Ability to work flexible working hours
- Math and analytical skills required.
- Supervisory and leadership skills required.
- Pro-activeness required.
- Microsoft office proficiency required.

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

To Apply:

Provide updated resume, cover letter (addressed to Human Resource Manager), copy of valid social security card, Valid police record, name and phone number of two (2) previous employers and a copy of COVID vaccination card.

Applications should be emailed to:

jobapplications@portofbelize.com

Closing date for receipt of applications is Friday, March 25th, 2022

'Ganja' Bill to be introduced in the House

By Javan Flowers

Cabinet gave its recommendation for the introduction of the "Cannabis Control and Licensing Bill 2022" at the next sitting of the House of Representatives, the government announced via this week's Cabinet brief.

"The adoption of the Cannabis Control Bill will provide for the control and licensing of the Cannabis industry and to establish the necessary legislative framework to govern and regulate the cultivation, processing, distribution, and delivery of Cannabis products for adult use only," the brief explained.

While the opening up of the Cannabis industry is highly anticipated by supporters, financial sector stakeholders have expressed a degree of disquiet. Recently, The Reporter interviewed the former Central Bank Governor Mr. Glen Ysaguirre and Heritage Bank's Managing Director Mr. Steven Duncan, who both questioned whether the industry would be able to utilize local banks.

"The challenge I can see that local banks may encounter is restrictions from their correspondent banks to do business with people who are in the cannabis industry," Ysaguirre explained.

He added that even though dispensaries in the United States that supply recreational or medical marijuana may be licensed and operating under the confines of state law, federal law still classifies marijuana as a Schedule 1 drug and considers "marijuana businesses" illegal; therefore, the banking system is bound by federal law not to conduct any business with any entity associated with the trade.

Consequently,

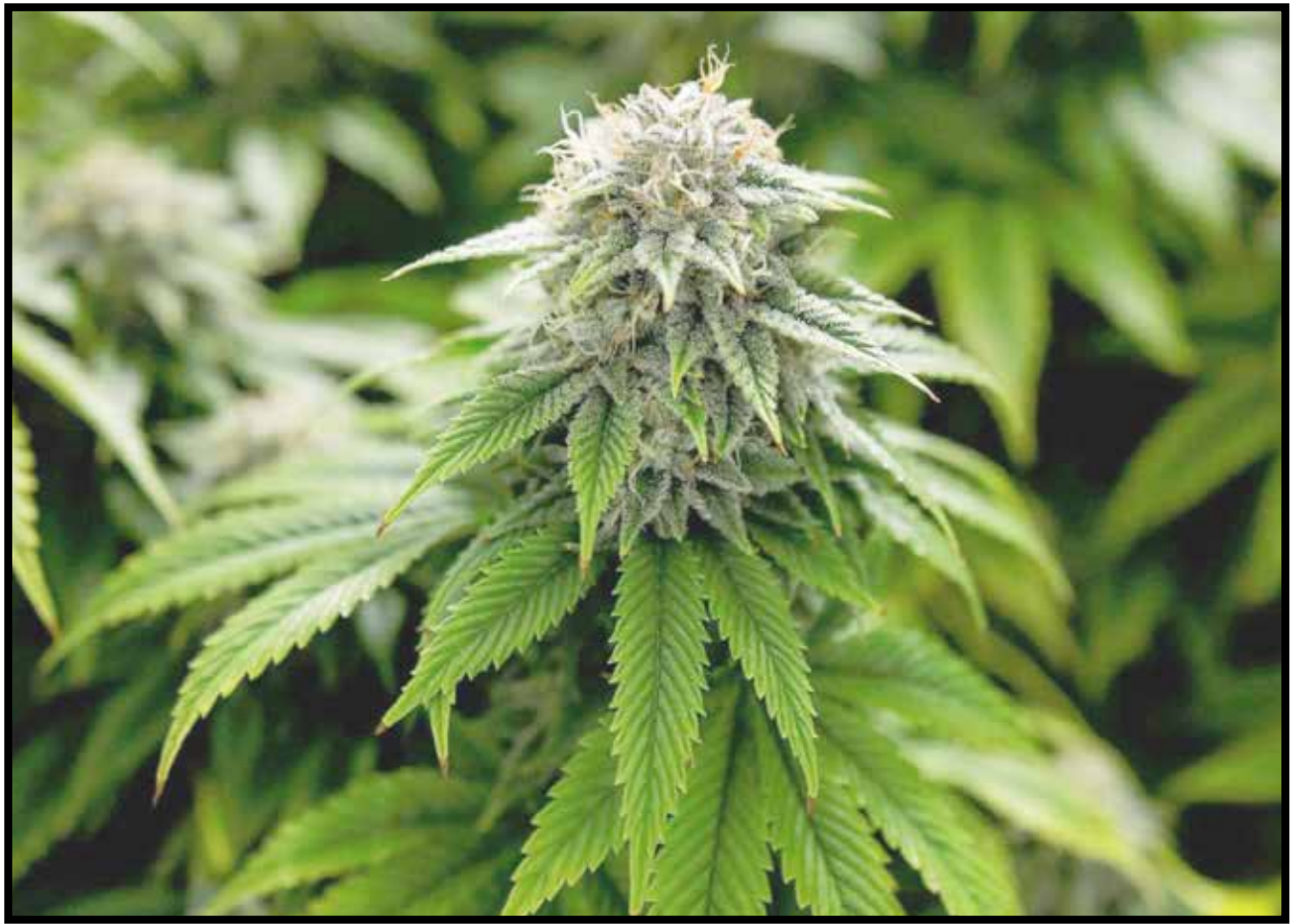
international correspondent banks run the risk incurring charges of aiding and abetting a federal crime or money laundering.

"I'm not sure what type of assurances [if any] the ministry would be able to give the correspondent banks as the Government of Belize cannot indemnify any correspondent bank of federal violation in their jurisdiction," he opined. "If the Federal Reserve or federal regulators haven't given permission to bank people in the cannabis industry [within the US], I don't see them making an exemption for Belize."

For his part, Managing Director of Heritage Bank Steven Duncan also highlighted just about six years ago local banks lost numerous correspondent banking relationships, all of which came without any direct justification. Since then, the sector has been "chasing ghosts" to ensure that whatever it is that they did wrong is corrected.

Duncan also pointed out that Belize cannot utilize non-USA banks. "Two of the three private-sector banks in Belize use the same bank as correspondent bank out of the United Kingdom. Because the US is our country's largest trading partner, that bank in the UK must have relations with an American clearing bank to complete transactions. They cannot complete it on their own."

Given the risks of de-risking, industry experts suggest that it is very likely dispensary proprietors would have to operate a cash-only business and lose crucial access to banking services such as lending opportunities, payroll, checking, and credit accounts, among other benefits.



PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION



INVITATION TO TENDER FOR EXTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES

The **Public Utilities Commission Belize** ("PUC") is hereby seeking **TENDERS** from qualified auditing firms to submit proposals to perform annual external audit services.

1. **Scope of Audit Services**

The PUC invites qualified auditing firms to submit proposals to perform annual external audit services for the fiscal year 2020|2021 and fiscal year 2021|2022. For fiscal year 2020|2021, the audit shall be comprised of two interim audit periods from April 1, 2020 to December 15, 2020 and from December 16, 2020 to March 31, 2021.

2. **Terms and General Conditions of Engagement**

It is the intention of the PUC to enter into an agreement with the successful firm to provide external audit services for the two fiscal years.

3. **Acceptance of Proposal**

The PUC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals for any reason. The lowest of any proposal may not necessarily be accepted. There is no expressed or implied obligation by the PUC to reimburse responding firms for any expenses incurred in preparing proposals in response to this request.

4. **Experience, Qualifications & Requirements**

The firm must meet the following minimum requirements to be considered for evaluation pursuant to this request for proposal:

- Must be a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Belize and qualified to practise in Belize.
- Must provide a brief profile of the firm indicating the scope of its practice, range of activities performed, the firm's contact person, phone number and email address.
- Must provide CVs and copies of certificates of key personnel that will be involved in the Audit.
- Must provide a list of at least 10 companies audited in the last three years and proof of same with their contacts.
- Must include a proposal on how fees charged will be calculated, with indication of involvement/time allocated in providing the said services.

5. **Audit Schedule**

The firm is to work with the accountant at the PUC and agree upon a schedule of activities which shall lead to the completion of the annual audit by June 30, 2022.

6. **Deadline**

Tenders should be addressed to the **Chairman** of the **Public Utilities Commission** and submitted in two sealed envelopes and delivered to the **PUC's office at #4 Princess Margaret Drive, 2nd Floor, Marina Towers Building, Belize City, Belize.**

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION IS MARCH 18th 2022 AT NOON.

Prime Minister Leads Delegation to Taiwan

By Javan Flowers

Belize City, Mar 7th, 2022— Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño departed the country this week in his first visit to the Republic of China (Taiwan) since taking office.

President Tsai Ing-wen will welcome Prime Minister Briceño with military honors and a state banquet before conferring the Order of Propitious Clouds with Special Grand Cordon. They will also engage in an exchange on issues of common concern.

Vice President Lai Ching-te will accompany the delegation to Tainan City and witness the



PM being awarded an honorary doctorate from Kun Shan University. Before

dining with the latter, he will also meet with Premier Su Tseng-chang and MOFA

Minister Joseph Wu. Briceño will attend a conference on the Taiwan-Belize

economic cooperation agreement and future trade and business opportunities.

The Prime Minister's delegation includes Hon. Eamon Courtenay, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Immigration; Hon. Jose Mai, Minister of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise; Hon. Francis Fonseca, Minister of Education, Culture, Science and Technology; Ambassador Stuart

Leslie, Cabinet Secretary; and Mrs. Rossana Briceño, Special Envoy for the Development of Families and Children.

They are expected to conclude their trip on March 12, 2022. In the absence of the Prime Minister, Hon. Cordel Hyde, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Natural Resources, Petroleum, and Mining will act as Prime Minister.

Amnesty applications are now available



By Javan Flowers

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade & Immigration has made available its long-awaited amnesty application, which can now be accessed via their website "www.immigration.gov.bz/amnesty-how-to-apply"

Immigration officials have said the program intends to accurately count our population and gather accurate data for social, economic, and migration planning policies.

The 2010 Census by the Statistical Institute of Belize (SIB) found that 14.2% of Belize's population was born abroad. However, this percentage doesn't reflect the number of undocumented migrants who moved to Belize during the past two decades.

According to the Ministry, the

SIB does not have any statistics on the number of undocumented migrants in Belize. Therefore, accurate projections of social assistance, losses in tax revenue, increasing social impacts, and unbalanced access to social services are "impossible."

While some of the migrants have, since 2010, regularized their status, it is believed that many more have entered the country and have irregular immigration status.

Therefore, following data highlighted by the Ministry "using the figures from the two amnesties and the estimate in 2010, the Ministry of Immigration estimates that the number of irregular migrants in Belize in 2021 would be approximately 40,000-60,000 migrants."



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES

Institution: Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing
Country: Belize
Project: Additional Financing for George Price Highway Rehabilitation Project
Sector: Infrastructure, Environment and Natural Disasters
Abstract: Individual Consulting Services – Social Specialist
Loan/Credit/Grant No.: 4616/OC-BL
Deadline: March 25th, 2022

The Government of Belize has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), towards the cost of the Additional Financial under the George Price Highway Rehabilitation Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services ("the Services") include the contracting of a Social Specialist for one year who will be responsible for the design, implementation, and oversight of a social program for the technical cooperation and loan programs managed by the Program Management Unit.

The Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing now invites eligible Individual Consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

A Consultant 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, January 2020) – Section V, 5.2 Selection of Individual Consultants based on Comparison of Qualifications of National Individual Consultants.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours:

Program Management Unit
 #1 Power Lane, Belmopan, Cayo
Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.
Tel: 501-822-0100/1942
Email: pmupcmow@gmail.com or gphrp.3344@midh.gov.bz

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) by 10:00 am (local Belize time) on March 25th, 2022.

Attn: Mr. Rolando Chan
 Program Coordinator
 #1 Power Lane, Belmopan
 Cayo District, Belize
Tel: 501-822-0100/1942
E-mail: pmupcmow@gmail.com or gphrp.3344@midh.gov.bz





HARVEST CAYE CONSERVATION FOUNDATION DONATES BZD \$20,000 TOWARDS THE PROTECTION OF BELIZE'S WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENT

BELIZE CITY, BELIZE, Thursday, February 17th, 2022: The Harvest Caye Conservation Foundation (HCCF), a non-governmental organization established in partnership with Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings Ltd. (NCLH) and its subsidiary company, Belize Island Holdings Limited (BIHL), is proud to announce it is **matching passenger donations dollar-for-dollar**, which will be provided to two organizations protecting the wildlife and environment in Belize.

“We are pleased to match our passenger’s contributions towards safeguarding the Scarlet Macaw population, which was under direct threat from illegal poaching,” said Dan Farkas, general counsel at Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings Ltd. **“By detecting and mitigating threats, the macaw population will have an opportunity to thrive, and future generations will be able to responsibly admire this iconic species.”**

Located off the coast of southern Belize, Harvest Caye is considered the Caribbean’s premier resort-style destination. The HCCF was established in 2016 in partnership with Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings Ltd. and its subsidiary, Belize Island Holdings Ltd., as a non-governmental organization whose primary goal is to promote wildlife conservation. The HCCF is dedicated to working with other NGOs in Belize and overseeing advocacy and outreach work with schools and communities to promote conservation and awareness of threatened species. The donations announced today reflects HCCF’s strong commitment to protect Belize’s wildlife. Half of the proceeds went to **Friends for Conservation and Development**, an existing partner. In 2020, HCCF was pleased to support a conservation project in Belize proposed by Friends for Conservation and Development which funded the launch of an Anti-Poaching Unit in the Chiquibul National Park. The main objective was to safeguard the Scarlet Macaw population which was under direct threat from illegal poaching. Scarlet Macaws are listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with less than 350 estimated to live in the jungles of Belize. This project was very successful in intercepting and detaining poachers. A total of seven baby Scarlet Macaws were rescued, recovered and reintroduced back into the wild. With the additional funding of **BZD\$10,000.00**, Friends for Conservation and Development will be able to improve the detection of threats to the macaw population and safeguard existing macaw nests starting this March.

The other half of the proceeds formalizes a new partnership with the **Belize Wildlife Referral Clinic (BWRC)**, a non-governmental organization that provides professional veterinary care for injured or sick wildlife in Belize. BWRC works closely with the Forest Department in responding to wildlife issues, providing the necessary medical care and rehabilitation. The clinic also provides veterinary care and checkups for the wild scarlet macaws chicks in the Chiquibul forest each year under close monitoring by the Forest Department and Friends for Conservation and Development. In the past, BWRC has provided basic animal health check-ups for the captive wildlife. The **BZD\$10,000.00** donation will support BWRC’s efforts to provide the needed care and rehabilitation for Belize’s wildlife.

HCCF is proud of its work to protect and promote wildlife conservation and is especially grateful for the support received by the Harvest Caye’s visitors. To learn more about the Company’s sustainability efforts, please see our inaugural **Environmental, Social & Governance Report**.

About Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings Ltd.

Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings Ltd. (NYSE: NCLH) is a leading global cruise company which operates the **Norwegian Cruise Line, Oceania Cruises and Regent Seven Seas Cruises brands**. With a combined fleet of **28 ships** with nearly **60,000 berths**, these brands offer itineraries to more than 490 destinations worldwide. The Company has nine additional ships scheduled for delivery through 2027, comprising approximately **24,000 berths**.



Belize Wildlife Referral Clinic (BWRC)



Friends for Conservation & Development (FCD)

Aptus Pi creates Digital Classroom without walls

Belmopan, March 4th, 2022

Teachers now have a new tool to create a digital “classroom without walls”, through the innovative Aptus Pi microcomputer that the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology (MoECST) introduced in 15 schools around the country in partnership with the Commonwealth of Learning and Notes Master

Minister of Education Hon. Francis Fonseca said the new devices were “exciting and one with great potential”, when he presented them to the schools representatives at the launch of the pilot project at the Gwen Lizarraga High School in Belize City last Wednesday, March 3. He said they would minimize the digital divide which was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic

As the Ministry’s ICT manager Ismael Noble explained, the devices do not require internet access to pro-

vide access to learning resources, as teachers can use the device to create a local WiFi network, which all their students may access from their cellphone, tablet or laptop computer. This allows them to set up a virtual classroom in a remote rural village or a vast university campus. The device can contain all the learning materials as electronic documents in its 64 gigabytes of storage memory, which the teacher can then share with the students by WiFi.

The Aptus-Pi device has a rechargeable battery which can be recharged from the BEL grid power or from solar charger. It operates on only 15 watts of power, which is less than a fluorescent light bulb, and allows the teacher to conduct a lesson even in areas which have no power from the BEL grid, as long as the students’ devices are charged. The students can turn in



Ministry of Education CEO Dian Maheia

assignments via WiFi, and the teacher can return corrected homework and tests, and communicate with all the students, without Internet access. The teacher can also up-

grade the teaching materials and lessons at any time by simply replacing the external storage microSD card, which makes the system very low maintenance for teachers.

The 15 participating schools in the project are Corozal Community College (Evening Division), Escuela Secundaria Técnica México (Evening Division), Orange Walk Techni-

cal High School and San Juan Bautista High School in the north. In the Belize district, Ladyville Technical High School and Sadie Vernon Technical High School are participating along with the evening divisions of San Pedro High School and Gwen Lizarraga High. In the Cayo district, Mopan Technical High School and the evening divisions of the Belmopan Adult Education Programme and St. Ignatius High. Down South, Independence High School and Julian Cho Technical are in, along with the evening divisions of Ecumenical High and St. Peter Claver Extension.

Chief Executive Officer Dian Maheia and Chief Education Officer Yolanda Gongora attended the launch along with Notesmaster CEO Dean Dundas and Dr. Tony Mays, senior specialist of Open Schools at the Commonwealth of Learning.

Weh Wi Ga Fi Seh

Kip sayf fahn di vairos!
Kip op yu helt.

How fi Seh “Twi”

Wan a di Afrikan Langwij fi Sohn Kriol Wod

Fi di paas too week dehn, wi mi-di shyaa sohn a di Kriol wod dehn weh kohn fahn sohn a di Afrikan langwij dehn. Wi mi shyaa sohn fahn **Yoruba, Ibo (Igbo), Kikoongo (Kikongo), Ewe**, ahn fahn wahn Afrikan langwij nayhn **Twi**. Tudeh wi shyaa sohn moa fahn **Twi**. Wen yu seh “Twi” karek, ih fi song sohnting laik **Chwee**. Yu ku googl how fi seh **Twi** karek. Tudeh, wi kloaz aaf dis seeriz wid sohn Kriol wod weh kohn fahn **Twi**, ahn sohn a dehnya aalso deh eena ada langwij.

Anansi (var: **Anaansi, Hanaasi, Hanansi**) *n.* Anancy; character in Kriol folklore that looks like a spider. **Anansi ahn Bra Taiga da neva reeli fren.** Anansi and Brother Tiger were never really friends. [*<Afr. Twi ‘ananse’ spider*]

bam brigidim buf *ono.* sound of someone falling or colliding, or sudden occurrence of something. (*Each word can be used alone. The addition of ‘buf’ means that whatever has fallen cannot be stood up again.*) **Di fat man faal dong – bam brigidim buf!** The fat man fell down kaboom! [*<Afr. Twi: ‘bam’ sound of striking or falling; ‘biram’ suddenly; Kikoongo: ‘bufa’ to strike with a stick*]

waawa *adj.* cowardly, fearful; weak and spineless. (*Usually refers to males.*) **Da lee bwai oanli waawa; ih frayd fi ih oan shado.** That little boy is really cowardly; he’s afraid of his own shadow. *See: fenkehfenkeh, frayda, kowad, malehleh, week.* [*<Misk. ‘wawa’ and/or Afr. Cameroon & Sierra Leone: ‘wowo’ useless, ugly; Twi & Hausa: ‘wawa’ foolish; Kikoongo: ‘wawa’ trembling*]

Yu ku chek sohnting fi free eena di Kriol-English dikshineri da:
<https://www.sil.org/resources/archives/10602>

Silvaana Udz, Ed.D. da fahn Bileez. If yu waahn tel shee bowt sohnting speshal fu put eena dis Kriol aatiki, eemayl: sudz142@gmail.com **Vizit: www.nationalkriolcouncil.org**

GOB has donated over 40 houses



The government notes that another 100 homes are nearing completion.

By Javan Flowers

Since December 2021, over 40 houses have been handed over to deserving Belizeans country-wide, with another 100 nearing completion, the Government announced this week.

At the handing over ceremony for the homes, the Prime Minister emphasized that “we are elected in government to be able to serve people, to help especially those that need it. Giving them a house like this trans-

forms their lives.”

“The mandate is to help our people, the Belizean people, to take advantage of a situation like this that is empowering lives,” said Hon. Julius Espat, the minister of Infrastructure Development and Housing.

He continued, “Once they get the title, they can use it to invest -- maybe further expanding the house or educating their children. So we’re serious about raising the quality of life, and that

is not done by giving someone a dollar or a plate of food; that is done by education, health, housing. So that is where we believe the emphasis must be.”

Minister of Health and Wellness Hon. Kevin Bernard said, “This goes to show that the government really cares for the people and wants to invest in them.” Adding that, “This is not just a shelter for them, but this is where they will continue to build their family.”

RF&G LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY LTD.

Date: March 9, 2022

Vanessa Retreage of #510 Pike Crescent, Belize City, Belizel District, Belize C.A. having made written declaration that Policy G7544064 under RF&G Life Insurance Company Ltd has been lost and having made request to the Company for a duplicate of the Policy, notice is hereby given that unless objection is raised within one month of the date herein, the requested duplicate policy will be issued.



A third person has been cured of HIV, scientists report

A woman became the third person ever to be cured of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, after she received a stem-cell transplant that used cells from umbilical cord blood, scientists reported Tuesday (Feb. 15).

The two other people cured of HIV, Timothy Brown and Adam Castillejo, both received bone marrow transplants from donors who carried a genetic mutation that blocks HIV infection, Live Science previously reported. These transplants contained adult hematopoietic stem cells, which are stem cells that develop into all types of blood cells, including white blood cells, a key component of the immune system.

This genetic mutation is rare and has been identified in only about 20,000 bone marrow donors to date, The New York Times reported. The bone marrow transplant procedure itself takes a heavy toll on the body, both during the highly invasive procedure and for some time afterward. In both Brown and Castillejo, immune cells from the donors' bone marrow launched an attack against cells in the patients' bodies; this condition is known as "graft versus host disease." Following this initial reaction, though, both men were cured of HIV.

She left the hospital just 17 days after her procedure, without any signs of graft versus host disease, Dr. JingMei Hsu, the patient's physician at Weill Cornell Medicine in New York, told the Times. Her case dispels an existing theory that triggering graft versus host disease might be a necessary step in curing someone of HIV, Dr. Sharon Lewin, president-elect of the International AIDS Society, who was not involved in the work, told the Times.

In addition to being HIV-positive, the woman had acute myeloid leukemia, a cancer that affects blood-forming cells in the bone marrow, Reuters reported. She had received the umbilical cord blood as both a treatment for the cancer and for her HIV,

as her doctors identified a donor with the HIV-blocking genetic mutation. Cord blood contains a high quantity of hematopoietic stem cells; the blood is collected at the time of a baby's birth and then donated by the parents, according to the Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK) Cancer Center.

Cord blood offers an advantage over bone marrow because donors don't need to be closely "matched" to their transplant recipient, according to MSK. For bone marrow transplants, doctors check the donor's and recipient's human leukocyte antigen (HLA)

close relative to help bolster her immune system after the transplant procedure, the Times reported.

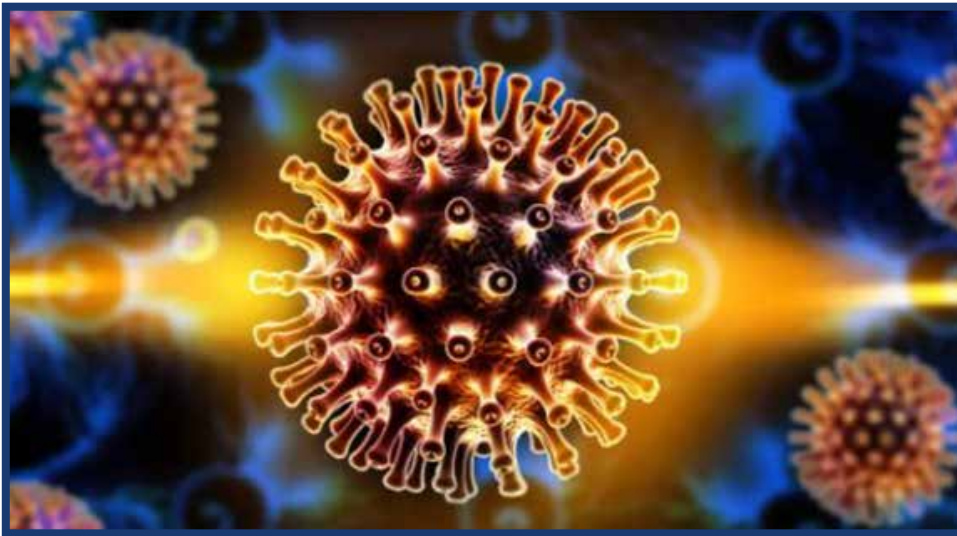
"The transplant from the relative is like a bridge that got her through to the point of the cord blood being able to take over," Dr. Marshall Glesby, an infectious-diseases expert at Weill Cornell Medicine and part of the research team, told the Times.

The woman's procedure took place in August 2017, according to The Guardian. She elected to stop taking antiretroviral drugs, the standard treatment for HIV, 37 months after her transplant, the Times reported. More than 14 months have passed since then, and still, no trace of the virus or antibodies against the virus can be found in her blood, the Times reported.

The woman's case is part of a larger U.S.-based study that will follow a total of 25 people with HIV, Reuters reported. These individuals will undergo an umbilical cord stem-cell transplant for the treatment of cancer, and the trial organizers will then monitor them to see whether their HIV status changes following the procedure. In general, umbilical cord blood is more widely available and more easily matched to recipients than bone marrow. So some scientists think the procedure may be more accessible than bone marrow transplants to HIV patients.

"We estimate that there are approximately 50 patients per year in the U.S. who could benefit from this procedure," Dr. Koen van Besien, director of the stem cell transplant program at Weill Cornell Medicine and one of the doctors involved in the treatment, told The Guardian. Worldwide, nearly 38 million people are living with HIV, according to the Times.

"The ability to use partially matched umbilical cord blood grafts greatly increases the likelihood of finding suitable donors for such patients," van Besien said.



tissue type, which refers to whether the individuals carry specific proteins, called HLAs, in the tissues of their bodies. HLAs come in different flavors, and these flavors must be closely matched between a bone marrow donor and a recipient to avoid a catastrophic immune reaction.

But because a baby's immune system is still quite immature at the time of birth, the HLAs of the baby and cord blood recipient don't have to match as closely as the HLAs of a bone marrow donor and recipient, MSK notes. The baby's immature cells adapt to the recipient's body more easily than adult cells. In the woman's case, her donor was "partially matched," and she also received stem cells from a

S U D O K U

Medium Puzzle

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

Answer to Puzzle

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

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.



FUN FACTS!

Did you know your skin sheds?

Skin is our largest organ—adults carry some 8 pounds (3.6 kilograms) and 22 square feet (2 square meters) of it. This fleshy covering does a lot more than make us look presentable.

According to a 2011 study published in the journal *Environmental Science & Technology*, we shed between 0.03 and 0.09g of skin every hour. That sounds like almost nothing, but over the course of a lifetime it adds up to about 35kg, or roughly half your bodyweight. Most of this is in the form of tiny flakes, which make up a major constituent of house dust.

Interestingly, the same study found that the squalene oil on shed skin reacts with harmful ozone in houses, offices and aeroplanes, so dust can actually improve the air quality.

Your skin undergoes a natural turnover cycle every 30 days or so. When this happens, the upper layer of your skin (epidermis) sheds, revealing new skin from the middle layer of your skin (dermis). However, the cell turnover cycle



isn't always so clear-cut.

Every hour we shed approximately 1,500,000 dead skin flakes. An average night of sleep can yield over 12,000,000 dead skin flakes, and it all ends up in YOUR MATTRESS EACH DAY!

Peeling is the body's way of repairing damaged cells. Peeling skin is harmless and helps the healing process, but it can be itchy and uncomfortable. Peeling skin is a common problem after a sunburn.

Scientists have previously known the epidermis consists of a thick outer barrier of dead epidermal cells, which are constantly shedding. What they've known less about is a secondary

barrier deeper below the surface in the epidermis that is made up of only a single layer of cells, which forms a much thinner, though no less important, protective barrier.

Now, a team from Keio University in Japan, working with a researcher at Imperial College London, have discovered that the shape of the epidermal cells is actually a flattened version of a tetrakaid-ecahedron - a 14-sided 3D solid made out of six rectangular and eight hexagonal sides.

The team says the epidermal cells' shape means that it can always form a tight, cohesive bond with the epidermal cells surrounding it.

The team also discovered that these cells manufacture proteins, which act as a temporary glue that binds the cells together in what are called 'tight junctions', which are depicted in the video. The combination of the cells' geometry and tight junction formation means that the skin barrier can maintain its integrity even though it is very thin.

When new cells underneath form the new tight junctions, this pushes the older cells upwards towards the surface of the skin, and the older cells lose their tight junctions. In this way, the tight junction barrier in the cell sheet is always maintained.



Ring! Ring!

The average person makes about **1,140** telephone calls each year.



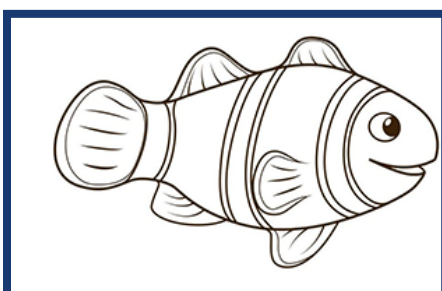
Blinkers!

You blink about **84,000,000** times a year.



COLOR ME

There are around 30 known species of clownfish.



Clownfish live in the warm waters of sheltered reefs and shallow seas in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. During the winter, they will migrate to deeper water to stay warm.

Schools of clownfish have a strict hierarchy, with the most aggressive female at the top.

All clownfish are born male. When the dominant female dies, the dominant male will turn itself into a female.

Clownfish are omnivores. They eat dead anemone tentacles, leftovers from the anemone, plankton, mollusk, zooplankton, phytoplankton, small crustaceans and various algae.

Male clownfish are dedicated fathers. They will prepare the nest for the female, guard the eggs, and clean the nest.

Clownfish communicate by making popping and clicking noises.

10. Clownfish catch prey by swimming onto the reef, attracting larger fish, and luring them back to the anemone. The anemone will sting and eat the larger fish, leaving the remains for the clownfish.



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Belize Water Services Limited invites applicants to fill the vacant post of **Customer Service Manager** in the Customer Service Department.

SUMMARY:

Manages, plans, organizes, integrates and evaluates the service activities and operations of assigned branch; ensures that at the branch level customer expectations are being met and exceeded by team, and performs related duties as assigned. Implement policies and procedures and the company mission, vision and core values is carried out effectively.

DEPARTMENT DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Administer a comprehensive complaint policy and procedures system guided by the Codes of Practice and Water Industry Act.
- Improve our efficiency - Reduce customer waiting time wherever possible and manage all customers' queries and complaints professionally.
- Build and maintain an excellent Customer experience whilst focusing on the company's mission, vision, and core values.
- Improve our customer base - whilst ensuring continuous reduction in the company's Account Receivable and at the same time retain and increase our customer base
- Empower our workforce - Provides coaching, guidance, and feedback that works to develop and retain a highly competent, team of customer-service oriented staff through selection, training and day-to-day management practices which support the Company's mission, vision and values
- Address and solve complaints and queries received in a way that is a win-win for both the customer and the company and provide the necessary follow-up to customers.
- Quality assurance through monitoring of policies and procedures and providing feedback to staff members.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES - The incumbent may not perform all of the listed duties and/or may be required to perform additional or different duties from those set forth below to address business needs and changing business practices.

- Plans, manages, controls, evaluates and administrative assistance to the Customer Service area at the branch offices countrywide.
- Assist the manager with the day-to-day management and reporting.
- Recommend and assist in the implementation of goals and objectives; establish schedules and methods for customer service; implement policies and procedures.
- Evaluate operations and activities of assigned responsibilities; recommend improvements and modifications; prepare various reports on operations and activities.
- Coordinate, analyze and implement strategies to ensure that all key accounts countrywide are properly monitored.
- Review and analyze meter reading, field service, and collections activities in relation to billing reports to assess unit production at the district level.
- Make adjustments as necessary with regard to billing problems; and communicate directly with customers to resolve difficult or complex service/billing issues for the district offices.
- Participate in the selection of staff; provide or coordinate staff training; work with employees to correct deficiencies; implement discipline procedures.
- Answer questions and provide information to the public; investigate complaints and recommend corrective action as necessary to resolve complaints.
- Conduct monthly district visit to branch offices to ensure that they are adhering to policies and processes.
- Build and maintain positive working relationships with co-workers and the public using the principles of good customer service.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL REQUIREMENTS:

Candidates will need to show evidence of the following:

- written and spoken communication skills that allow you to inform, help and advice customers, and liaise with other professionals;
- listening skills, to understand exactly what customers require; problem-solving skills;
- confidence, patience, politeness, tact and diplomacy, when dealing with difficult situations;
- motivational skills and an ability to supervise and lead a team of customer service assistants;
- creative thinking, to be able to come up with new ideas to improve customer service standards;
- an ability to work well under pressure;
- organizational and planning skills to develop customer services policies;
- good personal presentation, especially when working with customers face to face

COMPETENCIES TO BE EVALUATED ON:

1. Technical and Functional Skills
2. Understanding of the Business
3. Ability to achieving Results
4. Serving the Customer
5. Teamwork
6. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
7. Leadership and Personal Effectiveness

EXPECTATIONS:

- Prepare, maintain, and submit monthly reports on operational and personnel matters.
- Maintain a schedule of month end reports outlining the date received and errors identified on the reports.
- Make recommendations to management concerning staff matters and improvement to procedures and policies.
- Communicates with other departments and management to resolve problems and expedite work.
- Train and instruct staff members, assist with hiring of staff members and make recommendation to discharge staff members whenever necessary.
- Required to have an excellent knowledge of the company's mission, vision, core values, Codes of Practice and the Water Industry Act and possess the ability to communicate such to employees and customers verbally and in writing whenever necessary.
- Ensures that adjustments are prepared for (over-estimated customers, wrong reading, high bill or others).
- Ensures that jobs in JTS are closed one day after work in completed in the field and all jobs are moved from created to pending status and pass to Operations Department.
- Keep record of the time refund of security deposit request is received from the district to process the payment.
- Ensure that DISN and Inactive meters are dealt with monthly.
- Ensure that all accounts are billed timely and efficiently conduct random (25%) check of all cycles to identify inconsistencies.

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS:

- Master's degree in Accounting or Business Management with at least 5 years' experience or Bachelor's degree with at least 10 years' experience in customer service activities or accounting duties and managerial responsibilities will be an asset.

Interested persons can send your application letter with your detailed resume **March 21, 2022** to:

Human Resources Manager
Belize Water Services Limited,
P.O. Box 150, Central American Boulevard, Belize City, Belize
 Email : hr@bwsli.com.bz

BWS: Delivering water and more...

The Righters Write

Women and Climate Change

Contributed by the Human Rights Commission

The month of March is observed as women's month. It's a time when the call for the protection of women's and girls' rights and equality are amplified in many countries, a call to #BreakTheBias.

This year, there is special attention being placed on the close link between gender, social equity and climate change. In this column we have looked closely at human rights and its close correlation to climate change. Climate change, as we had stated then, is a direct threat to human rights and the enjoyment of human rights. Without our natural resources, humanity will face famines, natural disasters, mass migration and much more. Life as we know

it would drastically change, more so for some than for others.

On International Women's Day, March 8, women and their supporters joined in the call for climate action for women by women under the theme "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow". The UN reports that "without gender equality today, a sustainable future, an equal future, remains out of reach". And this has come as a result of new developments. So why make women and girls a focus of the efforts to mitigate and adaptation to climate? Currently, women and girls face many gender inequalities. If you add climate change to that, they stand to face some of the greatest impacts of the climate

crisis as it amplifies these inequalities placing their lives and livelihoods at risk. The UN reports that "across the world, women depend more on, yet have less access to, natural resources, and often bear a disproportionate responsibility for securing food, water, and fuel."

It adds too that "As women and girls bear the burden of climate impacts, they are also essential to leading and driving change in climate adaption, mitigation and solutions. Without the inclusion of half of the world's population, it is unlikely that solutions for a sustainable planet and a gender equal world tomorrow will be realized."

UN Women adds that "Gender inequality coupled with the

climate crisis is one of the greatest challenges of our time. It poses threats to ways of life, livelihoods, health, safety and security for women and girls around the world." UN Women takes a closer look at how climate change impacts women and girls. "In many regions, women bear a disproportionate responsibility for securing food, water, and fuel. Agriculture is the most important employment sector for women in low- and lower-middle income countries, during periods of drought and erratic rainfall, women, as agricultural workers and primary procurers, work harder to secure income and resources for their families. This puts added pressure on girls, who often have to leave school to help their mothers manage the increased burden. Climate change is a "threat multiplier", meaning it escalates social, political and economic tensions in fragile and conflict-affected settings. As climate change drives conflict across the world, women and girls face increased vulnerabilities to all forms of gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, human trafficking, child marriage, and other forms of violence."

It goes on to add that "When disasters strike, women are less likely to survive and more likely to be injured due to long standing gender inequalities that have created disparities in information, mobility, decision-making, and access to resources and training. In the aftermath, women and girls are less able to access relief and assistance, further threatening their livelihoods, wellbeing and recovery, and creating a vicious cycle of vulnerability to future disasters. Women's and girls' health is endangered by climate change and disasters by limiting access to services and

health care, as well as increasing risks related to maternal and child health. Research indicates that extreme heat increases incidence of stillbirth, and climate change is increasing the spread of vector-borne illnesses such as malaria, dengue fever, and Zika virus, which are linked to worse maternal and neonatal outcomes."

Here in Belize, the National Climate Change Office has recognized the importance of human rights in its approach towards mitigation and adaptation efforts. For them, a key part of the response is the strengthening of community resilience, or in other words, working more closely with the community. Lennox Gladden, the chief climate change officer at the National Climate Change Office, told the Human Rights Commission of Belize in an interview that "during the past couple years, we've taken a different approach towards building resiliency especially as it relates to the impact of climate change. As an office we realize that climate change isn't only an environmental issue, and we also take into consideration that - we have to take into consideration - the economics of climate change and also the social. Under the social, of course, we identify that some of the more major impacts of climate change affects livelihoods. So, this in part looks at how it trickles down to human rights. So, we do identify the importance of that linkage and how important it is to actually have a people centric approach when building some level of resiliency or trying to adapt or mitigate some of the impacts of climate change."

The new approach is including a series of stakeholders that encompass organizations and government departments that work

with different sectors of the community. The approach may very well be the best. According to the UN, "Women and men in rural areas in developing countries are especially vulnerable when they are highly dependent on local natural resources for their livelihood. Those charged with the responsibility to secure water, food and fuel for cooking and heating face the greatest challenges. Secondly, when coupled with unequal access to resources and to decision-making processes, limited mobility places women in rural areas in a position where they are disproportionately affected by climate change. It is thus important to identify gender-sensitive strategies to respond to the environmental and humanitarian crises caused by climate change."

It is important to take into account the way in which gender equality and climate change are closely related but equally important is to consider what role women can play in the mitigation and adaptation efforts to climate change. The UN adds that "Women often have a strong body of knowledge and expertise that can be used in climate change mitigation, disaster reduction and adaptation strategies. Furthermore, women's responsibilities in households and communities, as stewards of natural and household resources, positions them well to contribute to livelihood strategies adapted to changing environmental realities."

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.

FOR SALE

37.7 acres

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No Excuses

The Politician Not The Police

Sedi Elrington

All older Belizeans know that only our politicians possess the power and potential to solve our gang problem. Both our politicians and our policemen presided over the birth and development of our gang culture. They are the only ones with the power and authority to initiate meaningful measures to root it out of our nation.

It is a historical fact that during our colonial past not a single life was lost in our country by reason of gang violence. And, not a single Belizean was found to be associated with drug trafficking. Both those activities had their birth post 1964 when our country gained full internal self-government and then Independence.

The records in our archives will show that from early days the names of very prominent Belizean politicians were associated with the drug trade. Former Belizean drug dealers who are above the age of sixty and are still alive to tell the tale are able to detail the symbiotic relationships that have always existed between the politician, the police and the drug peddler. One veteran cocaine expert loves to tell the tale of how he would go to the CIB office on Queen Street with a bag containing flour and would walk out a few minutes later with a bag containing cocaine. It has always been common knowledge that police officers would arrange the sale of drugs and guns which had been confiscated in police raids. Also, it is widely known that our police cannot be trusted to keep any information given to them about drug kingpins confidential. In this era of the cell phone, all supposed confidential information is communicated to the drug

dealer within minutes of that information been confided in the police, along with the name of the Whistle Blower.

As a veteran politician this writer knows personally that corrupt police officers and politicians can be readily found among the membership of both our political parties.

But it is not only in our country that police and politicians have been known to collude in drug trafficking. This has been happening in Mexico, the United States, Latin and Central America and in the Caribbean. Not too long ago a very able Jamaican Prime Minister was forced out of office in consequence of the charging and extradition by the United States Government of a notorious Jamaican gang leader. And the former President of neighboring Honduras, who ended his term of office only a few weeks ago, is presently being detained in prison in that country pending extradition hearings against him initiated by the United States Government. He is alleged to have received money from drug kingpin El Chapo Guzman. His brother has been convicted of drug trafficking offences in the United States.

Belizean politicians and police officers, among others, find it difficult to resist the bribes offered to them by narco traffickers. For the most part both politicians and policemen in our country are poor and of humble background, for very few descendants of colonialism were able to acquire wealth. Most were barely able to make ends meet. The vast majority never ventured near a university or a quality institution of higher learning. The vast majority had minimal ethical and moral education. Few therefore

possess the strength of character to resist the generous bribes for which narco traffickers are famous!

Given the inherent weaknesses in the personalities of our leadership elite and in our security personnel it is of the utmost importance that strenuous efforts be made to imbue in our children coming behind those ethical and moral values that will make them principled and trust worthy. It is vital that they be infused at an early age with lessons on patriotism. They must have a clear

It is absolutely distressing, embarrassing, and nauseating, night after night to listen in the news to police officers giving the gory details of the carnage that gangs are committing in our country.

appreciation of their rights as citizens and of their obligations to their country and to their fellow citizens.

It is absolutely distressing, embarrassing, and nauseating, night after night to listen in the news to police officers giving the gory details of the carnage that gangs are committing in our country.

It is equally distressing, embarrassing and nauseating to hear of the frequent landing of narco planes seemingly with impunity all over the country. This writer has been sounding the warning repeatedly that our security forces are clearly out of their depth in dealing with these issues. We need urgently to adopt a new and comprehensive approach to solving it. The situation is getting worse by the minute. I shudder to think of the terror which will reign in our country if a stop is not put to these criminal activities.

The paramount obligation of a Prime Minister is to safeguard the safety and security

of the citizens of his country and his country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is for that reason that Prime Ministers are paid so handsomely and treated with such deference and respect. His job is the most important in the country. As we watch with incredulity the bravery of President Zelenslyy of Ukraine and his fierce devotion to duty, we can't help but reflect upon the fact that our own Prime Minister seems almost unperturbed by the increasing loss of lives in our country

Government visiting developed countries to carry special gifts to their hosts as well as a special wish list containing the "big ask."

The only nation from which our country can readily obtain substantial assistance to successfully combat the challenges we face with our youths is Taiwan. It is a very wealthy country. And, it is keen to make its mark on the world stage and to contribute to the betterment of humanity as a whole. Taiwan has no difficulty dedicating its donor funds to projects which can conduce to the enhancement of the security of its allies.

The writer is aware of no other ally than Taiwan which would readily be disposed to partnering with our country in a meaningful way to implement the type of ambitious, long term transformative project targeted specifically at that section of our youthful population in which we have historically under invested, and who have degenerated into a curse to our nation rather than a blessing.

Taiwan will not, however, give us this type and scale of assistance unless our Prime Minister himself makes a good case to them for it. P.M. was right when he stated in his state address to the Taiwanese Nation that global challenges require global responses, global cooperation and genuine partnerships. "Transnational Narcotics Trafficking" by gangs

is a global challenge. It can only be successfully be defeated by genuine global partnership.

But if P.M. Briceno is not of the view that the gang problem is our Top Priority National Security issue he will not approach the Taiwanese for their help with it. There can be doubt however that unless and until comprehensively tackled, our youth problem will only worsen and undermine every single development initiative which our country seeks to embark upon. And no Belizean leader will ever have the opportunity to declare that under their watch our citizen were kept safe and secure and our territorial integrity remained inviolate.

It is vital for our Cabinet to be put on notice that the granting of amnesty to illegal aliens can never be a matter of Top Priority at this time in our nation and that therefore there can be no justification for the wasting of scarce resources on that exercise at his time. All resources dedicated to that exercise should immediately be diverted to initiatives involving the fight against the gang scourge.

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<u>Emergency Numbers</u>	
Fire	90
Ambulance (Belize City Only)	90
Police (Countrywide)	0/911
Belize Coast Guard	225-2125
Crime Stoppers	0-800-922- TIPS
Domestic Violence Unit	0-800-A WAY OUT
Child Abuse Hotline	0-800-PROTECT



STRENGTHENING OF TAX ADMINISTRATION PROJECT

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Consultancy Firm to review and update the current Taxpayer Segmentation Model and develop a Risk-based Compliance Management Model

Institution: The Ministry of Finance (MOF)
Country: Belize Project: Strengthening of Tax Administration (STA)
Abstract: Consulting Services – Consultancy Firm to review and update the current Taxpayer Segmentation and develop a Risk-based Compliance Management Model.
Loan No.: 4839/OC-BL
Deadline: April 1st, 2022, Belize Local Time

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for the execution of a five-year tax modernization project entitled “Strengthening of Tax Administration” (BL-L1031). Through this project, the Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD) has procured a Modern Integrated Tax Administration System (the Revenue Management System (RMS) and is presently in the implementation process. This new system will be used in the management of the Belize Tax Administration.

The BTSD Strategic Plan clearly addresses the relevance of taxpayer segmentation and the risk management approach. It indicates that:

“It has become good practice for Tax Administrators across the world to implement Taxpayer Segmentation in revenue management to effectively analyze taxpayer data and to efficaciously implement different and specific surveillance and control mechanisms,” and that; “The deployment of a ‘Risk management approach’ is a modern and pertinent tactic that would aid in compliance. This approach gives a structured basis for strategic planning; focuses on the underlying drivers (not symptoms) of non-compliance; promotes diversity in the way major tax compliance risks are treated, rather than a ‘one size fits all’ approach; realizes better outcomes as it refers to efficiency and effectiveness of programs; coincides with international standards and is a strong basis for evidence-based evaluation.

Consequently, the BTSD will explore the introduction of a Risk Management Plan (RMP) to properly respond to the risks identified on a timely basis, to minimize overall compliance burden for both the taxpayers and the tax administration. As an important aspect of the RMP, risk mitigating strategies will be proposed for application against potential and existing risks. The plan will highlight all areas of risks including risk-based assessments, risk-based audits, risk-based sector and taxpayer segmentation, compliance risks (registration, filing, reporting and payments) and international risks. Risk mitigation reduces the extent of exposure and ensures that the strategic objectives are achieved.”

The consulting services (“the services”) includes the contracting of a Consultancy Firm for a period of five (5) months to review and update the current Taxpayer Segmentation and develop a Risk-based compliance management model, including configuration of the model in the ITAS. The main activity of the consultancy includes:

1. To prepare an Action plan for the review and updating of the Taxpayer Segmentation Model and Risk Analysis Strategy
2. To Assess the status of BTSD taxpayer segmentation and the use of risk-based techniques in the BTSD and to analyze the BTSD taxpayer information to identify ways to segment the taxpayer population following different criteria (income, assets, number of employees, economic activities etc.), and other relevant indicators.
3. To review and update the current model for segmentation of BTSD taxpayers (companies and individuals) and to define a strategy for updating taxpayers’ segments and profiles in the ITAS periodically.
4. Profile all BTSD taxpayers following the model once the model is approved by BTSD management.
5. To propose a model for the risk-based compliance model, defining the risk-based indicators, the rules, the risk factors to be utilized, their relative relevance (high, medium, low), the sources of information to utilized, the mitigation measures, and the required operations to use them.
6. To include the information on taxpayer segmentation in the ITAS database, inclusive of defining (setting) the parameters and rules for its then configuration in the ITAS database.
7. To prepare a report on the risks identified as well as the relevant mitigation measures to be introduced.
8. To suggest additional information (internal and external) to improve its risk-based control system.
9. To deliver workshops to BTSD staff on the Taxpayer Segmentation Model and risk analysis strategy to be implemented.

The Consultancy Firm should have a minimum of five (5) years’ relevant working experience in similar assignment, helping tax administrations to implement risk-based taxpayer compliance programs with the application of taxpayer segmentation and information crosschecking. In addition, the Consultant firm should have a minimum five (5) years’ specific experience in the following areas:

- Tax administration,
- Taxpayer compliance control based on taxpayer segmentation, risk analysis and information crosschecking, and
- Training on risk-based taxpayer, taxpayer segmentation and information crosschecking.

As well as a minimum of three (3) years of previous experience in conducting assistance to countries in the areas of taxpayer segmentation, implementing risk-based compliance

controls, and information crosschecking. Furthermore, the Consulting firm should have knowledge and experience working in Belize, and or the Caribbean environment in a similar assignment.

The Ministry of Finance now invites eligible Consultancy Firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested eligible Consultants must submit an Expression of Interest providing information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services (description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills, etc.). *The term “consultant” means a legally established professional consulting firm or an entity that may provide the services.*

Expression of Interest package should contain:

- (i) Document explaining interest, experience, and competence of the consulting firm.
- (ii) Firms experience in the assignment of similar consultancy services during the past five years. Description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments.
- (iii) Firms evidence of past jobs. (These includes letters from the respective client on the job (s) carried out, or a copy of contract or agreement with the client including copy of the TOR).
- (iv) Two references
- (v) Proof of nationality: Copy of certificate of incorporation, information of shareholders of company specifying the shares owned by each respective shareholder of the company and a copy of documentation of nationality of the shareholders of the company.

Additional documentation required for National Consultants:

- (vi) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from Belize Company Registry
- (vii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Social Security Board
- (viii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Belize Tax Service
- (ix) Copy of Current Trade License

A Consulting firm will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost - Based Selection (QCBS) procurement method 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, May 2019 edition) and is open to all eligible consultants as defined in the IDB policies. The selection of the successful firm will be based on a competitive process among short-listed firms that takes into account the quality of the proposal and the cost of the service. **Only the short-listed firms will be notified and will be asked to submit a technical and price proposal.**

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. For the purpose of establishing the short list, the nationality of a firm is that of the country in which it is legally incorporated or constituted and in the case of Joint Venture, the nationality of the firm appointed to represent it.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours **Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** Expressions of interest must be delivered via direct mail or e-mail at the address indicated below by **3:00 p.m. (Belize local time) on Friday April 1st, 2022.**

Interested consulting firms are asked to submit their expression of interest via e-mail to Michelle.Longsworth@bts.gov.bz marked STAP- Consultancy Firm to review and update the current Taxpayer Segmentation and develop a Risk-based Compliance Management Model in the subject header, or submit on or before **3:00 p.m. (Belize local time) on Friday April 1st, 2022** to the following address:

Director General
Belize Tax Service
Strengthening of Tax Administration Project
Charles Bartlett Hyde Building
Mahogany Street, Belize City
Tel: 501-222-5114

For clarifications kindly contact:

Procurement Officer
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