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PRESS RELEASE

Cabinet Brief

Belmopan, 18th May 2023.

The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño, met on 17th May 2023.

- Cabinet continued the discussion on ways to address the rising cost of living. It was requested that the Minister of Agriculture convenes a meeting with importers and suppliers to discuss ways to reduce the cost of major food items as well as inputs used to produce locally made food products and to propose recommendations to reduce the cost of living for Cabinet's consideration.
- After a full discussion on the sugar industry and the revelation that for two years the Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association (BSCFA) had not benefited from premiums derived from fair trade, Cabinet approved BZ\$1 million in subsidies for the association to be used for fertilizer to improve crop yield.
- Cabinet requested that the Financial Secretary instruct the Belize Tax Services to check into businesses that continue to charge tax on feminine products. These became GST-exempt effective 1st April with a grace period of one month for products that were already in stock to be depleted.
- Cabinet continued the discussion on the establishment of the Belize Government Lotteries Ltd., a government-owned company, and approved the introduction of amendments to the Lotteries Act to accommodate for government to sell lotteries nationwide. These amendments will be introduced at the next sitting of the House of Representatives scheduled for 19th May 2023.

- Cabinet gave its approval for the Minister of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation to sign a memorandum of understanding on Deepening Blue Economy Cooperation with the Government of Barbados, through its Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Green and Blue Economy. The MOU will strengthen the knowledge capacity in the blue economy, broaden and expand relations between the extensive scientific and technological communities, and strengthen cooperation between both countries in areas of mutual benefit.
- Finally, Cabinet gave its recommendation on several legislative amendments to be tabled at Friday's sitting of the House of Representatives.

Ends