



PR#381

PRESS RELEASE

Cabinet Brief

Belmopan. 21st July 2021. 6:00 p.m.

The Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño, met in regular session on 20th July 2021.

- Cabinet received a report from Hon. Michel Chebat, Minister of Health & Wellness, on the rising number of COVID-19 detections and approved new measures and restrictions which will come into effect on Sunday, 25th July 2021.
- Cabinet received an update from Hon. Henry Charles Usher, Minister of the Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform, on the redistricting exercise and urged that a plan be finalized and presented to Cabinet.
- Cabinet discussed the June 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report and approved steps to improve performance in combatting this issue in Belize, calling on all relevant ministries to implement the recommendations made in the report where appropriate. In addition, Cabinet restored funding to enable implementation of the plan.
- Cabinet approved the completion and validation of the protocols for accompanied and unaccompanied migrant children in Belize. This protocol requires validation prior to its implementation and is guided by national, regional, and international conventions and gives priority to children's right to life, survival, security and shelter.
- Cabinet gave its approval to conduct an exercise for the re-delineation of municipal boundaries for Dangriga, Corozal, Orange Walk, San Pedro, San Ignacio/Santa Elena, Benque Viejo and Punta Gorda towns. This is in support of a 2012 request by the Belize Mayors' Association to re-delineate municipal boundaries.
- Hon. Oscar Requena, Minister of Rural Transformation, Community Development, Labour & Local Government, informed Cabinet that he received a letter from the President of the Christian Workers' Union (CWU), dated 13th July 2021, informing that the CWU was invoking the 21 days' notice to institute industrial action against the Port of Belize Limited (PBL). In response, the Labour Commissioner will meet with the parties to develop a protocol on how the talks will proceed and scheduled the first meeting for 20th July 2021.

Cabinet took note of recent developments and requested that the Labour Commissioner extend all efforts to mediate a successful outcome in the deliberations between the CWU and PBL.

- Hon. Florencio Marin, Jr., Minister of National Defence & Border Security, reported to Cabinet on his recent working visit to New Orleans, Louisiana, in the United States, where he and his delegation were hosted by the U.S. Military to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the State Partnership Program between Belize and the Louisiana National Guard.

During his visit, Minister Marin and his delegation met with the High Command of the Louisiana National Guard and were appraised of the State Partnership Program between the Belize Defence Force (BDF), the Belize Coast Guard and the Louisiana National Guard.

Minister Marin discussed matters of cooperation between Belize and the Louisiana National Guard, including training opportunities, sharing of expertise, and assistance to the Belize Youth Challenge Programme. In recognition and in honour of the 25th Anniversary of the State Partnership Program, Belize received commendation from Governor John Bel Edwards of Louisiana.

The delegation included Hon. Oscar Mira, Minister of State; Ret'd Brigadier General Dario Tapia, CEO; Rear Admiral John Borland, Chief of Defence Staff; Brigadier General Steven Ortega, Commander of the BDF; Commander Gregory Soberanis, Acting Commandant of the Belize Coast Guard; and Force Sergeant Major Wilfredo Majano of the BDF.

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