

# THE CUENCA DISPATCH

Ecuador's Original English-Language Newspaper

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## Economic reform package sent to National Assembly without mention of fuel subsidies



On Tuesday, October 22nd, the National Assembly began the analysis of the tax reform project presented by Ecuadorian President Lenin Moreno, after having repealed a decree that eliminated the fuel subsidy and caused eleven days of protests in the country.

The president of the Assembly, César Litardo, said that the Legislative Administration Council (CAL) decided to accept the draft Economic-Urgent Law sent by the President for review.

"The Economic Regime Commission will analyze this proposal. We

are responsible with the country and we guarantee from the Assembly a broad debate for the benefit of all," he noted on Twitter. The commission will have five days to socialize the document and ten to present the first report for debate in session.

The project seeks to "generate a level of revenue that guarantees the sustainability of public finances, while facilitating and modernizing the tax system so that entrepreneurs have more opportunities to generate economic growth and employment opportunities," according to the Ministry of Finance.

The reform presented by the President has to do mostly with the tax aspects of the package agreed with the IMF and other international entities to receive a credit line for \$10.200 million.

The budgetary, labor and organic reform are also in the queue and are no just as sensitive as the tax reform, for what they mean for the reduction of public spending.

The proposed changes include amendments to the Organic Code of Planning and Public Finance (COPLAFIP) and the Organic Monetary and Financial Code (COMYF), in order to give the Central Bank greater autonomy.

cont. page 4.

## Ecuadorian dies participating in protests in Santiago Chile



An Ecuadorian citizen died in the social protests that are ongoing in Santiago, Chile, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility of the Andean country confirmed on Monday.

"Unfortunately, Romario Wladimir Veloz Cortez, a 26-year-old Ecuadorian citizen from Quito, died yesterday in Santiago, Chile, during the protests," the Foreign Ministry confirmed in a message to the press. "Currently the consulate is providing support to the family,"

the Ministry said.

In a post to the Twitter account of the Consulate of Ecuador in Santiago, it was reported that "the citizen died in the social protests in La Serena."

"We respect the right to peaceful protest and condemn all types of violence, we are constantly monitoring the investigations [to ensure that the facts of what happened are made clear to the Ecuadorian family]."

Violent groups in Chile have radicalized a social protest against inequality, which has claimed eighteen lives so far and that has sown the streets of more and more places in the country with terror, with barricades, fires and looting.

cont. page 8.

## Finance Minister says new proposal for fuel subsidy changes will go to legislature by end of October



The Ministry of Economy and Finance says that a new decree on the "rationalization" of fuel subsidies will come out before October 31, when it presents the budgetary pro-forma for 2020 (which must be presented 60 days before the new fiscal year).

This means that the State has less than ten days to send this budget document to the Legislature. Government leaders (President and Ministers) met with more than 60 organizations of the society (civil, farmers, workers)

cont. page 7.



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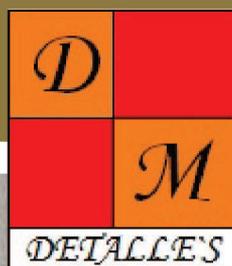
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# I'M JUST SAYIN'

By Michael Soares

## How deep does it go?

Turmoil. On the phone today, that's about the best way I could describe South America to my friend who lives in Thailand. He's seeing it there too; the King is tossing out and making moves that to many people there, look like he is taking a stronger autocratic position than his father did.

As for South America, between Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador (who is not out of the woods yet) and let's not forget, Venezuela, there seems to be discontent throughout the continent.

It's kind of scary. It's like we are in the middle of a powder keg that might explode like the "Arab Spring" did a few years ago. Remember how quickly that caught fire? It seemed like overnight peaceful protests turned to violent and there was no telling what the final shape of things would be.

Here, it reminds me of when I was young and there were lots of problems in Central America. Nicaragua and Panama come to mind. But there were also serious problems in El Salvador and Honduras. The memories of all that don't cause any reaction in me, because those events were so far removed from my life. They didn't seem to make much difference to us. In fact, probably the sharpest memory I have of those events is the way the US worked to get Noriega out of the building he had barricaded himself into. They played loud rock music day and night until he cracked. It was rather amusing.

But now, we are in the middle of all this and it isn't amusing. It's serious. People are dying for causes that seem to be nebulous. I don't see solid lines of outrage, but rather blurred arguments about why this government, or that one, are not supporting their people.

Take Chile for example. Just a few weeks ago, Chile seemed like it was an ideal place to go visit. Like everything was fine and people weren't angry at their government like they were here at the time. But what it looks like now is that Ecuador was a spark that lit the match there. Like the people there only needed to see how the world reacted to Ecuador's protests, and once they saw the support for the indigenous, they realized they could get world-wide support as well.

Now, I'm not a "Deep State" guy. I don't buy into all of that. But we did see that there were protestors here in Ecuador that were being paid by people from Correa's "Citizen Revolution Movement" (who are now hiding out in the Mexican embassy).

And lo and behold, this week a protester died in Chile who was actually a 26-year-old Ecuadorian. Why was he there? Did he show up in Chile after the protests here were over? I don't know the answers to those questions (I've read all the news reports, but there is very little information available), and I may be making connections that don't exist. But doesn't it all sound a little fishy? That maybe, just maybe, some of these protestors are being paid to cause disturbances anywhere there is unrest. That in fact they are the matches that are lighting the fires all throughout South America?

Maybe this is something that goes deeper than Correa. Maybe as some online have suggested there is a US component to this (though I don't personally believe that—US foreign policy is so screwed up right now I doubt this would be something in the hopper).

Anyway, regardless of all that, it is disconcerting to see this unrest rippling across the continent. I realize that South America and Central America have been hotbeds for political unrest for decades. But it seems now that there is so much of it coming to a boil at the same time.

Maybe it's just a sign of the times we live in now. With social media and the internet, protesters can be called to unite in a moment's notice. Clashes can flare up and grow while people are live streaming the action. Information used to travel slow, people had to organize days or weeks in advance to launch protest. Now, in minutes plans are made and executed.

Add to that the concepts of indigenous rights, economic imbalance, resource exploitation and you've got a situation where hundreds of

thousands of people feel they are not being treated fairly and are not being represented in their own countries.

And then you have a powder keg. With only one way to douse the match that will light it. The people have to be listened to and their complaints have to be heard with respect. Because the underprivileged will no longer just accept trinkets to placate them. They also won't let the politicians off the hook once peace is negotiated. They are watching and waiting to see what the response to their complaints is. And if it's not what they want, they'll come back again to threaten the stability of any country.

And keep in mind, no country is immune to this. Because it's not a "Socialist" thing. It's human nature. And the times "they are a changing."

# SUDOKU

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

See answers on page 11

## Economic reform package sent to National Assembly without mention of fuel subsidies (Cont.)

According to the Minister of Economy and Finance, Richard Martínez, it is a "legal reform to modernize the tax system and promote entrepreneurship" and does not include an increase in Value Added Tax (VAT).

The original tax reform included the elimination of fuel subsidies, which resulted in eleven days of social protests, that included an unprecedented wave of violence; in its new version the fuel subsidy issue has been put on hold.

The Economy Minister must now find ways to supply the almost \$1.4 billion that were expected to be saved by eliminating the fuel subsidy.

Some of that money will come from the broadening of the collection base among the largest companies, that will have to pay a supplement to the corporate tax, according to the project.

Those with revenue between \$1 million and \$5 million will contribute 0.1% of that billing for three years; those that invoice between \$5 million and \$10 million will pay 0.15% annually, and those with more than \$10 million will pay an additional 0.2%.

Plastic bags and electronic cigarette supplies will also be assessed, and tax relief will be eliminated for anyone with more than \$100,000 of annual income.

Other measures seek to favor small businesses with the elimination of bureaucracy in the payment of anticipated income or withholding taxes.

Extracted from Diario El Mercurio

## Rights of disabled appear to be getting taken seriously by city councilors



Guaranteeing access to employment and promoting enterprises of persons with disabilities in the canton, is part of the "Ordinance on the Protection of Rights of Persons with Disabilities" that was discussed yesterday in the Cantonal Council.

This point, generated debate among the councilors, who reached a consensus to promote the hiring of people with disabilities in the municipal corporation, grant discounts in markets, squares and itinerant fairs, and in addition, provide advice to boost their ventures.

Roberto Pañi, a person with a physical disability that forces him to be in a wheelchair, says that for two years he has been making sweets because he has not been able to get any other job, "I would like to receive advice to improve this small business, have my own brand, but this has not been possible."

According to the Ordinance, the Company of Social and Productive Development, the Company of Economic Development and other institutions must promote and promote entrepreneurship.

Councilor Roque Ordonez said that this regulatory body "is quite inclusive. In terms of employment, what we are looking for is that it respects the inclusion of four percent of people with disabilities and that the Municipal Corporation complies with it, we will be requesting the information to know in detail how many people with disabilities work in the corporation."

Yamilet Piedra, representative of civil society, mentioned that the discussion of these issues is positive, "what we seek is that the rights and

dignity of persons with disabilities be respected. We seek access to a decent life, which is not only in the law, but in practice."

With regard to the issue of employment and entrepreneurship, he said that the support in the second point is fundamental, "not only the attention of people with disabilities is needed, you have to support their ventures and generate sources of income for them."

### Services

The ordinance also states that the local government must enable technological tools that allow people with disabilities to access the payment of bills, paperwork and services through an online system. According to Pablo Pintado, director of systems of the Municipality, this kind of system has been available from the beginning of the current administration.

The measures also reach private companies. The ordinance states that buildings designed to provide services, or intended for commercial purposes, must have access and infrastructure for people with reduced mobility, with a penalty of 10 unified basic salaries, that is \$ 3,980, for those who fail to comply with the established regulations.

Nine out of 10 people with disabilities have suffered some type of accident in the city because the spaces are not very inclusive, according to the National Council for Equal Disabilities of Zone 6.

## Vicente Corral Moscoso hospital launches pilot program to digitize patient medical records

Vicente Corral Moscoso hospital has initiated a pilot plan to digitize patient medical records in order to have integrated data in a real-time network to improve treatment times.



Manolo Maestre, responsible for the clinic area, said that "the system allows—with a single click on the computer or on the cell phone—professionals to know the results of laboratory tests, imaging, medical prescription and inter-consultations, optimizing treatment times."

In addition, with this process the hospital intends to improve the safety of pharmaceutical care, eliminate transcription errors, reduce patient identification errors, dose failures and dilutions, among others.

The Vicente Corral Moscoso hospital receives patients from the provinces of Azuay, Cañar, Morona Santiago, Loja and El Oro. In the emergency area alone, they serve 350 people daily.

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## Azuay asphalt plant closed down for lack of environmental permits



On Tuesday, the Ministry of Environment (MAE) gave a notification of suspension of activities to the plant of the Public Company of Aggregates and Asphalts of Azuay, (Asfaltar EP), attached to the Provincial Government of Azuay, located in the Guaymincay sector in the canton of Gualaceo.

An inspection was carried out with the presence of technicians from the MAE and the Secretariat of Water, Hydrographic Demarcation of Santiago who, based on a formal complaint and citizen alerts through the media, arrived at the site to verify the situation.

At the point, workers of the company were notified of the immediate suspension of activities that had been carried out in the place, without an environmental license or permits to operate stone material removal machinery. Likewise, the formal document was delivered to the offices of the agency in Cuenca.

Istvan Medvedzky, legal advisor of the Ministry of Environment in Zone 6, announced that the company does not comply with its license, nor has it presented an environmental management and impact plan to initiate activities. "Once the activities are suspended, a periodic review will be carried out, to verify that they are not resumed until the environmental license is obtained, which must be socialized with the community," he said.

In addition, technicians from the Ministry of Water carried out the verification of the state of the Gúlag River from which the Guaymincay -Las Nieves -San Francisco irrigation system is supplied, which feeds water to nearby communities.

Adolfo Maurat, President of the Irrigation System, also presented the formal complaint about the location of the Asfaltar plant at the site and asked the authorities to investigate its operation.

## Police launch new program to reduce crime in city parks

To ensure the safety of the families that go to the recreation spaces throughout the city, Cuenca Police have launched a new program called "Parque Seguro."

Mario Castro, head of the Azuay Police Subzone, explained that the new strategy is preventive and consists in strengthening the presence of uniformed personnel with inflatable replicas of the Community Police Units, where people can go to report any anomaly that threatens citizen peace.

Castro said that patrols will also be reinforced with mounted and patrol police, in linear parks and other green spaces that are used by athletes and people who like to practice outdoor physical activities.

### Crimes

Police records indicate that the crimes with the highest incidence in public spaces are related to robbery, theft of vehicle accessories and the presence of people consuming liquor.

According to citizen complaints, there are criminals who tear cellphones



from people who play sports while listening to music with headphones or take backpacks that are left carelessly about.

The initiative aims to create an atmosphere of peace and was presented yesterday morning at Calderón Park to local authorities and student delegations.

## Paute rushes to secure consultants for new Center for Technical Vehicular Review

The mobility company of Paute has until November 15th to present studies for the implementation of the Center for Technical Vehicular Review (CRTV).

After the approval in the budget for the implementation of the technical vehicle review center in Paute, Manuel Amón, Director of the municipal Department of Transit and Transportation, indicated that they are against the clock for hiring consultants for the project.

"The posting for submissions for consultants has already been carried out, because on November 15th we must present the studies to the National Traffic Agencies (ANT)," said Amón.

Paute is expected to work together with the municipalities of El Pan, Guachapala and Sevilla de Oro, as they announced that they will not implement the vehicle review center because they do not meet the demand required by ANT.

Raúl Delgado, former Mayor of Guachapala and current Mayor of Paute, explained that the ANT regulation states that one of the conditions for a canton to open a CRTV is to inspect at least 15,000 cars per year. Guachapala only inspects 2,000 vehicles annually, El Pan inspects 1,200 annually, and Sevilla de Oro only inspects 120 annually.

Extracted from Diario El Tiempo



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## Laser eye surgery at IESS hospital in huge demand after only two months



In the last two months, 20 people have benefited from the 'Improve your vision' laser surgery day carried out by the José Carrasco Arteaga Hospital of the Ecuadorian Social Security Institute, (IESS).

Elizabeth Escalona, head of the Hospital's Ophthalmology Unit, reported that this surgery program is for patients diagnosed with astigmatism, farsightedness and myopia. "The patients were evaluated by specialists of the ophthalmology unit, to analyze whether they qualify for this service," she said.

To qualify for the surgery, patients must be between 18 and 40 years old, not have diseases such as diabetes or autoimmune conditions, and not have keratoconus, among others. "There are many factors that influence [the decision to approve a patient for the surgery], including the degree of myopia, farsightedness and astigmatism," said Escalona.

"We have high technology equipment to perform these procedures. These laser-assisted surgeries are part of the campaign that seeks to improve the vision of members, which after a medical evaluation, determines whether or not they are suitable for the intervention."

Escalona also explained that not all patients will be able to give up their glasses, there is a percentage that will definitely leave them and another group that may need a correction of this type.

Due to the demand of this new service, the hospital is analyzing extending the days of eye surgeries every month. Now, through the end of the year, only 10 patients receive the vision correction surgery each month.

Surgeries are performed only on weekends. Escalona says that the procedure takes between 10 and 15 minutes.

This service is part of the hospital improvement plan, said Luis Mario Maldonado, medical director of the health facility. With this service, the hospital strengthens the portfolio of 48 specialties and subspecialties of third level of care, which service an average of 2,500 to 3,000 patients daily.

## Parking no longer a problem at Mercado 10 de Agosto



The new Mercado Diez de Agosto parking structure—with a capacity of 60 vehicles and two areas for motorcycle parking and one for bicycles—was inaugurated last Friday after being completed with an investment of a little more than \$1.1 million.

Mayor Pedro Palacios, local authorities, merchants and the general public made a tour of the structure.

"From today [this structure

offers] more comfort for the merchants and users of the market. The new parking lot is a work for all the people," Palacios said.

The parking structure, located on Miguel Ullauri Street and Larga Street also has bathrooms for men, women and people with disabilities, stairs, an elevator and an emergency staircase.

The symbolic placement of the first stone for the construction of the parking lot was carried out on August 5, 2018, in the administration of Marcelo Cabrera.

Market merchants asked the authorities to plan for parking control, so that it is for the exclusive use of market customers.



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## Back pain is taken seriously at IESS hospital rehabilitation unit

Intense back pain, lack of sensation in the extremities and posture problems are some of the symptoms of a spine ailment, the most common being, low back pain.

Patients affiliated with the Ecuadorian Social Security Institute, IESS, can now receive rehabilitation therapies at the José Carrasco Arteaga hospital to relieve these ailments.

One of the patients is Cristian Zambrano whose self-medicated plan didn't work. He has a herniated disc and frequent backaches. His doctor examined him and prescribed a rehabilitation program that has helped, and his condition has diminished.

"I couldn't even take a step. I walked sideways, as if carrying two sacks of potatoes on my right side, all the time. Now at least I make the "tun tun" step when dancing," he said with a laugh.

Renata Pérez suffered a low back pain and also attends back rehabilitation, "at the beginning I had to come to rehab every day, now I come three times a week because the pain decreased a lot."

Of the 800 patients who visit this area of hospital rehabilitation, 40% are diagnosed with low back pain and derived pathologies. They suffer from backaches at least once in their life and are affected in different ways, according to each case.

"It is one of the main factors of daily discomfort that even causes work absenteeism," said Ana Zhapán, who is in charge of the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Unit of the hospital.

Eight out of 10 people will suffer from backaches at some point in their life, according to the World Health Organization and certified by the physiatrist Zhapán, who insisted that back problems regularly affect about 20 percent of the population

### Methods

There are now many effective methods to treat severe back pain and herniated discs that are applied in this hospital.

Pain management, patients with prostheses and injuries are treated "through therapy in which the procedure is located and ultrasound machines, compresses and control machines are used," said Zhapán.

In the area of traumatology, magnetos, laser, shortwave that generates internal heat, bicycle and exercises are the most used procedures to help people with fractures or who have come out of some surgical intervention.

The José Carrasco Arteaga hospital also has two decompressors for lumbar pathologies and one for cervical and disc hernias.

A good number of pathologies, such as herniated discs, can also be solved with semi-invasive techniques or even with rehabilitation.

The so-called semi-invasive surgical methods such as intradiscal ozone therapy, kyphoplasty, laminoplasty are used more every day. Or when possible, non-surgical techniques are used, such as traction machines to decompress and reduce the herniated disc without surgery.

"Only in more serious cases in which they produce disabling neurological damage, do we resort to conventional surgery," said Zhapán.



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## Finance Minister says new proposal for fuel subsidy changes will go to legislature by end of October (Cont.)

to take in their ideas that have helped the Executive to build the new policy grants.

In a radio interview with the Ecuadorian Broadcasting Association, Richard Martínez, Minister of Economy and Finance, said work has been done to expand the dialogue. "The Conaie is a representative of the society, but [knew] we must expand the dialogue to all groups at the national level," he said.

The "rationalization" or targeting of the subsidies has several steps; for example, to distinguish that gasoline has a different consumption compared to diesel. Martínez explained that the consumption of gasoline is linked to vehicles that circulate in the city and countryside, but that does not necessarily include people in conditions of poverty. On the other hand, the use of diesel has an effect on the entire production chain and, for this reason, [has a huge impact on people living in poverty] and requires a differentiated analysis.

"We have received at least ten proposals for different types of targeting instruments through technological tools," he said. Another scenario is "gradualness," that is, having a mechanism that gradually allows the subsidy to be withdrawn.

The challenge facing the budget for 2020 is basically to ensure a correction of the fiscal deficit. Martínez said there will be no increase in the budget, but that a greater reorganization and efficiency in the annual investment plan is being sought.

"We are working to reorganize the Annual Investment Plan to ensure it has a focus a little more tied to the growing economic investment in infrastructure to bring more competitiveness to sectors related to production," he said.

Extracted from Diario EL COMERCIO

## Attorney general may file charges against Vargas for statements about indigenous army



The Attorney General's Office has initiated a preliminary investigation into the statements made in Macas by the president of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (Conaie), Jaime Vargas, who circulated a video that went viral on social networks in which he called for the creation of a "proper army" of the indigenous movement.

At an assembly in Morona Santiago during the weekend, Vargas said, "We are going to organize with our ex-combatants, with our community security, we have to make our own army," he said.

Following the statements made by Vargas, the Prosecutor's Office is considering an alleged offense of article 349 of the Comprehensive Criminal Code. The article states that "persons who promote, direct, or participate in armed organizations, [or] command combat groups, terrorist groups or cells, aimed at subverting public order, replacing the Armed Forces and National Police, attacking them or interfering with their normal performance, will be punished with imprisonment for five to seven years."

Juan Sebastián Roldán, private secretary of President Lenín Moreno, said that the President is concerned about these statements by Vargas, which he described as a crime. He also said he would deliver a complaint to the Prosecutor for the "kidnappings" of 300 police and military during the demonstrations last week.

Vargas issued a clarification regarding his interventions. He noted that the formation of the indigenous guard "is born of our right to self-determination and is a constitutive part of legal pluralism, for surveillance, control, alarm, protection and defense of our territories and communities."

"The indigenous guard is a reality and exists in our territories or organizations, does not have a military structure and exists ancestral," he said.

Vargas questioned why that despite issuing a clarification regarding his interventions, the Prosecutor's Office opened the investigation against him.

## Salaries suspended for Ecuadorian politicians hiding in Mexican embassy

The Legislative Administration Council (CAL) of the Parliament of Ecuador, has suspended the salary of several assembly members who have been staying inside the Mexican embassy for more than a week. The assembly members sought "protection" from political persecution from the Mexican government.

The president of the National Assembly, César Litardo, explained on Twitter that the CAL has also suspended the salary of the assemblyman Yofre Poma, who was arrested on October 7th—during the country's 11 days of social protests—for the alleged crime of "paralysis of public services."

"On the situation of several legislators, we have resolved in the CAL to suspend the payment of the salary to the assembly members residing in the Mexican embassy. In the same way [we have suspended the salary] to assembly man Yofre Poma, during the time that he remains under arrest", explained Litardo.

The President of the National Assembly also announced that "alternates will be put in place," that is that other assembly members will take on the functions of the assembly members under arrest and in hiding in the Mexican embassy.

cont. page 8.

The other legislators whose salaries have been suspended are Gabriela Rivadeneira, Carlos Viteri, Soledad Buendía and the alternate assemblyman Luis Fernando Molina. All of these legislators are related to the Citizen Revolution movement (initiated by former Ecuador president Rafael Correa), that was formed last year as a split from the ruling party, Alianza País (AP), after Lenin Moreno assumed the office of President.



The leaders of the indigenous people who starred in the protests attributed the high level of aggression to infiltrators, while the Executive also maintains that that opposition politicians, including Correa, allegedly tried to destabilize the democracy, a claim denied by the former president.

The assembly members are not the only authorities that have requested protection at the Mexican embassy after the protests that shook the country for eleven days. They were joined by the trustee of the Prefecture of the province of Pichincha, Leónidas Moreno, as well as the spouses of Buendía and Viteri, Edwin Jarrín and Tania Pauker, who worked in the Citizen Participation Council.

Extracted from Diario El Mercurio

## Cuenca's bus fleet continues to be renewed at a rate of 19 buses a month



José Ochoa has been a bus owner for 23 years and recently bought a new vehicle at a cost of \$125,000, money he borrowed from a financial entity. The debt term that many carriers like him take to finance their buses is five, six and seven years, with monthly fees ranging from \$ 1,500 or more,

depending on the term.

On average, the new units cost around \$125,000, depending on the brand, either Hino, Chevrolet, Volkswagen or Agrale.

"People who have worked in the United States or who have relatives there who help them, can finance a car," he says. "But for the carriers to buy new buses requires a huge investment. Once the vehicle that goes out of circulation, (after 15 or 20 years of service, their resale value is only between \$5,000 to \$10,000."

In Cuenca, carriers are now required to buy new buses (to replace their current fleet) and put them into circulation by March 2020.

This renewal is made based on the provisions of the "Ordinance regulating the conditions for the improvement of the quality of the public transport service in the city", issued in 2014, that stipulates, "within the minimum conditions for the provision of services, the issue of the renewal of the vehicle fleet in full, within the period established by the Renovation Plan."

The city has 475 urban transport buses. So far 80% of those have been renewed. The other 20% will do so in the remaining five months of time. In Cuenca, the oldest buses—the blue buses—that still circulate date from 2004 and 2005.

Manolo Solís, president of the Chamber of Transportation of Cuenca, points out that so far, the progress in this process of changes is encouraging. The "red with beige" buses now seen in the city were made in 2019. Also, they are two types of buses on the streets now, Type 1 buses (80% of the fleet) and Type 2 buses (20% of the fleet).

Type 1 is a three-door bus, with capacity for 90 passengers, preferential seats, and spaces for wheelchair passengers. Type 2 has a lift in the door at the center of the bus that allows the driver to lower a platform to street level so a person in a wheelchair can board the bus without problem.

The process of renewal of Cuenca's bus fleet began in 2018 in synch with the deadline agreements reached with the Municipality of Cuenca.

Approximately 19 buses are replaced each month. The replacement of the 475 buses in Cuenca amounts to an investment of \$60 million.

## Ecuadorian dies participating in protests in Santiago Chile (Cont.)

On Sunday, the president of Chile, Sebastián Piñera, said that the country is "at war against a powerful and implacable enemy," in relation to the violent groups that have plunged the country into a state of emergency.

"We are at war against a powerful and relentless enemy who does not respect anything or anyone and who is willing to use violence without any limit even when it means the loss of human lives, with the sole purpose of producing the greatest possible damage," Piñera said in a public appearance before the press.

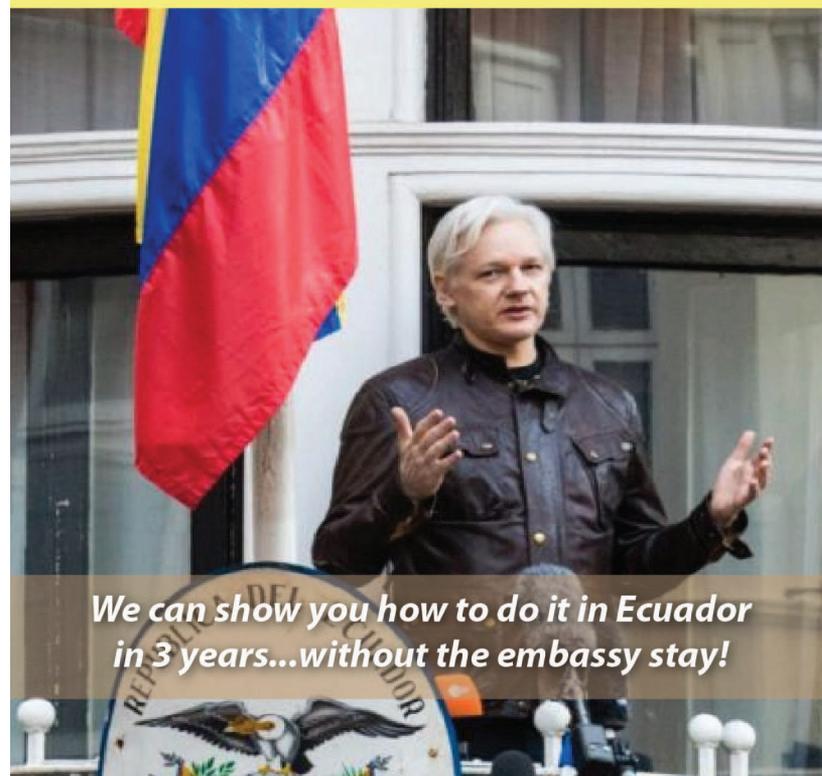
"They are at war against all Chileans who want to live in democracy," he added.

Extracted from Diario El Mercurio

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# CRIME REPORT AND ACCIDENT REPORT

## Cuenca Area Traffic Accidents

\* On the night of Friday, October 18, 2019, at 7:30 p.m., on the Azogues Basin road, in the roundabout of the Baguanchi road. A crash between a car and a motorcycle occurred, injuring one person who was transferred to the José Carrasco Arteaga Hospital.

\* On Sunday, October 20, around 3:00 a.m., ECUg11 received a report of a traffic accident on Ricardo Durán avenue, on the old road to the Banosbaths. A car and a motorcycle occupied by two people were involved.

The accident resulted in the death of a Gabriela Alexandra ChablaBizhco, 22 and injuries to a 25-year-old man who were riding on the motorcycle. The man was transferred to the José Carrasco Arteaga Hospital of the IESS.

\* Five people injured were the result of a traffic accident on the road to the Cajason Monday afternoon, October 21, 2019.

The incident occurred around 4:00 p.m., when a taxi and a gray Vitara SZ vehicle, for ran into each other.

Paramedic personnel of the Ecuadorian Red Cross, Firefighters of Cuenca, IESS and agents of the Traffic Commission arrived at the place to attend to five people who were injured in the accident.

The cause of the accident remains under investigation.

## Cuenca and National Criminal Activity

(Cuenca) On Tuesday, a group of five criminals stole an ATM that was installed in a building located in Challuabamba, east of Cuenca. The ATM of the Pacific Bank was located in a mini-market.

A security camera located in one of the commercial premises of the area showed the criminals removing the ATM at 2:40 a.m.

The five criminals detached the ATM with chains anchored to a white van and after accomplishing their task they fled towards Gualaceo, via the Jadán route.

(Cuenca) An informal trader reacted violently when he was prevented from entering an urban bus to offer products to passengers. The bus driver told the merchant that he cannot offer products due to a ban, there was insistence from the seller and threats that ended with the seller throwing a blunt object against the glass of a window and breaking it.

The event happened last Monday, around 7:00 p.m., on Héroes de Verdeloma Avenue and Luis Cordero Street, in downtown Cuenca.

(Cuenca) During the weekend, the uniformed citizens of the Citizen Guard of Cuenca (GCC) arrested three alleged criminals in the Free Fair sector for being involved in two criminal acts.

Santiago Mejia, inspector of the GCC, reported that when they were conducting public order control patrols on the EL Arenal platform, they were alerted by a citizen who informed them that a subject robbed him of a cell phone.

He added that the alleged offender was located and neutralized with the evidence and handed over to National Police personnel. He also commented that hours later two individuals were arrested and placed under the orders of police officers because they stole another cell phone.

(Cuenca) On Friday morning in San Lucas, criminals stole accessories from a Chevrolet Luv truck. The owner noticed the robbery when he was getting ready to leave his children at school.

The owner of the truck said that days ago he observed that an unknown vehicle was traveling through the sector, so he suspects that the antisocials would have been following him and waited for the right moment to act.

Another neighbor reported that he was also a victim of crime last Tuesday. He reported that his truck computer was stolen, among other accessories, when the car was parked in the yard of his home.

(Cuenca) On Monday, two subjects aboard a black motorcycle that circulated on the San José de Balzay road, assaulted a student, intimidated him with a gun and

then took his cell phone.

He indicated that he alerted the neighbors and followed them through the sectors of San Lucas, El Lirio, La Dolorosa and Río Amarillo. The subjects managed to escape towards Ordóñez Lasso Avenue. He explained that antisocials use motorcycles that are easy-moving vehicles to flee.

Also, another assault occurred in San José de Balzay where a young man was hit with the handle of a firearm in the head by criminals who escaped on a motorcycle.

(Cuenca) Last Friday morning a citizen was robbed by two criminals who were on a motorcycle, on Alfonso Moreno and Francisco Moscoso streets, near the University of Azuay (UDA), south of Cuenca.

The criminals threw the girl to the ground and hit her in the face, cutting her. The subjects also stole her cell phone and when they heard the screams of the neighbors, they escaped in an unknown direction.

Similarly, a young student who was traveling through the sector said that last week, when he went to his home, after leaving class, he was approached by two individuals riding a black motorcycle. The criminals seized his cell phone and cash on Veintisiete de Febrero avenue and Jaime Rosales.

Inhabitants of the area explained that the assaults on students and pedestrians happen almost every day. They confirmed that it would be the same criminals who use a black motorcycle to storm around UDA.

(Guayas) An operation led by the Prosecutor's Office of Guayas let to the arrest of three people for their alleged involvement in processing and illegal issuance of driver's licenses. They were selling these illegal licenses for between \$80 and \$150.

The Prosecutor's report notes that based on citizen complaints, investigations began in September 2019, about an organization of people in charge of processing driver's licenses.

To carry out this process, they falsified medical exams, including the psychosensometric testing that examines the physical, mental and motor coordination skills of people. In addition, they modified schedules, to the detriment of other users who had appointments months in advance.

The prosecutor of the Public Faith Unit, Alex López Ávila, said that a CTE official is among the detainees.



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**WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN AND BEYOND....**

"What's Happening..." is updated weekly with a large variety of events that both ex-pats and Ecuadorians will enjoy. If you have an interesting event you would like to publicize, email [info@thecuencadispatch](mailto:info@thecuencadispatch) for consideration.

## Cuenca Independence Day schedule available for download



The Municipality of Cuenca presented the agenda of events for the "199 years of Independence of Cuenca," which will be held during the last days of October and throughout the month of November.

Among the notable events are, on November 1st in the Parque La Libertad, the "National Music Concert," with several artists among them, Yavirac, Margarita Laso and Wachuka Tonic.

On November 2nd, at the esplanade of the Alejandro Serrano Aguilar Stadium, the Emerging Music Festival will be held, with the national bands Swing Original Monks, La Máquina Camaleón, La Madre Tirana and Arena Helmets.

The Huaynacapazo is scheduled for November 2nd with several orchestra and artists such as Lady Laura, Maria de los Angeles, Cecy Narvaez, Rossy War of Peru, the Rosario Brothers of the Dominican Republic among others.

And, the Chola Cuencana will be elected on November 3rd at Ex Crea.

A PDF of the entire schedule of events can be downloaded at:

[http://www.cuenca.gob.ec/sites/default/files/agenda2019\\_](http://www.cuenca.gob.ec/sites/default/files/agenda2019_)

INTERIORES\_web.pdf

Extracted from Diario El Tiempo

## Classifieds and Events

### October 28th -

#### **Mujeres Con Exito Asian Delights Vietnamese Dinner**

The meal will be served at 6 pm at Mujeres Con Exito, located at Baltazara de Calderon 2-26 y Miguel Velez (2 blocks west of San Sebastian Plaza).

The cost is \$10 per person

Contact name: Debby Larsen

Email address: [mcereservations@gmail.com](mailto:mcereservations@gmail.com)

### October 28th -

#### **Backgammon tournament at Common Grounds**

"Backgammon" tournaments every Monday at Common Grounds Sports Bar, Classes for beginners and practice for others begins at 2:00 and the Tournament will begin at 3:00. \$5 entry fee for the tournament, all proceeds go to cash prizes to the champion of the day, Common Grounds will award delicious food and drinks! HAPPY HOUR ALL DAY!

\* free classes for beginners

Time: 3:00 pm

Contact: Olger

phone: 0981079406

### October 29th -

#### **Cuenca Trivia Night at Common Grounds**

Hosted by Linda Chase. 5:00-6:30 Food, Drinks and Social. 6:30-8:00 Games with Prizes

Special menu for you with most of your favorite items including quesadillas, meat loaf dinner or sandwich, our famous onion rings, and awesome desserts and root beer floats..

Come join us for this sensational event!!! Newbies are always welcome!!!

Contact name: Cristian Contact number: 0981079406

Email address: [commongrounds@outlook.com](mailto:commongrounds@outlook.com)

### October 29th -

#### **El Otorongo Handycraft FESTIVAL 2019**

From Tuesday, October 29th to Monday, November 4th.

Place: El Otorongo Square.

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

### October 30th -

#### **Routes of Legend - Patrimonial Cemetery of Cuenca**

In commemoration of the deceased's day, we will visit the Patrimonial Cemetery of Cuenca with the theme of #RutasdeLeyenda, organized by Tourism and Culture - Archdiocese of Cuenca and the Barajo Artistic Collective, with the support of EMUCE EP Patrimonial Cemetery.

Do not stay out of this great experience, book now ...

Time: (6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.) Two schedules.

Cost: \$ 10.00 General value and \$ 7.00 preferential value (3rd Age, Children over 10 years, students, people with disabilities).

Meeting point: Av. González Suárez (Main Gate).

More information at 098 112 5407 or (07) 2 83 4636

### October 31st -

#### **Halloween Costume Party!**

Get your Halloween costumes ready for Oct. 31st at Santa Canela Bar with live band Gatos Negros. Prizes for the 1st and 2nd best costumes. Cover \$5. One free Canelazo drink with entry.

Happy hour 4-8pm, dinner 5-7pm, music starts at 7:30pm. Reserve your table now. We'll have a full house. Boooooo...

Address: "Santa Canela Bar". Calle larga 3-82 and Vargas Machuca.

Phone: 0997269237

### October 31st -

#### **Spooky Costume OBG Dance on Halloween at Common Grounds**

Happy Hour is from 5 - 7pm with Great Food All Evening.

Drink Specials & Music from 7 - 10pm.

Prizes for the Best Male & Female Costumes.

For The Costume Impaired We will Have Masks Available For Purchase.

Location: Eduardo Crespo Malo and Gran Colombia.

Venue: Seating re-designed to accommodate our dancers.

Parking: Free parking information: Behind Common Grounds on Jose Asutillo.

Bus service: Bus service to Common Grounds location: #13, #14, #19, #3 & #50

Donation: \$5 per person. Exact change is helpful.

Bar service: Full service bar at reasonable prices. Please do not bring your own drinks since this is the revenue for the venue, and we must be fair to them.

Dancing: All styles are welcome to the music provided.

PLEASE email us and tell us if you are coming and the number of people joining you. This way we can keep everyone abreast of all developments and

we can set up the venue for the expected attendance.

Contact: Rene

phone: [obgdance@gmail.com](mailto:obgdance@gmail.com)

### November 1st -

#### **Student Parade**

CUENCA PATRIMONIO CULTURAL DE LA HUMANIDAD EN SU BICENTENARIO

Place: Av. Solano

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

### November 1st to November 4th

#### **XVII Handycrafts Festival of America**

The most important Handicraft Festival of the entire continent

with more than a hundred artisans selected by an international court and the representation of those who have earned UNESCO recognition for artisan excellence and the CIDAP Medal.  
Address: Av. 3 de noviembre (next to the "Escalinatas"), Cuenca.  
Time: From 09:00 am to 08:30 pm (until Nov. 4th).

**November 1st -**

**Electronic Music Festival Tripy Tripy**

Place: Colegio de Arquitectos del Azuay. Calle de la Opera & del Charango, Control Sur.  
Time: 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m.

**November 1st to November 4th**

**Destino Sur 2019 (South Destination)**

Destino Sur is a space created to promote entrepreneurship, crafts, producers, beer culture, cocktails and Ecuadorean and international gastronomic culture, celebrating Cuenca traditions in a large heritage area of the city, paying close attention to special details from the smallest of the home to the biggest, with daily themes, and entertainment like no other.

- \* More than 60 stands of gastronomic exhibitors, artisans and producers.
  - \* Activations of our sponsors.
  - \* Keynote talks by San Isidro.
  - \* Argentina Grill.
  - \* Children's area with recreational activities for the little ones to enjoy the best moments.
  - \* Artistic activities with music, concerts, djs, art and more cultural resources.
  - \* All this in the best environment that only Casa de Mayo can offer you.
- FREE ENTRY

**November 1st to November 4th**

**Artisanal Festival "OTORONGO CUNA DE ARTESANOS"**

Place: Plaza de El Otorongo  
Time: 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

**November 1st - November 2nd**

**Traditional Food Festival**

You'll can taste different traditional dishes like: Hornado, Cuy con Papas, Colada Morada, Guaguas de Pan, Morocho, etc.  
Place: Mercado El Arenal - Mercado 10 de Agosto - Mercado 3 de Noviembre - Mercado 27 de Febrero - Mercado 12 de Abril - Mercado 9 de Octubre.  
Time: 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

**November 1st to November 3rd**

**"El Mercadito" Handicraft and Design Fair**

The best of design, gastronomy and crafts in the best fair with the best atmosphere.  
Place: Terraza de Todos Santos, beside Todos Santos church.  
Time: 10:00 a.m.

**November 1st to November 3rd**

Gastronomic Festival CHUYA MIKUNA 2019  
Place: Casa de la Provincia  
Time: 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**November 2nd -**

**Concert of the Symphony Orchesta of the University of Cuenca**

Place: Patrimonial Cemetery of Cuenca  
Time: 11:45 a.m.

**November 2nd -**

**Emerging Music Festival**

The Emerging Music Festival will be held, with the national bands Swing Original Monks, La Máquina Camaleón, La Madre Tirana and Arena Hel-mets.  
Place: at the esplanade of the Alejandro Serrano Aguilar Stadium.  
Time: 4:00 p.m.

**November 3rd -**

**Cuenca's Independence**

**The city of Cuenca declares its independence from the Spanish crown on November 3, 1820.**



**Worship Services**

**The International Christian Community**

What: We are open to Christians of all backgrounds and our main goal is to love one another in the Lord. Come and enjoy "God With Us".

When: Every Sunday at 11:00 a.m. (in English). Coffee fellowship after the service.

Where: Nicanor Aguilar and Solano (one block north of Monte Sinai Hospital).

Contact info: Email info@internationalchristiancommunity.org

**Calvary Chapel Cuenca this Sunday - English and Spanish Services**

What: Calvary Chapel has been formed as a fellowship of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

When: Sunday's service in English at 9:30 a.m., in Spanish at 8 a.m. and also at 11 a.m.

Where: Our location is at the western end of bus line #22, Juan Pio Montufar and Primera Convención

Cost: Free

Solution to Sudoku puzzle on page 3

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

# Real Estate & Rentals



**FOR SALE**

## The Best Place to live in Cuenca

ATLANTIDA is not just a building, this is a full housing project with recreational areas and Spacious apartments only 10 minute walk to Centro Histórico, Universities, Hospitals and more.

**Contact:**  
Ma. Paula Carpio T.  
0998059463  
jtoral8@hotmail.com



**FOR SALE**

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**Contact:**  
Ma. Paula Carpio T.  
0998059463  
jtoral8@hotmail.com



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## Fully furnished Condo for Rent in LA MARTINA

Third floor, two bedrooms, two bathrooms, parking space for two cars and storage unit. The building has an elevator, a huge terrace with BBQ area, gym, security 24/7. Excellent location, close to the Milenium Mall, Supermaxi Vergel, Parque de la Madre. Pets are not allowed in the building.  
\$620 per month, one year lease. All inclusive.

**Contact:**  
Marna Feican  
099 840 9884  
feicangm@gmail.com



**FOR RENT**

## Big Shared-Garden-Apartment for Rent near El Centro

This unit is located in the Santa Ines Hospital area and comes with: 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, one parking space, a terrace, a covered laundry room, and of course a huge shared garden. \*The price includes water and gas. Price \$500.

**Contact:**  
Mónica León  
0999 880 979  
monileonera@yahoo.com



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**Contact:**  
Iván Neira  
+593 984747607 (wp only)  
officecuenca@gmail.com



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