

# THE CUENCA DISPATCH

Ecuador's Original English-Language Newspaper

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## Moreno visits Cuenca and talks about investments

The investment that the National Government has earmarked for Cuenca in the last two years is \$450 million, announced President Lenin Moreno during his visit to the city last week. The Ecuador's Head of State visited Cuenca to celebrate its 199 years of independence alongside the Mayor of Cuenca, Pedro Palacios Ullauri.

Moreno mentioned that the \$450 million is the amount that has been delivered via direct investment and by law assignments. In his speech he said that the best way to celebrate the capital of Azuay is with "good news," so he talked about the projects the national government has supported since he took office. In 2019, the Moreno administration has delivered \$10 million to Cuenca for water and sanitation, \$3 million for five parks and recreation areas, \$1.6 million for the Mirador de Turi, \$7 million for the All-Life Plan and \$30 million in bonds for 33,000 people with limited resources. He also mentioned Cuenca's planned water treatment plant.

"A few weeks ago we [also] signed the sovereign guarantee for the construction of the Guanguarcho Water Treatment Plant, for about \$68 million. It will be the most modern treatment plant in South America," said the President.

Five community integration centers will also be built. In addition, he



highlighted the investment of \$16.8 million in the 'Youth Employment' project.

"In Azuay we have 241 beneficiaries," he said.

Following the request of Mayor Palacios for the State to continue its support in the realization of local projects, President Moreno said that they are guarantors of a \$50 million loan with the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF) for the new market of transfer, public spaces and roads.

The Government will also allocate \$130 million in loans from Ban Ecuador and the National Financial Corporation for 12,000 loans to entrepreneurs, \$25 million from the Bank of IESS in mortgage loans, \$150,000 for rehabilitation studies at

cont. page 4.

## 7 National Court of Justice judges under investigations for "disproportionate increases" in assets



The results of an evaluation of the assets of the judges of the National Court of Justice is part of the report that the Evaluation Committee delivered to the Judicial Council at the beginning of last October.

One of the findings was the 'disproportionate' increase in the assets of seven national judges, over a four-year period. The evaluators indicated that one of those magistrates entered the High Court with an estate valued at \$300,000, and at present has assets valued at \$1.2

cont. page 4.

## Air Canada Quito to Toronto flights start in December

On December 8, 2019, Air Canada will begin operations in Ecuador with three weekly direct weekly flights between Toronto and Quito.

"This marks a new stage in connectivity between the two countries and constitutes an additional means to promote the tourism, commercial, investment and academic mobility sectors with Canada," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

The Ministry said that Air Canada's entry into operation in Ecuador is the result of its management, through the Embassy of Ecuador in Ottawa, as well as the support given by other public and private groups such as Mariscal Sucre Airport and the Municipality of Quito.

These efforts were based on the Agreement on Air

cont. page 6.



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# I'M JUST SAYIN'

By Michael Soares

## It's cultural

We're nearing the end of our remodel in Yunguilla. Last week the third layer of plaster was sanded, and the painting began. It will probably be done this week. And then the new flooring will go in. After that we will have to wait sometime for our cabinets to be completed, but that is really all that will be left to do.

We've been lucky enough to have an amazing Ecuadorian contractor doing the job for us. He had worked construction in the US for 7 years and really knows what expats expect. Both from a visual perspective and a safety perspective.

Everything here has been done to the highest level. We overbuilt the steel structure for the addition. We used elastomeric paint for the first coat on the plaster. We painted 5 coats throughout the house. And so on, and so on.

In other words, our guy got it. He knew the right way and the wrong way to do things, and he always went with the right way.

But I wouldn't have wanted his job for anything in the world. Because, he has a large team of Ecuadorians that he has to manage and no matter how good he is at it, a couple of the workers were lazy and spent as much effort trying to avoid work, as they would have spent working.

Fortunately for us, he picked up on that quickly and took them off the job. He said to me, "I gave them a chance to get to do better work. They just couldn't see how they would be better off being a painter than a laborer." Now those guys are digging holes and pouring concrete.

Anyway, as I said, our guy was great, the job was WELL done, and we have no complaints. We would recommend him in a minute. Especially since he saw the problems with his two workers. I didn't have to tell him.

But I can't help but think, "What were they thinking?" Why would they go out of their way to not do a good job on easy work?

This is something we often saw with local people that we hired for the restaurant. Some incredibly hard and some worked didn't even try. Like with our contractor's two guys, they didn't last long either.

Now, I'm not saying that Ecuadorians aren't hard workers. So many of the people that worked for us were. But what we did see is that, those who weren't good workers actually tried hard not to be good workers. Like it was a challenge to them.

I remember one guy in particular that Codie talked to about his work habits, explaining that if he didn't try harder, he would be fired. He apologized, said he understood, and said he really needed the job because his wife just had a baby.

Then he went out of her office, proceeded to flirt with a female employee and did absolutely nothing for the rest of this shift. He got fired. Then he begged to stay and asked how we could do this to him when he had a family to support. Simply put, we told him, "You work too hard at not working."

I talked to some of our good employees about this and they told me it's cultural. That some Ecuadorians still resent "Jefe" (the boss). Even if "Jefe" treats them well. Even if "Jefe" is an Ecuadorian (and in many cases, more so).

This all still goes back to the Spanish conquest of the Ecuadorians and them basically being treated as lower class citizens. That has not been forgotten, and probably never will be.

Because about 71% of the country is "mestizo," meaning they are of Indigenous and Caucasian descent. And they are still often treated as a lower class. They likely all have family histories that talk about abuse from Jefe. About being cheated out of wages and insurance or even land. About so many atrocities that it becomes hard to list them or fathom them. We've been told stories by people we know out here in the country, and frankly some of them are pretty unbelievable.

So, when I take all that into account, I can understand why the people that worked (shortly) for us acted the way they did, and why two of our contractor's guys were like that. But I find it sad.

Because now, instead of punishing Jefe, they are punishing themselves. We gave them good jobs, with insurance and a pension, and paid holidays and all the benefits they are entitled to in Ecuador (something MANY employers do not do in Cuenca). And I know our contractor treats his guys well also. He is trying to help guys move up from hard labor to easier work.

But to this small set of people, their past history is stopping them from getting a better future history. And from having a better life.

It's cultural. I get it. And I accept it. But someday, something has to give. Because otherwise, the people who have been abused will continue to be so, just this time it will be by their own hands.

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## Fun By The Numbers

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Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9X9 grid, broken down into nine 3X3 boxes. To solve a Sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the number will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

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

See answers on page 11

## Moreno visits Cuenca and talks about investments (Cont.)

the headquarters of the House of Ecuadorian Culture, Azuay.

It is also contributing \$490 million for the construction of 60 kilometers of the Cumbe - Cuenca - Azogues - Biblián corridor, a highway that will benefit the provinces of Azuay and Cañar.

The President said that Cuenca can count on his administration for new projects that they need, especially on the eve of the Bicentennial of Independence, to be held on November 3, 2020. One of the emblematic works that is expected to start working is the Tram transportation system, described by Palacios as "a dream that became a nightmare" but that they hope will be activated soon.

Extracted from Diario EL TIEMPO

## 7 National Court of Justice judges under investigations for "disproportionate increases" in assets (Cont.)

million.

This information in the Committee's report was obtained after those being evaluated authorized the review of their financial statements. Another national court judge entered the Court in 2015 with an estate of \$180,000, which is currently valued at \$900,000.

The report prepared by the Committee mentions that these increases "attract attention" and it is recommended that the Judiciary ask for explanations from the judges mentioned and investigate their actions.

"We established the observations and sent them to the Judicial Council to take the relevant disciplinary or legal actions. We do not say they are guilty, we only ask that they investigate whether there was an unjustified increase," said Juan Carlos Mejia, a member of the Evaluation Committee. Another member of the Committee agrees that it is necessary to investigate these asset increases, because every year the seven judges would receive an additional \$400,000.

"They may have lucrative private activities, but they also do not appear in the statements made by officials annually. It only reflects the salary they receive in the Court and, in some cases, the salary they have as teachers."

These seven magistrates are part of a list of 24, that during the assessment did not reach the minimum score to remain in their positions. In addition, among the judges who failed the valuation there are two that did not make their financial information available, since they did not authorize lifting the bank secrecy for reviewing their assets. Nor did they present a notarized certification stating that they have no assets or money in tax havens.

Judiciary member, Fausto Murillo, said that this week the Plenary will meet to analyze the data in the report. The official said that an internal inquiry is planned to find out if any of these judges committed disciplinary offenses. "If this is the case, we will send these findings to the Office of the Comptroller General of the State or to the Prosecutor's Office, to open the investigations."

On March 25, the Bureau for Truth and Justice, which investigated the persecution that occurred during Correism, presented its 249-page report. In that report there are alleged payments of bribes to judges in exchange for not being accused or charged. "In the case of '30-S' for example, there is a complaint that rates were established that reached \$70,000," to resolve an appeal in the National Court of Justice.

In another case, related to 30-S, a similar event occurred. High Court judges would ask defendants for \$60,000 not to condemn them. In that case 52 people were investigated. According to the Bureau, one of them decided not to hand over the money and was sentenced to three months in jail.

The spouse of one of the magistrates was charged with collecting the money, says the investigation. The Bureau also detected that in some cases, the cash was received by a trusted lawyer. According to one of the evaluators, these cases of illegal collections were detailed in the document delivered to the Judiciary.

Extracted from Diario EL COMERCIO

## Local and national flower producers lost millions during November strike



After incurring losses of \$40 million during the 11-day strike against Executive Decree 883, Ecuador's floriculture sector is facing the challenge of increasing national sales and exports to make up for the shortfalls.

To calculate the total losses, the Association of Producers and Exporters of Flowers, (Expoflores), interviewed their 206 members who have farms in Azuay, Cañar, Chimborazo, Cotopaxi, Tungurahua and part of the Coast.

Alejandro Martínez, Executive President of Expoflores, said that of the \$40 million lost, between 10 and 12 percent reflect the impact on producers in the Azuay and Cañar provinces.

Martínez as representative of the union has approached both Banecuador and the National Finance Corporation (CFN), to secure economic support.

"The first thing is to get companies to have access to short-term credit so as not to have short-term cash-flow problems," Martínez explains.

He also said it's important and to consider the challenges ahead in recovering the crops that were affected, many of them, for lack of maintenance during the 11 days.

Because flowers sales and crop maintenance stopped during the strike, around 12,000 tons of flowers were lost, representing approximately 5 percent of the turnover of the year in the sector. Expoflores calculates that exports will further fall by 2 percent in 2019, compared to 2018.

Another point that he touched on is that the trust of the clients abroad must be recovered. Many stopped receiving merchandise because it was impossible to fulfill the shipment.

Eduardo Ramírez, manager of the Cuenca branch of the CFN, said that credit lines for agriculture are managed nationally and that the doors are open for producers in the province to obtain economic support.

Ecuagenera, whose main headquarters are in Gualaceo and which specializes in the production and conservation of orchid species and hybrids, was heavily affected during the days of national unemployment.

One of the founders of the company, José Portillas, said that thanks to the work and commitment of its employees, that they managed to take the plants on foot or by motorcycle to the airport in Cuenca.

From there they were transferred to the Guayaquil or Quito airport to be exported. "Our customers around the world did not realize the problem we had here, but domestic sales were at zero," said Portillas.

"There were no customers and I estimate, being very conservative, that our losses amount to \$70,000," he added. In addition to this, the flights on those days became more expensive.

To make more income to ensure they had cash flow and enough money to cover the company's expenses and staff salaries, Ecuagenera had an open house from October 30th thru November 4th. During the open house, they sold some orchid hybrids at discounts of more than 60 percent.

Ecuagenera has four forests where orchids are grown, and genetic crosses are made to achieve the 4,000 varieties they have in the world and national markets.

Extracted from Diario EL TIEMPO

## ECU-911 responded to almost 3,800 emergencies during holidays



Ecuador's Integrated Security Service (ECU-911) coordinated the care of 3,797 emergencies during the Fiestas of Cuenca and Azogues, (from Thursday, October 31 to Monday, November 4, 2019) in the Azuay and Cañar provinces. About 83% of those occurred in Azuay province; 17% were in the Cañar province.

### Azuay

In Azuay, 3,152 emergencies were recorded. Those with the most emergencies were; Cuenca had 2,733 emergencies equivalent to 87%; Gualaceo, had 95 or 3%; Camilo Ponce Enriquez had 63, or 2% of emergencies.

Of the total emergencies reported in Azuay, 57% corresponded to Public Safety, 15% to Health Management, 14% to Traffic and Mobility. The remaining 14% were spread across other sub-types.

In comparison to the Fiestas de Cuenca of 2018, there was a reduction of 15.13% in the total of coordinated emergencies in the province, from 3,714 in 2018 to 3,152 in 2019.

### Cañar

The province of Cañar recorded 645 emergencies during the Fiestas of Cuenca. Within this, the cantons with the highest frequency of emergencies were: Azogues, with 330 equivalent to 51%; La Troncal, with 168, or 26%; Cañar, with 58 or 9%, and Biblián, with 39 or 6%

Of the total emergencies reported in the province of Cañar, 70% correspond to Public Safety, 15% to Health Management, 11% to Traffic and Mobility. The remaining 4% were spread across other sub-types.

Extracted from Diario EL TIEMPO

## Holiday tourism numbers expected to exceed last year



During a press conference on Monday, The Minister of Tourism, Rosi Prado, described the country's internal tourism during the holiday for the Day of the Dead and Independence of Cuenca, from November 1 to 4, 2019, as "positive." Prado said more than 565,000 people toured Ecuador during the holiday.

The most visited tourist destinations were on the Ecuadorian Coast accounting for 49.5%; this was closely followed by destinations in the Andean region with 45.9% of the holiday tourists. After thanking the Ecuadorians who decided to do domestic tourism, Prado said that these results allow to restore the country's economy.

"We want to end the year this way," she said. According to the minister, the 2019 holiday income for the tourism sector is expected to exceed the \$56 million reported in 2018.

The most visited cities during the four holiday days were: Quito, Guayaquil, Atacames, Cuenca, Ambato, Latacunga, Salinas, Manta, Riobamba and Santo Domingo.

The minister said that last week, to promote the country's destinations, an internal promotion campaign began in social networks, print media and on public roads.

"This campaign is the result of a "self-managed" effort carried out by the Ministry of Tourism, which meant a saving of more than \$400,000 for the State."

The minister also reported that—according to data collected at the Quito Airport—there was a growth of 3% in European tourists, but 30% less of American tourists.

Prado said that this week a National Promotion Campaign starts that will be designed to remind tourists to keep Ecuador in mind when they plan their 2020 vacations. This campaign will cost around \$500,000.

Extracted from Diario EL TIEMPO

## Traffic accidents increased during Holidays but public transport proved to be very safe

ECU-911 reported 2,479 traffic accidents, during this year's the Day of the Dead and Independence of Cuenca holidays. That's in comparison to 2,211 traffic accidents in 2018 (in increase of about 12%).

Juan Zapata, General Director of ECU 911, also reported 24 deaths due to traffic accidents occurred during the November holidays.

Carla Arellano, Executive Deputy Director of the National Transit Agency (ANT), also reported that from Thursday, October 31st to Monday, November 4th, 211,738 people travelled on public transport; 9 people were slightly injured in public transport traffic accidents.

She also said that the monitoring of the 12,000 intra and interprovincial buses was maintained through GPS devices throughout the holiday. Of these 12,000, only 7 were involved in traffic accidents.

"This is just 0.06% of the buses that circulated," she said. Arellano also added that there were no deaths on public transport, maintaining the trend for holidays in 2019.

The ANT also recorded 3,331 speeding vehicles that were reported to control entities and operators. In addition, 1,556 buses were monitored at the land terminals, of which 271 failed to comply with the regulations and



were not allowed to leave.

The National Police reported that 281 suspects were arrested in different crimes, 19 vehicles and 11 motorcycles were recovered, 27 firearms were seized, and 27 vehicles and 29 motorcycles were held for investigation. Also, 485,092 grams of controlled substances were also seized, preventing hundreds of doses from reaching end buyers, and 130 people were arrested for drug-related crimes. In addition, 26 intentional homicides were recorded, 16 for criminal violence and 10 for interpersonal violence, said Police spokesman José Vargas.

Extracted from Diario EL TELÉGRAFO and Diario EL TIEMPO

## Air Canada Quito to Toronto flights start in December (Cont.)

Transport between Ecuador and Canada, ratified on February 13, 2017. On August 21st of this year, the Embassy of Ecuador, together with the executives of Air Canada, officially launched the flight at the headquarters of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society.

According to the Foreign Ministry, more than 30,000 Canadians visit the country annually. And, for Air Canada, Ecuador is an important tourist and cargo market. The Minister of Tourism of Ecuador, Rosi Prado de Holguin, said that "the country's goal is to ensure that tourism remains the third source of income for Ecuador, so we continue to work every day to promote Ecuador in the world."

Extracted from Diario EL TELÉGRAFO

## Swiss hiker dies on Cotopaxi after falling into crevasse



Three Swiss mountaineers fell into a crevasse during an ascent of the Cotopaxi volcano on Sunday, November 3rd. One of the three hikers—a 57-year-old woman—died from the fall; her two companions were injured. The Swiss Foreign Ministry did not reveal the identity of its three compatriots, who fell into a crevasse and remained trapped there for several hours.

National authorities used rescue and search teams to find the lost hikers

One of the Swiss hikers is in a hospital in Quito, where he is being treated; the body of the deceased hiker will be repatriated to Switzerland.

The environmental services of the Cotopaxi volcano reported that the three people entered the volcano park as part of a group of six tourists last Friday, after registering for the visit. Apparently, the hikers crossed a natural ice bridge when it cracked, causing the three to fall.

Extracted from Diario EL TIEMPO



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## It may not be long before Chinese cars take over the Ecuador market

Like the rest of the world, Ecuador's automotive market has been steadily adding cars from China over the last few years. Today, over 40 Chinese car brands are available in the country.

According to information from the Association of Automotive Companies of Ecuador (Aeade) the Chinese car brands that compete in the local market are: Baic, Domy, Great Wall, Landwind, Beiben, Dongfeng, Hanteng, Lifan, Brilliance, Enranger, Huanghai, QMC, BYD, Faw, Jac, Shineray, CAMC, Foday, Jetour, Sinotruk, Changan, Forland, Jinbei, Soueast, Changhe, Foton, JMC, Ventura, Chery, GAC, Joylong, Yue Jin, Dayang, Geely, Kawei, Yutong, Dayun, Golden Dragon, King Long, Zotye.

According to the Chamber of the Automotive Industry of Ecuador (Cinae), from January to September of this year, 100,628 cars have been sold in the country. Of that figure 17.7% (17,820 cars) were imported from China, a figure that has grown rapidly since 2016, when it was 5.9%. Since last year, the rate of Chinese cars sold has increased by more than 6%.

Those numbers represent a steady climb towards that of local production, which represents 21.3% of the market.

Meanwhile, in relation to sales of imported vehicles, China represents 22.5% of the total. Among the brands that have strengthened the most are Chery, Great Wall and Jac.

Also, it's important to consider that in addition to the Chinese brands, there are vehicles of companies from other countries that bring their cars to Ecuador through China, as happens with two Chevrolet models: Captiva and Cavalier.

According to Cinae information, the top 10 vehicles imported from China are:

- Chevrolet Captiva (11% of total)
- Chery Tiggo (10%)
- The Jac truck (8%)
- Great Wall (Haval) H2 / H6 (7%)
- Soueast DX3 (6%)
- Cavalier (5%)
- Great Wall Voleex C30 (4%)
- Changan CS15 / 55/75 (4%)
- Foton Gratour / Tunland (4%)
- Jac S2 / 3/4 / (3%)

Those ten positions represent 62% of the vehicles brought from the Asian giant.

Another thing to consider is that, two Chinese brands, Great Wall and Jac, already produce some of their vehicles here in Ecuador; Great Wall makes three models here and Jac makes one.

David Molina, Executive Director of Cinae, says that Chinese brands entered with low prices and opened the market, but there has come a point where there are too many and some with very few sales. He thinks that not all will survive in the local market and basically, with the passage of time, the main ones will remain and will generate an important volume of sales.

Extracted from EL Universo



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## Ecuador to install ethics committees in companies to prevent government contracting corruption

The Anti-Corruption Secretariat announced that in the next few days, they will start having people working in the oil, electrical and telecommunications companies. The Government's fight against corruption will have a new structure: ethics committees.

Its mission is to prevent bribery in government procurement. This is an idea of the Anti - Corruption Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic.

The Anti-Corruption Secretariat has finalized the selection of 18 professionals who will join the group, that initially will operate in six of Ecuador's Largest public companies. They will be engaged at the managerial level of each institution. There they will be responsible for verifying contractual processes to ensure that they are free from any type of corruption before, during and after contracts have been signed.

The 18 professionals will have the positions of ethics advisers and their salaries will be covered by the entity where they will work, so they will not mean an additional expense for the Anti-Corruption Secretariat.

At the beginning of the selection process there were 52 candidates. They went through a first phase of merits, where their resumes were verified. The Anti-Corruption Secretariat verified that they have no judicial past; in addition, they have no links with private companies and no relationship with state officials.

María del Carmen Constanter was in charge of the selection process. She explained that next week they will announce the names of those people chosen, whose profiles were analyzed according to the public company in which they will work. The official stressed that each ethics committee will consist of three people and will join Petroecuador, Petroamazonas, National Electricity Corporation, National Telecommunications Corporation (NTC), Flota Petrolera Ecuatoriana (Flopec) and the Electricity Corporation of Ecuador.

Those selected will receive special training from the Institute of National Studies (IAEN). Their

preparation will depend on the characteristics of each entity they join. This agency will be responsible for preventing, investigating and reporting cases of corruption that occur in the companies where they work.

For the Anti-Corruption Secretariat, the contribution of the committees was also important for the implementation of a bribery management system and they will advise the staff on the management system and issues related to the bribery. María del Carmen Constanter pointed out that the members of the committee are not auditors or contract supervisors, and their report will not be a requirement to settle contracts.

"Its main function is to prevent and generate structures and policies in each company to eliminate all processes to corruption," she said.

However, they will have direct access to all the information they require and will follow the complaints presented by employees or citizens.

The reports they prepare will be addressed to the management level and the Anti-Corruption Secretariat, who in turn will determine if a complaint to the Prosecutor's Office, Attorney General's Office or Comptroller's Office is appropriate.

"We are creating ethics committees in the public sector, certified by international bodies, so that the contracting processes meet transparency standards. This will reduce corruption at its root," said the Anti-Corruption Secretary Dora Ordóñez.

She commented that they are on the way to implementing the international ISO Antisoborno 37001 standard throughout the public sector. This certification will allow Ecuador to comply with transparency standards, which will attract more foreign investment.

For the director of the Law School of the International University, Esteban Ron, these committees must comply with basic organizational standards, such as: self-determination in their operation, technical training, compliance with anti-corruption standards and demonstration of

results of judicial cases.

Anti-corruption practices must begin with the prevention and creation of an appropriate culture in the administrative, financial and institutional legal operation.

"That is why the incorporation of ISO 37001 is a great step forward."

The Secretariat will begin with the authorization of the first six committees, but the objective is to implement them in the 123 entities that are part of the Executive.

Extracted from Diario EL TELÉGRAFO



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## Textile sector loses over 12,000 jobs in the last year



The textile sector is going through a sensitive situation.

More than 12,000 people in the industry lost their full employment in the last year. The figure represents a 9% drop, according to data from the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC).

This Tuesday, the Association of Textile Industries of Ecuador (AITE) presented a report which concludes that between January and August of this year, versus the same period 2018, sales overall fell 20%. The percentage includes the segments of clothing, and production of threads and fabrics.

"That is the cause of the loss of full employment," explained Javier Diaz, president of the guild. He added that the figures could worsen due to losses generated in October, following the 11 days of stoppages.

The volume of import of fibers and yarns fell; meanwhile, imports of finished products are increasing, mainly from China.

That shows that production is not energized, Diaz said. He added that these problems add to the drop in household consumption. The spokesman also referred to the draft Law of Economic Growth, discussed in the Assembly. According to him, the Government initiative is not focused on improving production conditions.

Extracted from Dairio EL COMERCIO

## Tourist ship runs aground in the Galapagos



A tourist boat suffered a mishap when it was sailing and ran aground in the Punta Vicente Roca sector, located north of Isabela Island, in the Galapagos archipelago.

The incident occurred at approximately 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday and forced the evacuation of all the passengers. The ship, named the Celebrity Xpedition, partially ran aground on a sandbar while making its

regular route.

According to a statement from the company Ocean Adventures, owner of the boat, all guests and their crew are safe.

"As a precaution, the 46 guests, as well as non-essential crew members, were quickly evacuated to a ship that was nearby and later picked up by their sister vessel, the Celebrity Flora," the company said.

Preliminarily it was reported that there is no environmental impact report as there was no breakage of the hull or the fuel tanks. However, authorities are continuing to monitor the situation. The Celebrity Xpedition was brought afloat and was towed to the Italbaca Canal.

Extracted from Diario EL TELÉGRAFO



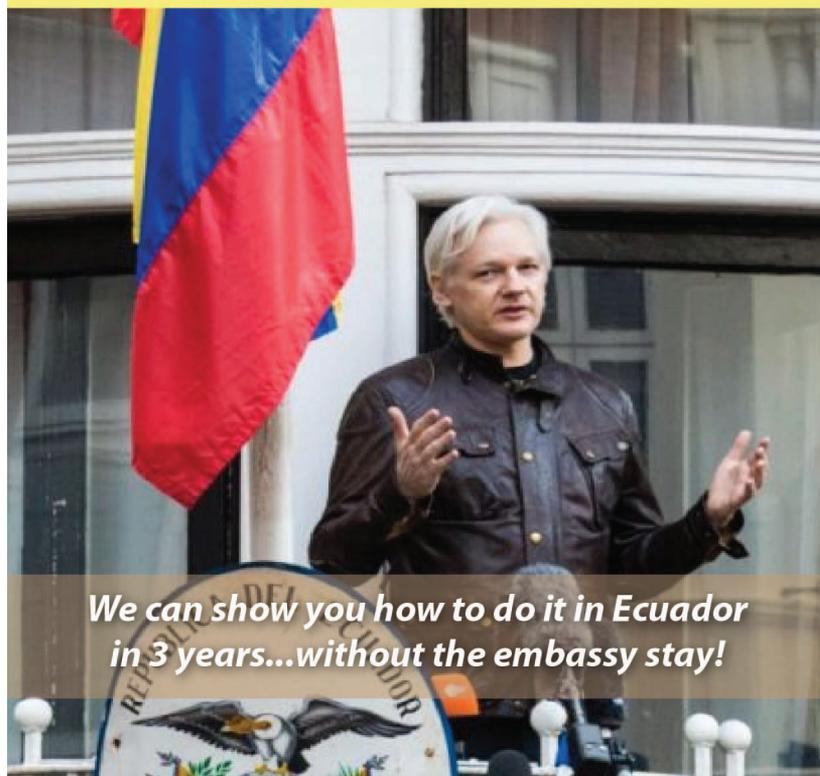
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## CRIME REPORT AND ACCIDENT REPORT

### Cuenca Area Traffic Accidents

\* On Tuesday morning, a violent crash occurred between a truck and a van on the Cuenca-Molleturo-El Empalme road, La Toreadora sector of El Cajas.

Due to the force of the impact, both the truck and the truck zigzagged without control over the road and came to rest across the road, closing it for a short time.

The crash occurred in a sharp curve. On Tuesday, Edison Moscoso, Director of the CTE in Azuay, reported on his Twitter account that visibility conditions in sections of the Cuenca-Molleturo road were minimal due to the presence of thick fog and suggested drivers reduce speed, turn on lights, stay aware and do not pass.

Rescuers from the Fire Department of Cuenca responded to the accident and confirmed that there were no people injured.

\* At 7:15 a.m. on Tuesday, on Remigio Crespo and Los Rios Avenue, a motorcyclist was injured after crashing into a car. The motorcyclist was assisted by paramedics of the Fire Department and taken to a hospital for additional examinations.

\* At 7:25 a.m. on Tuesday, on Avenida Diez de Agosto, the driver of a blue Toyota pickup truck lost control of the vehicle when the steering system failed and ran into a flowerbed in the median, injuring three occupants (2 children and an adult woman).

Traffic agent Marlon Rubio said that the last vehicle technical review was carried out in 2014. The agent highlighted the importance of registering the vehicles in the centers where the mechanical inspections are carried out, which allows detecting the wear of parts and thus having the car in good condition to avoid accidents due to predictable causes.

\* At 4:56 p.m. on Monday, seven people were injured in Facte Chico, in the Czech parish, when for reasons still unknown, their four-door vehicle, lost control and went down and embankment and overturned in a stream.

Staff of the Ecuadorian Institute of Social Security, Ecuadorian Red Cross, Ministry of Public Health, Fire Department of Cuenca and Public Mobility, Transit and Transportation Company (EMOV EP) assisted the wounded inside the vehicle.

Resources on the site reported a total of seven injured: five women aged 1, 21, 30, 44 and 68; and two men aged 10 and 75, who were transferred to the José Carrasco Arteaga Hospital of the IESS with a reserved prognosis.

\* At 4:00 p.m., on Saturday, November 2nd, what started as a family trip ended in a tragedy. On the road to Noboa, an accident resulted in the death of 5 family members and left another 11 people injured, in which a family lost saw five of its members die, while 11 were injured.

On the scene, police found that a car had lost control, overturned and fell 70 meters to a canyon. ECU-911 reported that 16 members of the same family were in the car when the accident occurred.

Authorities are continuing to investigate the cause of the accident.

\* On the evening of Saturday, November 2nd, María Teresa Albarracín, 68, died at Vicente Corral Moscoso hospital after being hit by a vehicle at the intersection of Vega Muñoz and Mariano Cueva streets.

According to witnesses of the accident, the woman crossed Vega Muñoz and was struck by a car. The people who witnesses of the accident arrested the driver of the car and asked ECU-911 to send an ambulance to attend to the victim.

The woman was stabilized and taken to Vicente Corral Moscoso hospital with serious injuries. Meanwhile, civil transit agents from EMOV arrived at the scene and took the driver into custody.

\* On the evening of Saturday, November 2nd, on the Cuenca-Azogues road, a 36-year-old man was injured in a violent crash. The man was treated by the paramedics of the IESS and the Fire Department of Cuenca.

\* On the morning of Friday, November 1st, on the road to Zapotillo, two women died in a motorcycle accident. According to the police, upon arrival at the scene, they observed that the two women had been killed; a doctor and ambulance arrived and verified the deaths of the 18- and 20-year-old women.

There was no obvious cause for the accident.

### Cuenca and National Criminal Activity

(Cuenca) After rejecting their appeal, the Criminal Guarantees Chamber of Azuay ratified the sentence of 34 years and 8 months against Rafael L., Lady H. and Diego Ch., for the robbery and death of 65-year-old Florencio A.

In the sentence issued on Tuesday, the judges also confirmed that those sentenced must pay \$6,000 reparation to the victim's family members.

The police investigation showed that Diego Ch. planned the attack on April 12, 2018 and drove Venezuelan citizen Rafael L. and Colombian citizen Lady H. to the victim's home, located in the Puertas del Sol sector of Cuenca.

Diego Ch. directed the attack from outside the building, while the other two defendants physically assaulted the victim in order to find where the money, they thought he had, was hidden.

The attackers tied the hands and feet of the victim, then placed packing tape on his body and face. The latter caused his death by suffocation, after the attackers left the building and took a computer, a tablet, cell phones, a bicycle and clothing.

After an investigation, the three people were arrested in November 2018, in Cuenca and Arenillas.

(Cuenca) At 3:00 a.m., on Tuesday, members of the Anti-Criminal Brigade arrested a Colombian citizen, identified as Laureano VP, at the intersection of Hurtado de Mendoza Avenue and José Joaquín de Olmedo Street, and charged him with possession of a gun, four transparent cases with cocaine and a mobile phone.

According to the police, it is presumed that the citizen used the weapon to intimidate and assault the citizens.

(Ricaurte) In the afternoon of Friday, November 1st, in the La Paziani neighborhood, in the Ricaurte parish, police arrested Juan PMB, 32, for drug possession during the operation 'Makano.'

Police data indicate that the operation, coordinated with the Prosecutor's Office, raided a property that was used by suspect for the collection, distribution and sale of drugs.

As a result, 4.54 doses of marijuana and 966.8 doses of cocaine were seized. The report indicates that the citizen has a prior criminal record for drug possession.



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## Ecuador begins its official withdrawal from Unasur

Ecuador initiated the notification of its official departure from the Union of South American Nations (Unasur), after President Lenin Moreno had in late October denounced "in all its contents" the treaty establishing the organization.

"The Foreign Ministry will notify its peers from the States that continue to belong to Unasur, of its decision" said the Foreign Ministry of Ecuador.

The procedure will consist of the delivery of a "verbal note," by the Ecuadorian embassies in each capital, to the governments of Uruguay, Venezuela, Bolivia, Guyana and Suriname, which are still member states, and also to Peru that, although it has similarly notified Unasur of its departure from the union, has not yet completed the corresponding procedures.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs added that "the notification operates or is effective six months after [notification] to member countries." This document will be signed by the chancellor of Ecuador, José Valencia.

On September 17, 2019, the National Assembly approved the withdrawal from the treaty, which paved the way for the departure of the country from Unasur. This was after the Constitutional Court declared that the withdrawal from the treaty required the prior approval of the National Assembly.

The problems in Unasur began in 2017, when the twelve member states could not agree on a new secretary general. It was later aggravated by the positions taken on the Venezuelan crisis and entered a critical phase when, in April 2018, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay and Peru suspended their participation in, and financing of, the organization.

Unasur has a physical, unused headquarters to the north of Quito; President Moreno announced that the building will become a university for the indigenous population.

On March 21st, the Heads of State of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Peru met in Santiago de Chile at the Meeting of Presidents of South America, that led to the creation of a new block to replace Unasur.

Unasur was born in 2008 with twelve member states, of which now there are only five remaining.

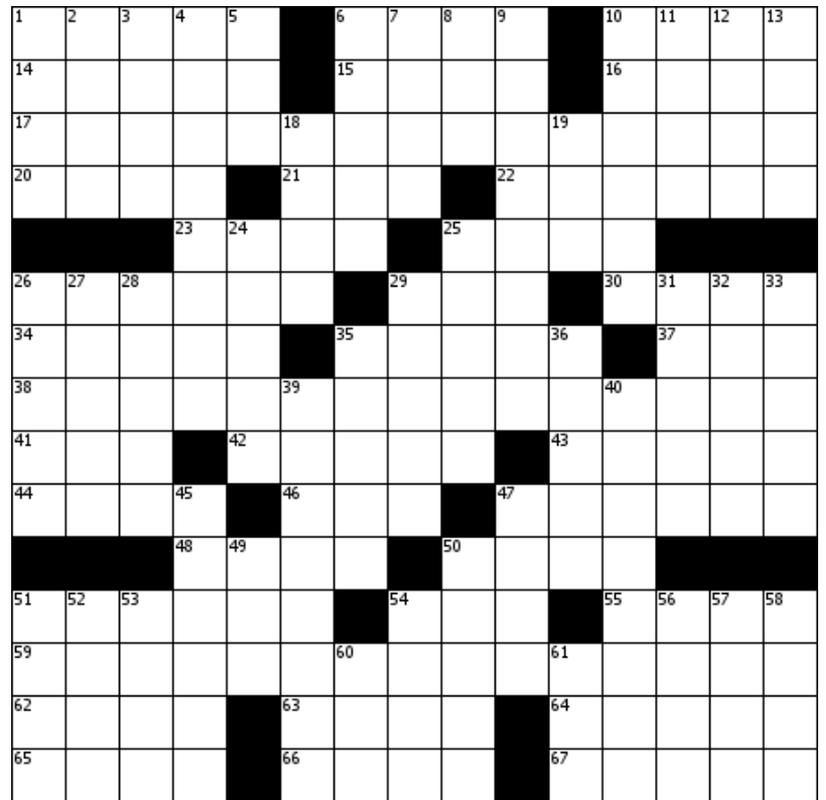
Extracted from Diario EL TELÉGRAFO

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10:30 AM to 10 PM

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See answers on page 11

### Across

1. Nordic toast
6. Genesis victim
10. They're for hacks
14. Approach to an article
15. Brand of toy blocks
16. Silks solo
17. Like a private
20. Barnyard belles
21. Type of meat or pepper
22. Works the dough
23. Not now
25. The one there
26. Biblical Promised Land
29. Bowl over
30. Did the butterfly
34. Bitter
35. Blazing
37. Mother of 6-Across
38. Getting nowhere
41. Nameless woman
42. Lachrymal drops
43. Body section
44. Big name in petrol
46. You can dig it
47. Census unit
48. Monocle part
50. Come in behind the others
51. Borg and Edberg
54. Aurora's counterpart
55. Capital on a fjord
59. In last place
62. Beam intensely
63. Sandpaper surface
64. "Otello" composer
65. Makes a choice
66. Launching org.
67. Flavorful seed

### Down

1. In under the tag
2. Understand
3. Lewd look
4. Premier players
5. "The Lip" Durocher
6. Sci-fi character
7. Reach for your toes
8. Fabergé creation
9. Photographer's request
10. Military trainees
11. General vicinity
12. Boston legend
13. Backtalk
18. Melodious singer
19. Stuff studied in genetics
24. It may be kicked
25. Metrodome denizens
26. Secret storage spot
27. Pains' partners
28. Closes in on
29. Prefix for mentioned
31. Deteriorates by use
32. Dispatch boat
33. Item in a patch
35. Seaweed extracts
36. Colorado park
39. Broadway blazer
40. Ripped into
45. They're golden
47. Swanky
49. Slim swimmer
50. "Whole \_\_\_ Shakin' Going On"
51. Town of Normandy
52. Enfold
53. Bridge seat
54. Sponsorship
56. Wrap for a rani
57. Digital displays
58. Depression-era migrant
60. Target of the Million Mom March
61. One of the Gabors

## 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.

### Classifieds and Events

#### November 11th - Cuenca Diabetes Support Group - Monday, Nov.11, 3:00 PM

People with diabetes are not "diabetics," they are people living with a condition that can be successfully managed, sometimes with lifestyle alone, and sometimes with both lifestyle and medication. By meeting with others who have diabetes or similarly working through health challenges you will find that others in the group will understand your own experience firsthand. You do not have to have diabetes to join the group — maybe you have a partner or spouse who needs your support, or maybe YOU just want to get healthier by learning how to eat better and learn other strategies too. We cover a range of topics — healthy eating, shopping, strategies for socializing, traveling healthfully, and preventing advancement from pre-diabetes. Join in. A \$5 donation to Cuenca's Casa de la Diabetes Foundation will be accepted. Feel free to contact me for more information. See you on Monday the 11th at 3 PM! Hotel Floré, Padre Aguirre 8-15 y Sucre, second floor.

Contact: Susan Burke March phone: 0997129013

#### November 12th -

##### Talk at Casa Bienestar- Introductory on Reiki for prospective

Elizabeth Cohen will be offering Reiki sessions and training at Casa Bienestar Health Center beginning in November 2019. She will be offering a free introductory talk on Reiki for prospective patients and practitioners – and anyone else who's interested – on November 12 at 2 PM at Casa Bienestar Health Center. A limited number of free mini-sessions will also be scheduled at that time. In her November 12 talk at Casa Bienestar, she will discuss:

- What Reiki is and how it works
- Problems that Reiki can help with
- Health benefits of Reiki
- What a typical healing session is like
- Case studies of patients with whom she has worked
- Her own Reiki journey
- The recent adoption of Reiki by hospitals and mainstream institutions
- Training available for prospective practitioners.

Contact: Beth Shahda phone: 093 982 0306 / 07 281 5579

#### November 14th - Charities With Rythm in Cuenca

Come support the local hotels and restaurants while giving local musicians a place to showcase their talents. There will be a \$5 cover, all of which will go to a lucky local charity. We will rotate charities.

We bring you a night of musical entertainment. Meisner Financial will present our First Fundraising Concert, on Thursday, October 14th from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, at the beautiful Hotel Inca Real.

Address: General Torres 8-40 near Simon Bolivar.

Let your Thursdays be a little magical with a cover of only \$5.

Contact: Ned Meisner phone: 0939984769

#### November 16th - Making new friends in the Puñay Mountain/ for free!

Hey there!

If you are a mountain lover, this is the hiking you were looking for...

Puñay Mountain is located at a height of 3245 metres above sea level in the

Chunchi Canton of the Chimborazo Province... amazing! 4 hours walking and breathing the purest air in the Andean páramo..

We are a group of hikers interested in making new friends while exploring exciting places!

Do you love adventure? We too! if you want to join us, please contact us..

We look forward to meeting you soon!

Contact: Azul Marina email: azulmarina.spanishlearning@gmail.com

#### November 17th -

##### Welcome to Shambhala! Free group meditation Sundays at 10 am

Making Enlightened Society Possible: All Are Welcome y ¡Se habla español!

You're invited to meditate together, 10.00 – 11.30 AM this and every Sunday morning, up the stairs at Namaste India Restaurant. 8-81 Calle Larga east of Benigno Malo. Online and Maps: search "cuenca shambhala"

Feel free to contact us with questions and for further information.

Contact: Paul phone: +593 982848203 with text and WhatsApp

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O	P	T	S		N	A	S	A		A	N	I	S	E

Solution to Crossword puzzle on page 10

Solution to Sudoku puzzle on page 3

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

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Looking to rent or sell your apartment, house, or land?

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Mónica León  
0999 880 979  
monileonera@yahoo.com



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