

THE CUENCA DISPATCH

Ecuador's Original English-Language Newspaper

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Sales of companion animals now prohibited in El Arenal

The sale of companion animals such as dogs and cats is now "totally prohibited at the Feria Libre," according to the municipal director of Markets, Marcelo Álvarez Toral, who warned that all pets that are sold in the sector will be rescued and given up for adoption by the Citizen Guard.

The decision, according to Álvarez, has been in force since the beginning of this year and was taken in coordination with animal groups in the city and in compliance with an ordinance prohibiting the sale of pets in unsuitable spaces.

"The animals are overcrowded, under the sun and the reproduction of these occurs in a cruel and inhuman way, we cannot continue to allow this," said the official.

According to the data of the Citizen Guard, about 30 people are dedicated to the sale of pets at the Feria Libre and only three are registered, but even they cannot market pets because they lack the appropriate conditions to do so.

Álvarez said that these merchants will be able to sell pet supplies and pet food in order to keep their businesses.



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Citizen Guard saves the life of baby who drowned



Without the help of one of Cuenca's Citizen Guard, the new year would have had a tragic start last Thursday.

On the morning of January 2, 2020, a member of the Citizen Guard of Cuenca saved the life of a 10-month-old baby boy who had fallen inside a bucket of water and was found unconscious.

The incident occurred around

9:30 in the morning when one of the citizen guards carried out his routine patrol in the 9 de Octubre market sector near Vargas Machuca and Vega Muñoz streets. He realized that there was a commotion inside a business of the sector and reacted quickly.

For approximately four minutes,

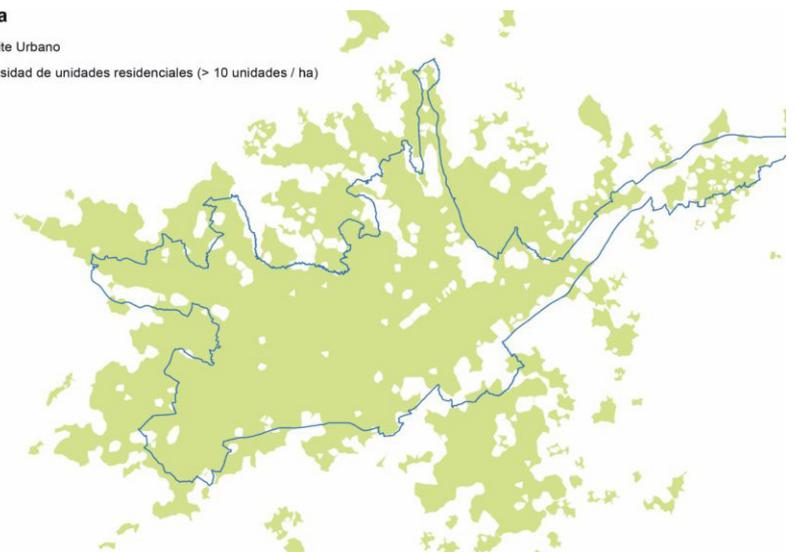
cont. page 4.

New cadastre will remap Cuenca for the first time in 22 years

enda

Limite Urbano

Densidad de unidades residenciales (> 10 unidades / ha)



It's considered an ambitious but very necessary project for Cuenca: the restructuring of the cadastre (property register) of the urban area of the canton will contemplate a range of changes and obtain an approximation of the reality of the city through an integral census of the properties.

The last time that the cadastre of Cuenca was updated was in 1998. Although thousands of properties have been added since that date, the sum has only been partially updated and through very specific cases. However, with the restructuring Cuenca expects to

cont. page 4.

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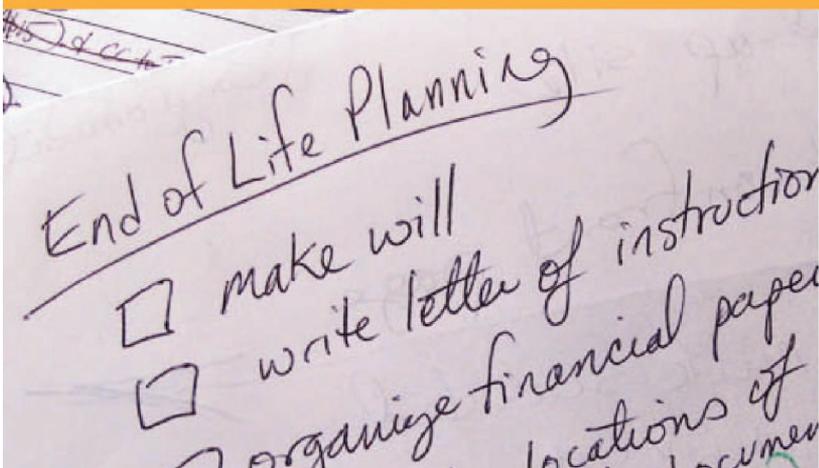
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I'M JUST SAVIN'

By
Michael
Soares

Brilliant ideas

Today I was talking to a friend who lives in Thailand and he told me about a "brilliant" (as in not really brilliant) idea that someone we know has come up with. The guy he mentioned has decided to open a Cajun restaurant. In Thailand.

When pressed on whether he thought he would have enough business for a Cajun restaurant (which almost to the person, no Thai has ever heard of) to survive, the guy responded, "Well, I'll sell Thai food too!"

Let me see if I have this right. An American, in Thailand, thinks he is going to be able to make Thai food so much better than say, the 200+ Thai restaurants in town, that any lack of customers he has for his Cajun food will be made up for with his selling of Thai food.

Brilliant.

So many people do so many stupid things. And they can't see the stupidity of it all because they convince themselves they are right first, before they dig into the reality of the facts.

Let me give you another example.

Since I hail from the great state of legalized marijuana sales—Colorado—almost every time I go back to the US, someone asks me if I can bring them some pot candy, some pot vape, or some other newly concocted form of imbibing in the drug. And I always ask, "Why would I do that? Why would I risk getting arrested so you can have a little bit of pot to dull your day?"

Maybe I just look stupid to them. Maybe the idea of getting me to bring this back for them sounds so good in their minds, that they can't see the idiocy of it. They ask me before they dig into the reality of the facts.

Speaking before thinking is never good. Speaking before looking at the consequences or the fallout is never good. Ask yourself, "Have I ever said something before thinking about it and it worked out so good that I've decided to never think before I speak?" Have you ever thought that? Probably not.

But I'll bet you've said some things without thinking that you have wished for years you could take back. From something as simple as saying, "Yes," to the question, "Does this dress make me look fat," to something more complex like blurting out to your boss that he's, "Full of shit."

You've done these kinds of things and you've not only tried to back your way out of them, you've learned from those experiences, and as an adult you've tried to think more often before you speak.

What a shame that not everyone can do that. That not even someone with arguably the most important position in the world can do that.

It's hard to believe that the President of the United States can say something like, "if Iran strikes any Americans, or American assets," the U.S. has targeted 52 Iranian sites — "some at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture, and those targets, and Iran itself, WILL BE HIT VERY FAST AND VERY HARD."

This was said in a tweet. Where he actually had to think slowly so he could type. He had time to ask himself, "Is this a good idea?" And he obviously convinced himself, "Yes." Brilliant.

Now, this isn't the first time, nor will it be the last, that this man has written something so foolish on Twitter that you'd expect it to have been posted by a 5-year-old. But this time, he said something this stupid after creating an international crisis (I will not argue with you about whether killing the Iranian General was right or wrong, because there are always two sides to that type of debate).

At a time where intelligence would have caused someone to stay off of Twitter, the President of the United States threatened to break an international law [*The Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in*

the Event of Armed Conflict was developed by Unesco in 1954 and has been signed by 133 countries, and ratified by the US in 2009].

Then he doubled down on it the next day saying, "They're allowed to torture and maim our people; they're allowed to use roadside bombs and blow up our people. And we're not allowed to touch their cultural sites. It doesn't work that way."

After 24 hours of listening to people tell him it is against international law to bomb cultural sites, he still wouldn't face the reality of how stupid his thinking was. Brilliant.

He's since backed away from this, saying, "And we are, according to various laws, supposed to be very careful with their cultural heritage.

And you know? If that's what the law is—I like to obey the law. But think of it, they kill our people, they blow up our people, but then we have to be very gentle with their cultural institutions."

"But I'm okay with it. It's okay with me."

We all know he's not okay with it. Because he continues to try to justify what he says before claiming he'll follow the law.

I've laid off on this guy for a long time because the nonsense just became so overwhelming that writing about him all the time took away from the good things I wanted to say in my column.

But the brilliant dialog from him this week was just too much to let go by. Because it shows just how much of a man-child this President is. He doesn't think before he speaks. And he doesn't see that as a problem. It's probably how he has always been. He's not going to change.

Nonetheless, I have to hope that this week, maybe, just maybe, he saw how close what he was saying got the US to actually being pulled into another war. And that he will start to think every once in a while, before he writes something stupid on Twitter.

I doubt it, but I have to have hope. Because he isn't going anywhere soon.

Because a whole lot of Americans think that the stupid things he says are good ideas. Brilliant in fact.

I would agree, but then it would have to be in the "not really brilliant" use of the word

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Fun By The Numbers

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

See answers on page 11

Citizen Guard saves the life of baby who drowned (Cont.)

Guardian Fernando Casco, gave the child cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), after which time the young boy responded and began to breathe on his own. However, Casco continued to care for the child who had respiratory distress, as ECU 911 indicated that the ambulance would be delayed due to traffic.

Casco realized that the Catholic University Hospital was only three blocks away, so he ran with the child in his arms to the hospital, where doctor's quickly treated the child in the emergency room. Doctor's said the child's life was saved by Casco's quick thinking.

"The citizen guards have training in first aid dictated by the Red Cross, Firefighters Cuenca, among others and we are at the service of citizenship," he said.

Municipality collects 14% of 2020 taxes in the first week



In the first week of collection of taxes for urban and rustic properties, the Municipality has brought in 14% of the projected fees for 2020, says Patricio Abad, the financial director of the local government.

According to the latest property tax collection report, citizen payments totaled \$1,750,000 in the first week; this amount is expected to double at least until January 15th, the deadline to benefit from the 10 discount % for prompt payment. The projected collection for urban and rustic properties for the whole year is around \$12.3 million.

Abad said that payment points are open at the windows of the Municipal Treasury where you can pay in cash or by credit and debit card, the 'Aquisito Nomás' points for cash payment and the website www.cuenca.gob.ec for online payment with cards from Banco de Pichincha, the only entity that has an agreement with the local government for this service.

Home gas delivery prices become the prisoner of supply and demand

The price of gas delivered at your home will not be regulated by the Agency for Regulation and Control of Hydrocarbons (ARCH) and will be subject to the free supply and demand of the product, said Juan Manuel Rodríguez, regional director of the institution. This comes after citizen requests that ARCH establish a value of the product that is sold in trucks and vans.

Rodríguez explained that the price of gas at home includes the cost of the transfer, and since there

are different distances between one address and another, it is "virtually impossible" to establish a fee for this service. "We have 244 points of sale and we would have to create 244 different rates because it is not the same to deliver gas on the Remigio Crespo that it is in Sayausí," he said.

Unauthorized deposits such as neighborhood stores or temporary collection sites in the rural area are also not required to sell the gas at \$1.60, Rodríguez added.

Despite this, he said, users

New cadastre will remap Cuenca for the first time in 22 years (Cont.)

have a quasi-real panorama of a city that has grown in sectors that until the last century, were considered "the countryside".

In addition to getting a realistic view of the city boundaries, the changes being made this year will not only be to have a cadastre to recognize who must pay taxes. It will be a multipurpose cadaster that will allow city planners to know how the city is being distributed and what conditions could be causing a possible growth to the canton ecosystem, among other things.

But, in principle, the idea of restructuring came from a problem that citizens who have their own homes, land, or want to build a construction, know: the lack of integration on the information on the properties.

"The first symptom we found is that in different dependencies there were different properties. The site that should be the same was one way on one side, and another way on another. And one says, "Which is the real property?", explained Raúl Mejía, expert on the subject of cadastres.

The problem of this is that the architects and engineers have their own way of measuring a land, and the information that is in the dependencies, for example, of Urban Control or Planning Direction, do not coincide.

To solve this problem, the restructuring is intended to standardize measurement methods. But this is only part of the remedy.

Aerial photography

What many consider problems in the Department of Appraisals and Cadasters of the Municipality of Cuenca have been identified (in addition to Raúl Mejía), by Juan Quito, who is the coordinator of the restructuring project.

Quito explained that the changes in the department were divided into three phases: the first was fulfilled with the identification of the problem, the second began yesterday, and the third will continue next year.

In the case of the second phase, among what stands out the most is the institutional strengthening, that is: training to describe the city, and an aerial photograph of Cuenca. For this, the project coordinators recreated a map consisting of points drawn based on the light and water meters.

With that information, a plane will fly over Cuenca and there will be a photograph that will identify the residential units located in the city. The data obtained, as well as the images, will be available for better planning in the growth of Cuenca.

Streamline processes

The Department of Appraisals and Cadastre has taken its first step in helping to expedite citizen requests. In a few days, people who need a property report will no longer have to go to the department and make the request (unless certified) and wait weeks to obtain it. They soon will only need to go online to "cuenca.gob.ec," and enter the Property Report option. From there they will be able to generate a file and print the report.

Extracted from Diario El Mercurio

who feel affected by the price of gas at home can contact 1-800-LOJUSTO (1800-565-8786) so that the ARCH generates consensus between distributors and users. "If, from one day to the next, the value of gas at home goes up without justification, we can handle that claim," he said.

Regarding controls on legalized distributors, Rodríguez explained that at the end of 2019, two people were arrested in Azuay who are now going through criminal proceedings against them for irregularities in the sale of gas.



According to Rodríguez, the law gives ARCH competence to control operations only in authorized deposits. "In these sites the value cannot be greater than \$1.60 under any circumstances," he said.

Extracted from Diario El Mercurio

Pumapungo Museum exceeded 158,000 visits in 2019

The Pumapungo Museum received more than 158,000 visitors in 2019, which exceeded the figure of 140,000 reached in 2018. This means an average frequency close to 3,000 weekly visitors.

This year a total renovation of the site, its museology and an encounter with Cusco is planned as in November the museum will turn 40 years old.

The museum will celebrate its 40 years of service on November 4th. Its first exhibition on November 4, 1980, was a sample of images of the Virgin Mary, from the collection of Father Carlos Crespi, explained Tamara Landivar, director of the museum.

Its anniversary will coincide with the celebration of the 200 years of independence of Cuenca, so an intense agenda of cultural activities will be developed.

A reconceptualization of the museography will be executed, with a new proposal, maintaining its status as the National Museum of Ethnography.

This project has been in the works for more than two years and involves an integral renovation of the site's museum area and its ethnographic and anthropological part. "It will be done in stages, with an integrative proposal."



Founded with a divine acquisition

The University of Azuay is contributing to this project. There will be a new exhibition this year around the collections of Father Carlos Crespi that were acquired by the Ex-Cultural Section of the Central Bank of Ecuador; with the collection the Cuenca museum was established.

Crespi was a Salesian priest, musician and graduate in Natural Sciences who, in addition to promoting education and introducing cinema in Cuenca, explored the eastern region, lived with the Shuar people, studied some of their customs, made a film about them and gathered a collection of archeology pieces.

Tying in Cuenca's history with Peru

In addition, among the planned cultural events, there will be a Cusco-Pumapungo meeting, which is planned between the Ministries of Culture of Ecuador and Peru. It would be the first time a similar approach is given.

At the time of the Incario, Cusco was its capital and center of the empire, while Tomebamba, where the current Cuenca is located, became one of its main cities. Here, in Pumapungo, was the palace of Huayna Cápac, an Inca born in this territory, who consolidated his conquest initiated by his grandfather Pachakútik and continued by his father, Tupac Yupanki.

Number of registered vehicles in Cuenca continues upward trend

A total of 93,825 vehicles were registered in Cuenca in 2019. That's 919 more than the 92,906 that were on the roads in 2018. This is in a city that has parking for about 112,000 cars.

In January 2019, 3,484 cars were registered in Cuenca. In February that number was added to by another 6,739 car registrations. The trend continued with 8,544 more cars registered in March, 8,351 more in April,

9,087 more in May, 8,398 more in June, and 10,212 more in July. Registration numbers then slowly dropped for the remainder of the year with 9,157 cars registered in August, 8,280 in September, 7,346 in October, 7,274 in November and 6,139 in December.

According to records of the Mobility Company (EMOV EP), who is in charge of vehicle registrations for the Municipality of Cuenca, in 2013 Cuenca had 79,567 vehicles registered. Those numbers went to 84,176 in 2014, 89,864 in 2015, 85,961 in 2016 and 86,966 in 2017.

In 2016 and 2017 there were drops in vehicle registrations because the neighboring cantons assumed registration powers and some car owners went to do this procedure in those jurisdictions.

Since 2017, there has been an increase of about 20%, as EMOV EP implemented a customer service system that now allows home registration.

The registration process for this year will resume on January 13th according to the schedule that is set nationally by the National Transit Agency (ANT).

Extracted from Diario EL Mercurio



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The cloister of the Carmelitas

A wooden door, larger than normal, separates what for many is the "material world from the spiritual." It is the entrance to the interior of the Cloister of the Mothers of Carmen del Asunción, in Cuenca, where 20 nuns are separated from the everyday life of Cuenca. They receive visits three times a year. Christmas, Easter and the celebration of the Virgen del Carmen.

The Plaza de las Flores is the prelude to entering this site. People move about and buy products made by the religious women, place a candle on the altar that is at the entrance of the house, where you can clearly hear the voices of the nuns. But you cannot enter beyond these spaces.

Once through the door, the silence is unique. Only the chirping of the birds and the ringing of the bells interrupt these moments of solitude and recollection.

Sister Maria Leonor of the Holy Spirit, a nun of 84 years and Ana Graciela of the Infant of Pragu, are waiting at the entrance of the convent. Their faces are not covered as normally happens and they show their look of affection.

A few meters away is the patio, where a marble pool adorns this space. The house has two floors,



there are distributed bedrooms, study rooms, dining room and workshops for their work, while on the first floor, a nuanced corridor of plants and flowers hides some of the rooms of the place. A few individuals have visited it.

The monastery of Carmen de la Asunción was founded in 1682, with four nuns coming from the city of Quito. For its operation, a plot was assigned, with a corner to the Plaza Mayor, donated by the bachelor Pedro Hurtado de Tapia.

Since colonial times, a great cultural treasure has been preserved by the barefoot Carmelitas of this monastery: sculptures, documents, books, wall paintings.

The Carmelite monastery was founded by the nieces of Santa Marianita de Jesús and was given the name of El Carmen de la Asunción, since it has since

assumed the office of permanent maintainer of devotion and worship of the Virgin Mary.

"Our life is a surrender to God completely," says Ana Graciela, who explains that 20 nuns live in the cloister. According to Vatican standards, there can be no more than that many women in this space.

"I always liked being religious. I put on the tablecloths in the house and said I am a nun," recalls the nun with a slight smile. She has been living inside this convent for more than 40 years.

The nuns are woken between 03:30 and 04:00 to make their prayers, then give instructions of the liturgy and then perform the tasks assigned to them.

In Carmen de la Asunción, there is currently a novice of simple vows (in the trial period) and two applicants (who will take the habits) of the 20 in total. Young people arrive to this place at the age of 18 and may stay and take the religious oath for life.

The cloistered nuns receive visits only three times a year and leave when they have to go to the doctor "or if one of our relatives becomes seriously ill or dies," says Mother Ana Gabriela.

Extracted from Diario EL Telegrafo



Daniela Cordero, Health Insurance

Daniela Cordero is the agent I talked to – her role includes finding us the best doctors in Ecuador who also speak English. She is very focused on that. She also actually knows doctors who do house calls.

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Tomebamba Rotary Club announces 2020 projects



Health is the base theme of the Tomebamba Rotary Club for 2020. Several projects are underway and waiting for public entities that can join the great work, whose purpose is to serve the community that requires it.

Javier Ordóñez, president of the Tomebamba Rotary Club, said that in 2020, they have a range of projects for the benefit of children, women and vulnerable families. One of them is with the María Amor Foundation, where drinking water will be provided, and the children and women of the foundation will have workshops and psychological treatments for a year, with the support of the University of Cuenca, through the faculties of Psychology, Agronomy and Hospitality.

The next social work for the end of January is the "Mission Hope," in which doctors from Canada will perform 60 hip and knee surgeries. By March, 30 surgeries will be scheduled for people with hip dysplasia, with the "Walk Mission," and by July, 3,000 people will benefit from sight evaluation and lens delivery with the "Santa Cruz Mission."

"We will have the support of medical professionals, to do these free surgeries to people who cannot pay \$20,000 for the operation. We call a hospital in Cuenca, whether public or private, to facilitate operating rooms and sponsor the entrance of ophthalmological equipment," said Ordóñez.

Education and food are also within their priorities, so they provide 180 refugees with food at the San Francisco Inn.

Extracted from Diario El Mercurio

Deportivo Cuenca fútbol players to make up to \$8,000 per month



Deportivo Cuenca will be one of the clubs with the lowest budget in the 2020 season.

Yet, the monthly payroll of the football team (and coaching staff) is set at \$100,000. The maximum amount any one player will be paid is \$8,000 a month.

According to Juan Serrano, president of the Football Commission, he has tried to bring players in at the lowest possible cost, depending on supply and demand.

"The players who earn the most will receive a monthly salary of \$8,000, the others are below that value." There is another item for travel, food, lodging, etc.

However, due to the economic crisis suffered by most clubs in the

country, the director considers it appropriate to open six seats for foreign players as they are more economically accessible.

"With the value requested by an Ecuadorian player, two foreigners can be brought in, especially from Argentina, Uruguay or Venezuela."

He suggests that national footballers engage in the economic reality of Ecuador, because they are already being displaced by foreigners. Even the leaders of the other clubs recommend not offering millionaire amounts because "it becomes a snowball that will break sometime."

Serrano said the 2020 squad is not yet complete. The team still needs to fill the void left by Joao Ortiz, who was transferred to the Dolphins. And the team still needs to rectify the situation of central defender Anthony Bedoya. He has proposals from abroad and other clubs in the country. If the negotiation becomes a problem, his position would be filled with the sixth foreigner quota.

As of this past Wednesday, January 8, 2020, the Cuenca team has five foreigners: Argentines Brian Cucco, Lucas Mancinelli and Rafael Viotti, and Uruguayans Bruno Foliados and Gustavo Alles.

Extracted from Diario El Comercio

Salinas surfer saves Mexican tourist couple from drowning



Andrés Torres from Mexico and Jessica Guzmán from Mexico, both 20, enjoyed the sea and the sun in the La Lobería sector, in Salinas, last Sunday afternoon. At an unexpected moment, the two young people were dragged offshore by several waves. The incident occurred just after 5:00 p.m.

Some people observed the fact from the tourist viewpoint site. José Luis Mazón was one of them. He said that when he saw the two people moving away from the shore, a young man asked for a Boogie board and threw himself into the sea to try to save the couple, who were already 150 meters from the shore.

But the young man who tried to save them was also dragged out by the waves and couldn't pull the couple back to shore

"For almost an hour the three kept clinging to the small board, only floating while the sea took them deeper and deeper away," Mazón said.

Upon learning of the emergency, the Ecuadorian Navy sent a speedboat to rescue people.

Surfer Jairo Alay Guerrero, from Santa Elena, then appeared and threw himself into the sea with his board, said witnesses. Ten minutes after entering the water, the surfer had managed to put the three people on his board and began to tow them into shore.

All three were holding on to the surfboard, while being dragged to the shore by Guerrero. A few minutes later, the Navy boat arrived and rescued everyone in the water.

Torres and Guzman were transferred to Salinas, where they were treated in an ambulance. No one was injured in the near deadly accident.

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Ecuador monthly inflation rate in December 2019 was -0.01%

On January 6, 2020, the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC) published the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This recent report showed a monthly inflation of -0.01% in December 2019, compared to the previous month which was -0.70%.

The annual variation in the last month of 2019 was -0.07%. In December 2018 it was 0.27%.

There are twelve consumer divisions in the CPI index. According to the INEC Technical Bulletin, the three divisions that most affected monthly inflation in December 2019 were food and non-alcoholic beverages (-0.0533%); restaurants and hotels (-0.0065%); and, furniture, household items and for ordinary household maintenance (-0.0039%).

By regions, the monthly price variation in the cities of the Coast (0.01%) showed that the cities of the Sierra were higher (-0.03%). On the other hand, the cities of the Sierra (0.12%) presented annual variations higher than those of the Coast (-0.24%), the report indicates.

The cities that presented the lowest monthly variations were Esmeraldas, Cuenca, Quito and Santo Domingo. In contrast, the cities with the lowest annual variation were Esmeraldas, Santo Domingo, Guayaquil and Manta, below the national annual inflation.

In the international context, INEC explains that compared to the annual inflation values of the member countries of the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) and Southern Common Market (Mercosur), as of November 2019, Ecuador is below average.

Extracted from Diario El Telegrafo

European car prices fall 12% in Ecuador since 2016

The impact of the commercial agreement with the European Union (EU) in the automotive sector—that marks its fourth year of a total of seven years in 2020—is reflected in the sale of European vehicles in the Ecuadorian market.



According to the Association of Automotive Companies of Ecuador (Aeade), at the end of 2019, the position of European vehicles in the Ecuadorian market was 6.4% (around 8,500 units sold), very similar to 2018 (8,810), but significantly higher than the 2% market share in 2016 (1,519 units).

Genaro Baldeón, CEO of Aeade, says that the reduction of European vehicle tariffs has meant an increase in the supply of models of European origin. So much so, that at the end of 2018, 40 more models of European vehicles were offered than could be found in 2016.

He also points out that it has meant more options for the consumer along with better pricing. Consequently, the prices of European vehicles, in general terms, have been reduced by 12% compared to 2016 (before the

agreement with the EU came into force).

Baldeón indicates that as a result of the agreement, the import quotas—that were in force until 2016—were eliminated and as a consequence, during the last three years, the volume of sales that the Ecuadorian market had in 2011 has been restored. In 2018, European manufacturers sold 137,615 units and in 2019 the figure is close to 133,000 vehicles; 110% more than in 2016.

Tariffs will eventually disappear for European vehicles

The CEO of Aeade also says that European vehicles will have an additional advantage as a result of the staggered reduction of import tariffs defined in the trade agreement. For light vehicles, the tariff has now been reduced by half: those vehicles that normally had a 40% tariff prior to the agreement, had their tariffs reduced to 20% as on January 1st.

According to the relief schedule prepared by Aeade, the base tariff was 40% prior to 2017. On January 1, 2017, upon entry into force of the agreement, it was reduced to 35%; on January 1, 2018 it was lowered to 30%; on January 1, 2019, it fell to 25%, and now, as of January 1st it is at 20%; on January 1, 2021, the tariff continues to fall and will be 15%; on January 1, 2022, the tariff falls to 10%; on January 1, 2023, it falls again to 5%; and on January 1, 2024, the tariffs will disappear.

Baldeón added that there are other sub-headings that have a 35% tariff and that pay a 17.5% tariff this year.

According to the representatives of Aeade, technological evolution also affects the manufacturing costs of vehicles. The new technologies that reduce fuel consumption and generate lower CO2 emissions, as well as those that incorporate greater safety equipment imply a higher cost of vehicles. For this reason, the reduction of the tariff can be neutralized in those models of vehicles with superior technology.

Not everyone is happy with the falling tariffs

For David Molina, president of the Chamber of the Ecuadorian Automotive Industry (Cinae), the reduction of the tariff of vehicles from the European Union has affected the local market, precisely because of the price reduction.

However, unfortunately, the opening of markets has not been accompanied by a competitiveness agenda that allows local industry to compete under similar conditions. For example, the CKD tariff (parts and pieces imported for packaging) costs between 10% and 13% on vehicles competing with Europeans.

"There is a divorce between industrial policy and trade policy. Ecuador is making huge strides in the face of a commercial agreement with Mexico, the market with Colombia is already open, and yet it still has a high tax structure that punishes and puts disadvantage to local production," he says.

The president of the Cinae believes that the alternative for the local industry would be to generate conditions of adequate competitiveness, that is, the CKD tariff must be zero percent for all vehicles that are assembled in Ecuador.

Molina believes that when the agreement with the EU, which has a term of seven years, came into force, some cars started with a 30% discount and other vehicles with 35%.

He says that most of the light cars that entered paying 35% of tariff can be nationalized today paying 15% of tariff.

According to Cinae, based on the prices reported to the SRI, among the European cars whose values range between \$18,000 to \$20,000 are the Suzuki, SCross model, the Citroen, C-Elysee model, the Citroen C3 Feel and the Peugeot, 301 N1, among others.

According to Aeade data, among the best-selling models, from January to November 2019, are the Chevrolet SCross with 1,557 units sold and the Nissan Qashqai, with 1,326 units sold.

Extracted from Diario El Universo

Twenty years out, the dollar lowered inflation and narrowed the gap between salary and the basic basket

Norma doesn't remember how much money she had for the grocery purchases 20 years ago, when the currency in Ecuador was the sucre, only that the return varied. "One week the money was reached, and another did not, so there I saw what I cooked my children. Sometimes it was just rice with guineo," says this 57-year-old housewife from Guayaquil.

His testimony reflects a face of the economic crisis that the country went through in 1999: prices varied with such frequency that people could not plan their budget.

To cite an example, press reports from 1999 report that that year the pound of rice in the markets ranged between 2,400 sucres and 2,800 sucres.

At present, the increase would imply paying a penny more, but in 1999 those 400 extra sucres covered half of a bus ticket.

Ecuador recorded rising inflation and had a national currency in constant devaluation. This and other factors motivated the Jamil Mahuad government to announce dollarization on January 9, 2000.

The price was 25,000 sucres for 1 dollar.



Was dollarization a success?

Twenty years later, there are divided criteria on the success of the measure by the analysis that emerges from indicators such as inflation, the basic basket and family income.

The first registers a marked difference before and after, going from an upward trend to a downward trend.

Annual inflation stood at 22.8% in 1995, climbed to 30.7% in 1997 and 60.7% in 1999, according to the study, 'The Ecuadorian Economy after 10 years of dollarization' of the Central Bank of Ecuador (ECB).

The index climbed to 91% in 2000 and began to plummet to 9.4% in 2002, according to the same source.

Vicente Albornoz, Dean of Economics at the University of the Americas, remarks that one of the "great merits" of dollarization was to "slow down inflation."

He maintains that this is good for the economy, because it allows companies and people to plan the use of their money.

"Inflation is the speed at which prices grow. When we had sucres there was high inflation, that is, prices were rising fast and all the time," he says.

Note that that is why, before dollarization, inflation rates were double digits.

Since 2002 they remain in one. But in 2017, there was a negative annual inflation, a behavior that was repeated at the end of 2019.

Albornoz points out that this is not due to dollarization, but rather to poor management of the economy by the previous regime. And he explains that the negative expression reflects that people don't spend because they don't have money to do it.

The cost of buying basic goods

Likewise, the 20 years of dollarization show the evolution of the basic basket and family income (the National Institute of Statistics and Census, INEC, defines it as the income of a four-member household with 1.6 income recipients).

The ECB study indicates that in the decade prior to dollarization, the basket cost an average of \$304.4 per month, while income reached an average of \$168.7 per month.

The same source notes that between 2000 and 2009, the monthly average of each indicator was, in its order, \$409.38 and \$278.1.

The ECB concludes that family income went from covering 55.4% of the cost of the basket, to covering 67.9%.

That is, an Ecuadorian type home improved its economic conditions a little to buy a basic basket.

INEC data shows that between 2010 and 2019 the gap between this indicator and family income has been gradually shortening.

In 2010, a typical household lacked \$93 to pay for the basket, and in 2015, only \$9. And, 2019 closed in December with a "surplus," according to INEC, because the family income was \$735.47 and the basket of \$715.08.

But the trend during 20 years of dollarization picks up a gap, as family income is not enough to finance the basket.

The former director of INEC, Byron Villacis, points out that it is due to certain factors of the economy. On the basket, note that the price of certain products "is much higher" in some cities, because they are more susceptible to being affected by speculation.

He cites as an example the rise in food from another region, when the price of gasoline is announced.

Villacis explains that certain components of the basket behave like this, because the "economic structure of the country has not changed:" it still depends on trade, rather than on service (added value).

On the other hand, he says that family income has improved over the years, but "it is not growing at a rate that it should, because the economy grows a few years, other years it does not grow ...".

That is, it is an indicator that "depends a lot" on the macroeconomic situation.

"Dollarization is good, but it has its costs," says Byron Villacis.

And notes that any dollarized country has "a lot of difficulty" when it wants to change its "economic structure," because it is anchored to a foreign monetary system that has its rules.

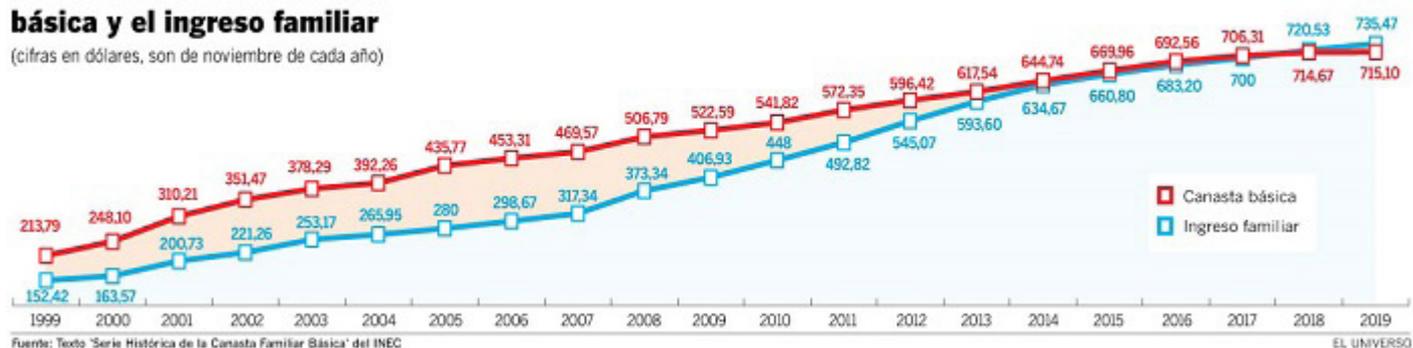
Consumer behavior

The director of the Consumers and Users Tribune, María José Troya, believes that Ecuadorians quickly adapted to the use of the dollar in 2000. "Although at the beginning it was a very strong adjustment, people quickly got used to it," says Troya, adding that the citizens of Europe took longer to accept the euro.

Extracted from Diario El Universo

Diferencia entre la canasta básica y el ingreso familiar

(cifras en dólares, son de noviembre de cada año)



CRIME REPORT AND ACCIDENT REPORT

Cuenca and National Criminal Activity

(Cuenca) A woman and her 20-year-old son have been arrested by the Police for the crime of extortion.

The police report notes that after learning of the complaint made by two citizens about telephone calls to demand the delivery of \$300 to return a television that was stolen from them, the agents of the National Subdirectorate of Investigations Against the Crime of the Right to Property opened an investigation to locate the criminals.

On Sunday afternoon, on Loja Avenue, Bryan V. and his mother Sileny Q. were arrested with a television, a remote control and the cell phone they used to call the victims.

The Police are investigating whether these subjects are linked to other crimes committed in different sectors of the city.

(Cuenca) Police captured six alleged members of a criminal organization, which stole money from a commercial premise located in the Historic Center of Cuenca.

The incident was committed around 11:30 on Saturday at a store selling food located on Calle Larga and Padre Aguirre, where the criminals stole \$2,000.

The Police reported that through the operation "Tornado," three subjects were captured inside the commercial premise and later, after the search of a hostel located in the Terrestrial Terminal sector, the other suspects were apprehended along with the vehicle they used to commit the crime.

Roberto Guerra, a police officer, reported that the subjects acted in groups, to distract the employees who worked at the store.

(El Valle and Challuabamba) A criminal gang robbed two petrol stations Monday morning and took the money raised overnight. One of the assaults was committed around 02:00 at the service station that is located on the road to El Valle, in the El Coco sector.

One of the employees reported that a taxi without plates arrived at the gas station and two men and a woman got out and pointed revolvers at the clerk to force him to hand over the money.

The clerk said that his partner tried to prevent theft but was shot at and received three cuts to his scalp.

Mario Castro, head of the Police Subzone of Azuay, confirmed that another service station was robbed in Challuabamba, apparently by the same individuals.

The police chief said that the investigative units reviewed the images captured by the security cameras of the gas stations and scanned cameras that exist in the surrounding areas in order to collate information that identifies criminals.

Castro explained that this type of robbery is known as "of opportunity," because they are committed by gangs that come from other cities, analyze vulnerable businesses, hit and flee.

On the amount of the damage, he said that one of the gas stations lost \$400 and the other is still confirming the amount.

Castro said the investigations are advanced and that he hopes to have the criminals behind bars soon.

(Santa Isabel) On Tuesday, in Santa Isabel, a 78-year-old man was arrested for a sexual offense against a 10-year-old girl.

Police reports indicate that the arrest took place after Maritza B. reported that her daughter told her that her neighbor had taken her to her home—deceiving her that he was going to give her a candy cane—and had touched her private parts.

The report details that with that information and being a flagrant crime, the uniformed men immediately proceeded to apprehend the suspect.

The alleged aggressor was a foreign national identified as Miguel Ángel MP

The Azuay Prosecutor initiated an investigative process to determine if the subject would be accused of rape or sexual abuse.

Cuenca Area Traffic Accidents

A young motorcyclist lost his life when he was hit by a crane-type platform

truck. The accident happened Thursday morning at Primero de Mayo and Canton Sigsig Street.

Transit agents said that the driver of the platform truck made a turn towards Canton Sigsig Street and the motorcycle hit the vehicle. The driver of the heavy vehicle left the scene.

"Apparently the negligence belongs to the driver of the truck, for not observing that the motorcyclist was coming down the avenue. The investigations will determine the responsibilities."

The victim was identified as Álvaro Rolando Galarza, 25. His body was transferred to the Forensic Center of Cuenca.

"On the morning of this Thursday, January 9, 2020, two motorcycle traffic accidents were recorded in different parts of Cuenca, leaving both riders injured.

The first occurred at 7:00 a.m. at Pío Bravo y Borrero streets. It appears that a taxi hit the motorcyclist who was transferred to the José Carrasco Arteaga Hospital of the IESS. The taxi driver was arrested until police learn the final report of the motorcycle's health status.

The other accident involved a policeman riding a motorcycle. He was also hit by a taxi. This incident occurred at Gil Ramírez Dávalos y Turuhuayco Avenue.

According to the EMOV civil transit agent, police officer Juan Moscoso was driving to Mariscal La Mar airport to receive the state ministers. "He had his flashing lights on, so he had preference to pass through the red traffic light," he said.

Both the policeman and the driver of the light vehicle were injured.

"Two young people who were riding on a motorcycle were injured after crashing into the back of a cargo vehicle at 7:50 a.m. on Wednesday morning. The accident occurred on the El Valle-Santa Ana road.

Paramedics from the Fire Department and the Ministry of Health attended the emergency and determined that one of the injured had to be transferred to a hospital; the other was treated at the site.

According to investigations carried out by traffic agents, the accident occurred when the truck slowed down to enter a block factory. Apparently, the motorcycle did not keep a safe distance and slammed into the back of the truck.

"Emergency services provided first aid to the occupants of three vehicles that were injured last Friday on different roads in Cuenca.

The first and most serious emergency arose at 5:20 a.m. on the Pan-American South, near Tarqui, where a Chevrolet truck went off the road and turned over on its side.

Responders found an 18-year-old girl was in critical condition and a 12-year-old girl who presented with lacerations; both young women were transferred to hospital centers.

Another emergency came at 6:20 a.m. on Friday at the intersection of Presidente Córdova and Hermano Miguel streets, in the Historic Center, where a Chevrolet Aveo car was hit by a Grand Vitara SZ jeep.

Fire Department paramedics reported that they helped four children and drivers, who had minor blows, but did not merit the transfer to health homes.

The agents indicated that they will investigate who did not respect the traffic light to establish responsibilities.

"An interprovincial bus of the Trans Esmeraldas cooperative overturned on Saturday, claiming the lives of five people and injuring seven.

The tragedy occurred at 03:30 a.m., when the bus Number 35, which covered the Quito-Esmeraldas route, before reaching Chafalú, in the Chinca parish, left the road and fell into a ravine of about 40 meters deep

ECU 911 reported that the injured were taken to the southern hospital, Delfina Torres, and the bodies to the Emerald Forensic Center.

Surviving passengers reported that the unit left at 10:30 p.m. from the Quitumbe land terminal, bound for Esmeraldas.

This new tragedy adds to the overturning of a bus from the Flota Imbabura cooperative, which took place early Saturday morning, on the Alóag-Santo Domingo road, leaving three dead and 13 wounded.

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 for consideration.

Classifieds and Events

Events

Jan. 13th - Floral Design Workshop: Creating Arrangements for Valentine

We invite you to spend a pleasant afternoon learning a new artistic skill. Floral Design is a psychotherapeutic method in which the mind, body, and soul form a unity. Philip Combs, a former part of the Texas State Florist Association Board of Directors will guide you through this magnificent art. You'll learn to create beautiful vase arrangements for your Valentine, using freshly cut roses from Ecuador Direct Roses Farm. The perfect gift. Made with love with the guidance of an expert.

Schedule: Monday, January 13th from 11 AM to 2:30 PM
La Guarida: Mariscal Lamar 22-23 and Luis Pauta
Cost: \$25 per person (materials and lunch included) plus 1 glass of wine.

To reserve your spot, please contact Karla Sanchez or send an email to karla@ecuadordirectroses.com or call to my cellphone 096 904 1385

Jan. 14th - Attention Retirees and Pre-retirees from the usa! free class

Special free class in English at the Universidad Politecnica Salesiana of Cuenca: THE CHANGING WORLD OF RETIREMENT PLANNING. Tuesday January 14, 2020 from 9 am to 1 pm. Free breakfast (8:30 a.m.) and free lunch (12 p.m.) included and catered by Sunrise Café (Calle Larga). The Universidad Politecnica Salesiana is located at Calle Vieja 12-30 y Elia Liut, Cuenca.

For registration and more information:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/retirement-workshop-held-at-cuenca-university-central-campus-tickets-63540197441>

The same class will be held in Salinas on Friday January 17 and also on Saturday January 18.

Jan. 15th - OBG Dance At Common Grounds

Our First Dance of the New Year will be:
WEDNESDAY January 15, 2020
Happy Hour is from 5 - 7pm with Great Food All Evening
Drink Specials & Music from 7 - 10pm
New Location: Eduardo Crespo Malo y Gran Colombia
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.
Contact: Rene
email: obgdance@gmail.com

Jan. 18th - Celebrating Marvels of Nature and Humanity

Don't miss the show of watercolors that is now extended through Saturday, January 18, at the Miguel Illescas Gallery. Themes of the paintings include landscapes of the Cajas, of Cuenca, and scenes from Colorado, Nevada, and Israel. The art was featured in the newspapers El Tiempo on December 14, and the front page of El Mercurio, on December 17. Saturday, January 11 from 4 - 6 PM.
Show open now through Saturday January 18. Free, Calle Larga 1-209 and Miguel Angel Estrella, Cuenca.
Contact: Sandra Doren
Phone: 0982799503

email: doren1750@gmail.com

Jan. 18th - Cooking classes at the Alliance Française are back for 2020

Let's celebrate 2020 together with two classes (same theme) on January 18th and February 1st

Same time - 9AM - 1PM

\$10 for AF members - \$15 public

Tadeo Torres 1-92 Y Av. Solano

Class executed by yours, humbly, Chef Marc Dullin (Retired in Cuenca)

• By popular requests we will have a hands-on knife-skills class where you will learn all the professional cuts using vegetables and fruits (please bring your kitchen's knives and an apron)

Afterword, we will enjoy a menu created to utilize our cut product

To reserve your place, please register with Thibault or Natalie at the Alliance Française

Pre-paid and pre-registered ONLY - No walk-in ...

Price includes a generous serving/tasting of the menu + free sharpening and always ... a glass of chilled Chardonnay. (Spanish, English and French spoken)

Contact: Marc

Phone: 0987456825

email: mdullin.53@gmail.com

Word Scramble

What cuencanos have been waiting for yet concerned with for the past 4 years.

N A A R V T I



Answer: Tranvía

Solution to Sudoku puzzle on page 3

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

Real Estate & Rentals



FOR RENT

**LARGE, NEWLY RENOVATED HOUSE IS
A 15-MINUTE WALK TO EL CENTRO.**

Short walk to Calderon Park, this charming, two-story house has an outside terrace off the back bedroom, a pleasant enclosed garden and an outside bar-b-que patio. There are three upstairs bedrooms plus a maid's suite on the ground floor and a separate office with desk. All bedrooms have their own bath.

Contact:

CuencaRentalsandSales
0994882938
rentalscuenca@gmail.com



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

Contact us to include your listing in the next issue!

info@thecuencadispatch.com
099-582-1318



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

Be part of these living concept

Apartments from 86 sq m with hot water and gas centralized system, fiber-optic-internet service, gym, communal roof and lot of more reasons that make Atlantida the best place to live.

Contact:

Ma. Paula Carpio T.
0998059463
jtoral8@hotmail.com



FOR SALE

**AFFORDABLE BRAND NEW CONDOS
FOR SALE**

Located near the Av. Ordóñez Lasso, 10 min. (by car) to the Historic Center. With large terraces, balconies and windows to relax and enjoy the scenery. The bathrooms and rooms have heating systems. We have 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom-condos.

Contact:

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



FOR SALE

**Hacienda and Land for Sale in the
Jungle**

Location: San José de Morona , Tiwintza canton, province of Morona Santiago, approximately 300 kilometers from the city of Cuenca. \$800 per hectare.

Contact:

Juan Pablo Avila
(593) 998-688883
jpavila11@hotmail.com