

BELIZE

No. HR2/1/13

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, 8th January 2021

10:00 AM

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ORDERS OF THE DAY

1. Prayers.
2. Oath of Allegiance of a new Member.
3. Announcements by the Speaker.
6. Papers.

No. HR1/1/13 - Supplementary Appropriation (No.5)
Schedule for Fiscal Year 2020/2021.

No. HR2/1/13 - Supplementary Appropriation (No.6)
Schedule for Fiscal Year 2020/2021.

*(The Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Economic
Development and Investment)*

10. Statements by Ministers.

12. Introduction of Bills.

1. General Revenue Supplementary Appropriation (2020/2021) (No.5) Bill, 2021.

Bill for an Act to appropriate further sums of money for the use of the Public Service of Belize for the financial year ending on the thirty-first day of March, two thousand and twenty-one.

2. General Revenue Supplementary Appropriation (2020/2021) (No.6) Bill, 2021.

Bill for an Act to appropriate further sums of money for the use of the Public Service of Belize for the financial year ending on the thirty-first day of March, two thousand and twenty-one.

3. Central Bank of Belize (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

Bill for an Act to amend the Central Bank of Belize Act, Chapter 262 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011; to provide for emergency programs and facilities in unusual and exigent economic, financial or systemic circumstances; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

4. Finance and Audit (Reform) (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

Bill for an Act to amend the Finance and Audit (Reform) Act, Chapter 15 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011, to provide for the establishment of a Contingencies Fund to be used for urgent and unforeseen expenditure for which no other provision exists; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

(The Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Investment)

5. Belize Constitution (Ninth Amendment) Bill, 2021.

Bill for an Act to amend the Belize Constitution, Chapter 4 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011, to provide for additional grounds for the removal of a judge; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

6. Time Limit for Judicial Decisions Bill, 2021.

Bill for an Act to specify a time limit in accordance with sections 98 and 102 of the Belize Constitution within which a judge shall give a decision in a civil case and any appeal case; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

7. Public Contracts Commission Bill, 2021.

Bill for an Act to establish the Office of the Public Contracts Commission to monitor the award and implementation of public contracts for the purpose of ensuring that such contracts are awarded impartially and on merit; to investigate fraud, corruption, mismanagement, waste or abuse in the award of public contracts; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

(The Honourable Minister of Education, Culture, Science & Technology)

8. Public Health (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

Bill for an Act to amend the Public Health Act, Chapter 40 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011; to expand the definition of infectious disease and dangerous infectious disease; to increase the penalty for the breach of regulations; to provide for violation tickets; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

(The Honourable Minister of Health and Wellness)

13. Motions relating to the Business or Sittings of the House.

14. Public Business.

A. Government Business

**I MOTIONS *(For Text of Motions see
Notice Papers attached)***

- 1 Good Governance in Belize Motion, 2021.

Cabinet's recommendation to be signified.

*(The Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Economic
Development and Investment)*

2. Designate New Holidays and Special Days Motion, 2021.

Cabinet's recommendation to be signified.

(The Honourable Minister of Home Affairs & New Growth Industries,

II BILLS FOR SECOND READING

III COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE ON BILLS

IV BILLS FOR THIRD READING

BELIZE

No. HR2/1/13

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, 8th January 2021

10:00 A.M.

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NOTICES OF QUESTIONS AND MOTIONS

M O T I O N S

1. Good Governance in Belize Motion, 2021.

Notice given on 14th December 2020.

WHEREAS, Standing Order 26 of the House of Representatives provides for a Motion to be moved with the permission of Madam Speaker;

AND WHEREAS, the people of this great nation deserve a better Belize, deserve good governance and deserve to once again, live in a truly democratic nation where the rule of law is of paramount importance;

AND WHEREAS, all 26 duly elected members of the House of Representatives on this side of the House had covenanted to:

1. work ceaselessly to achieve the goals set out in the PLANBELIZE Manifesto of the People's United Party;
2. above all, remain faithful to the motto of the PUP – Serve the People – and not to use our offices for personal gains;
3. at all times, faithfully uphold and defend the Constitution and Laws of Belize;
4. unreservedly support plans and policies of a PUP Government that promote social, economic, and environmental justice;
5. ensure that all workers receive fair pay for their work and to implement a livable minimum wage of \$5 per hour;
6. to work to eliminate economic and social privilege and disparity among Belizeans and to protect the right of all to life, liberty, access to affordable education, universal health care, land and housing, and the right to live in peaceful communities;

7. to protect the identity, dignity and social and cultural values of Belizeans including indigenous peoples;
8. to actively promote sustainable development in Belize and to protect our natural and built environment;
9. to insist on good and transparent governance and to hold accountable those who betray the public good;
10. to defend Belize's territorial integrity and to protect Belize's interest in international fora;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House will:

1. Pass legislation to empower the Integrity Commission by appointing professional personnel on the Commission, modify its membership and provide adequate funding for the Commission to fulfill its important legal, auditing and investigative functions;
2. Implement measures to ensure that the three branches of government (i.e. the Executive, Legislative and the Judiciary) function as truly complementary but independent branches as envisaged in the Constitution; Establish sound systems and good practices for recruitment of judges, magistrates and officers of the Court with security of tenure; Ensure that there is increase in the budget for the Judiciary to ensure that the Judiciary is able to ensure that persons accused, and parties in civil matters, are given a fair trial within a reasonable period of time as mandated by the Constitution;
3. Take measures to reduce discretionary ministerial powers in order to increase administrative efficiency and eliminate, where possible, political intervention;
4. Implement a national budget planning, implementing and monitoring system to guarantee transparency of the budget, by engaging civil society, local governments and electoral divisions in the budget process, and to ensure efficient use of the national resources in the designated programs;
5. Facilitate the implementation of a government procurement process through an E-marketplace for the government, statutory bodies and state-owned organizations based on best models used by countries in the region, and ensure that the procurement of supplies, works and services must abide by strict rules in order to ensure fairness, competition and transparency; These rules will ensure that suitably qualified suppliers or contractors are chosen without bias and that the best price/quality ratio and the best price is obtained, with the full transparency appropriate to the use of public funds; The Office of the Contractor General will be strengthened by the enactment of the Public Contracts Commission

to ensure full compliance with established rules and procedures in each step of the process from the call for tenders and proposals, publication, and all the procedures for establishing shortlists, evaluation, award and signing of contracts;

6. Reconstitute the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) with effective participation of social partners in the Senate so as to ensure its proper role in overseeing the sound and prudent management of public revenues and expenditures; Strengthen the capacity, allocate appropriate resources and ensure the proper functioning of the Office of the Auditor General, to conduct financial and value-for-money audits for public cost centers and accounts right after the conclusion of every financial year (Section 120, Belize Constitution) and enable and operationalize effective internal auditing systems throughout all departments of Government; Ensure that all hearings of PAC and parliamentary standing committees are public so as to ensure true transparency and accountability.
7. To ensure that we have fair and effective representation and participation, we shall provide for the independence of the Elections & Boundaries Commission to be free from political interference; Its Chairman is to be appointed in a similar fashion as the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Auditor-General, so that the Commission can be autonomous and free from government control; Implement the Constituency Development Fund to enable elected representatives to be pro-active in supporting grass-roots development initiatives in the country. Importantly, to amend the Constitution to provide a fixed date for elections and, to introduce campaign financing legislation.
8. Reform and modernize the public service by taking steps to restore the autonomy of the public service (prevent micro-management by political directorate), to enhance customer orientation and quality service delivery, and to provide innovative solutions to complex challenges of the day. Assist the Public Service Commission to re-establish integrity and impartiality in recruiting, training, evaluating and disciplining processes; Revert to appointing Permanent Secretaries, i.e. using senior career public officers as accounting officers of all Ministries; Public officers will be made to do their job, without fear or favor, punishment will be swift for incompetence and/or corruption, and penalties will be increased for acts of corruption and public authority abuses; Introduce legislation with measures to protect whistle-blowers and witnesses involved in corruption cases; We will implement e-governance where possible to increase efficiency in service and transparency.

Cabinet's recommendation to be signified.

2. Designate New Holidays and Special Days Motion, 2021.

Notice given on 14th December 2020.

WHEREAS, Standing Order 26 of the House of Representatives provides for a Motion to be moved with the permission of Madam Speaker;

AND WHEREAS, Belize is a free, democratic and independent nation

thanks to the sacrifice and service of many people, but more particularly the Right Honourable George Price, Father of the Nation;

AND WHEREAS, we believe that it is right and proper to honour the Father of the Nation, the Right Honourable George Price, by designating his birthday, the 15th day of January, as a public and bank holiday to memorialize his sacrifice and efforts in the achievement of this great nation's independence;

AND WHEREAS, today Belize is a beautiful tapestry of peoples of diverse ethnicities and cultures;

AND WHEREAS, we wish to mark the importance of the emancipation of slaves in Belize on the 1st day of August 1834, when many of the ancestors of our fellow Belizeans of African descent were freed from their shackles who continued in their service as free persons to build what is today this great nation;

AND WHEREAS, history records that the people of Belize, including the indigenous people of Belize, were never conquered by the Spanish, and as such, we wish to celebrate their heritage and also the cultural diversity of the great people of Belize, by either removing the 12th day of October as Columbus Day and re-designating that day, and establishing a committee to do so and to review all other public and bank holidays;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that:

1. The 15th day of January shall be a public and bank holiday in honour of the late, the Right Honourable George Price, the Father of the Nation, and be celebrated as George Price Day;
2. The 1st day of August shall be a public and bank holiday to mark the importance of emancipation of the slaves in Belize and be celebrated as Emancipation Day; and
3. The 12th day of October shall no longer be celebrated as Columbus Day and is to be re-designated by a committee to be formed to review the same and all holidays.

Cabinet's recommendation to be signified.

(The Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Investment)