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## THE BIG CREEK GROUP



panies that operate out of Big Creek are: the Port of Big Creek – the country's principal port for exports; Banana Enterprise Limited – providing port, tug and barge, and stevedoring services for the Port; Belagro Agriculture – the largest fertilizer and agro-chemical supplier in Belize; BC Shipping – an international container shipping company; Haney Farm Limited – shrimp farming; and Softech Data Center - an online travel agency.

According to Anuar Flores, brother of Zaid, a former Director of the Central Bank of Belize and currently a Director of Belize Electricity Limited, and, for the past several years, a business consultant to the Group, the history of the Port of Big Creek is intimately tied to the country's banana industry. "It has been at the center

of the development of the Port and the Big Creek Group," he explains. "In the early 1980s, the once government-owned and foreign-managed banana industry was on the verge of collapse. The United Kingdom wanted the bananas but the production was too small to justify the efforts; the shipping time was too long and manual loading on barges, transported to Guatemala for transshipment to the UK, was just not cost-effective and created significant quality issues.

"The then Chairman of the Irish-owned Company, Fyffes, Mr. John Ellis, a former Vice Chairman of United Brands Fruit Company, a visionary and strong advocate of the Belize banana industry, with the assistance of Craig Griffith, a retired Investment banker, coordinated with the