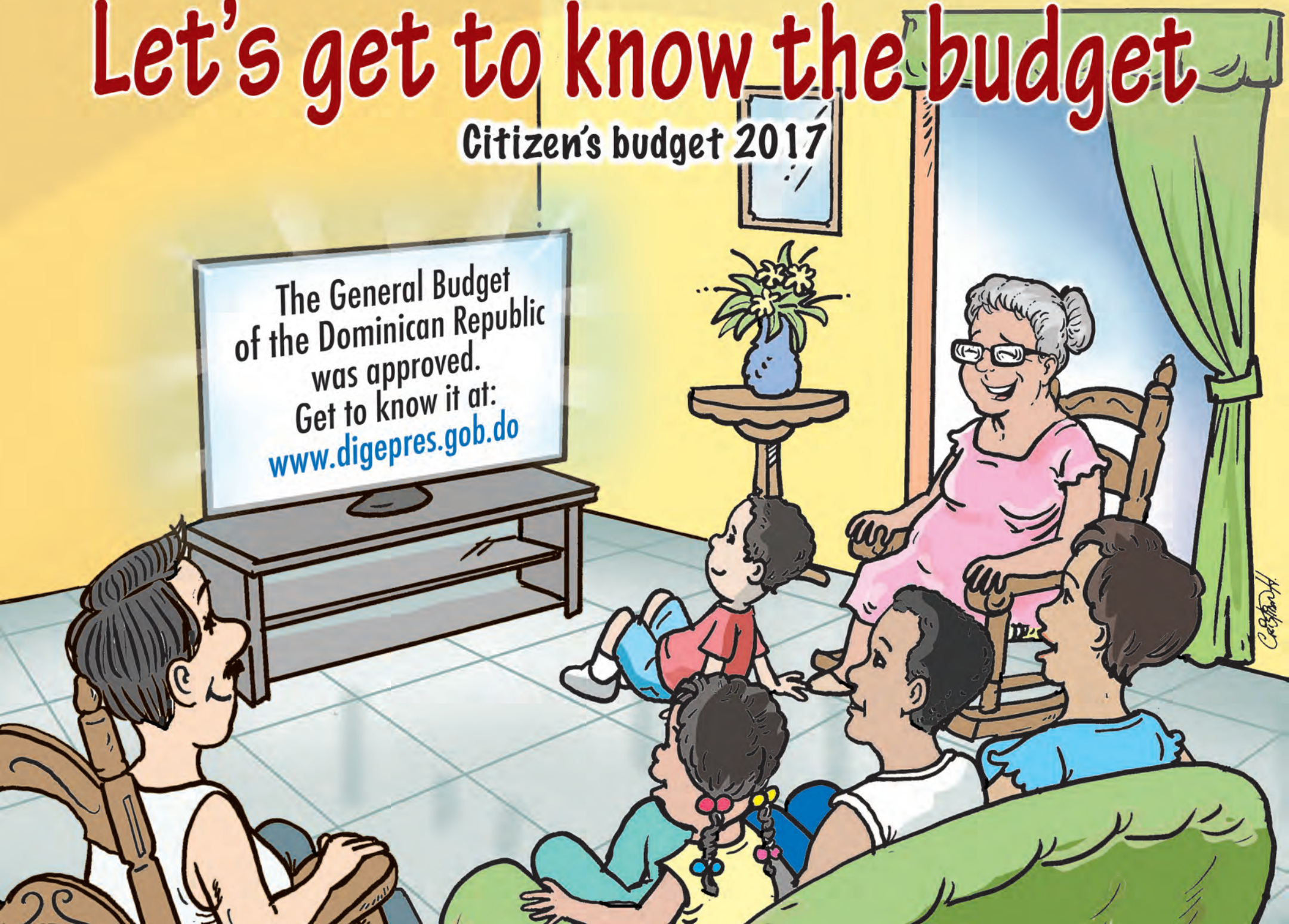


Let's get to know the budget

Citizen's budget 2017

The General Budget
of the Dominican Republic
was approved.
Get to know it at:
www.digepres.gob.do



Cartoonista

Let's get to know the budget

Citizen's budget 2017

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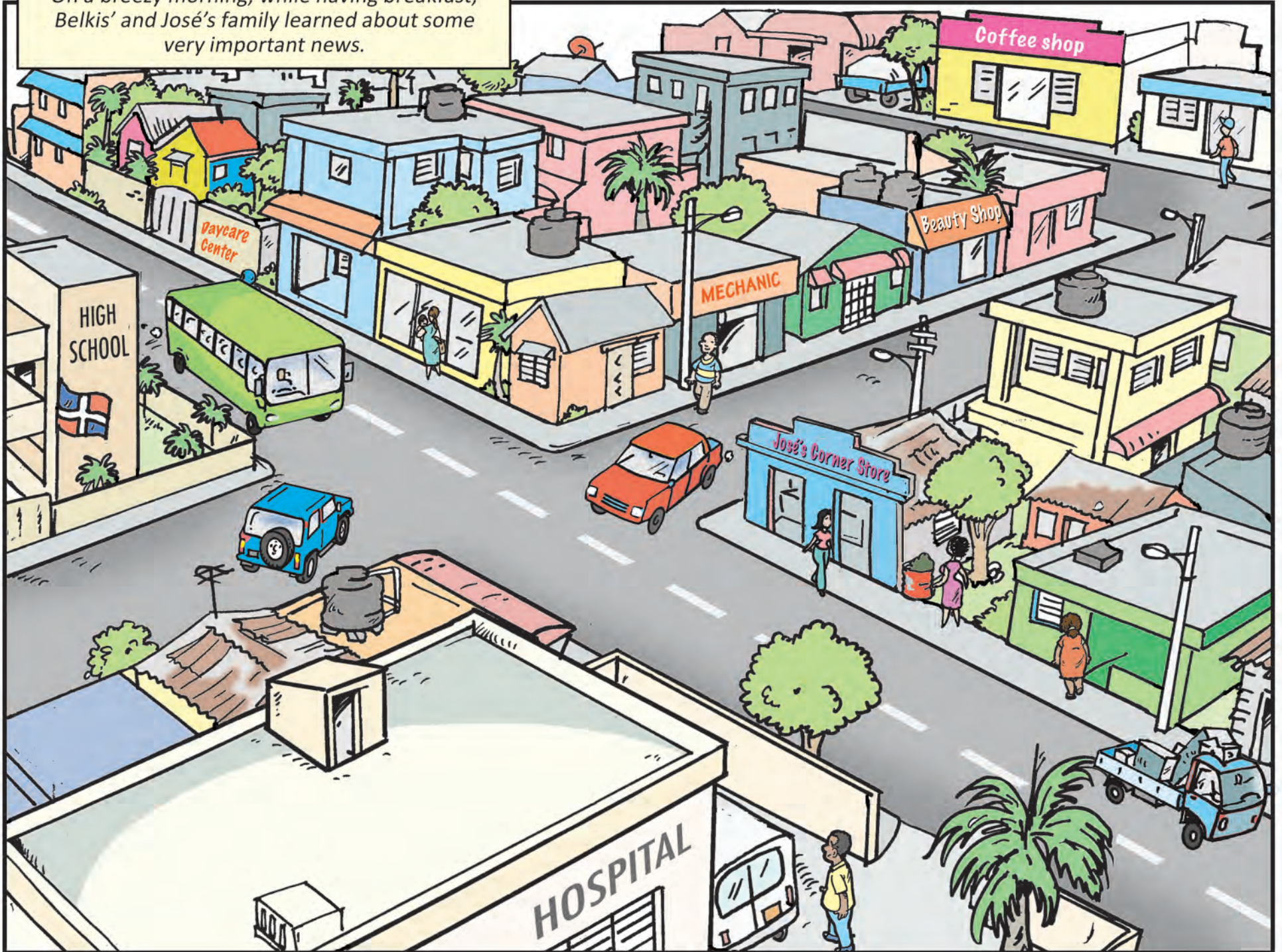
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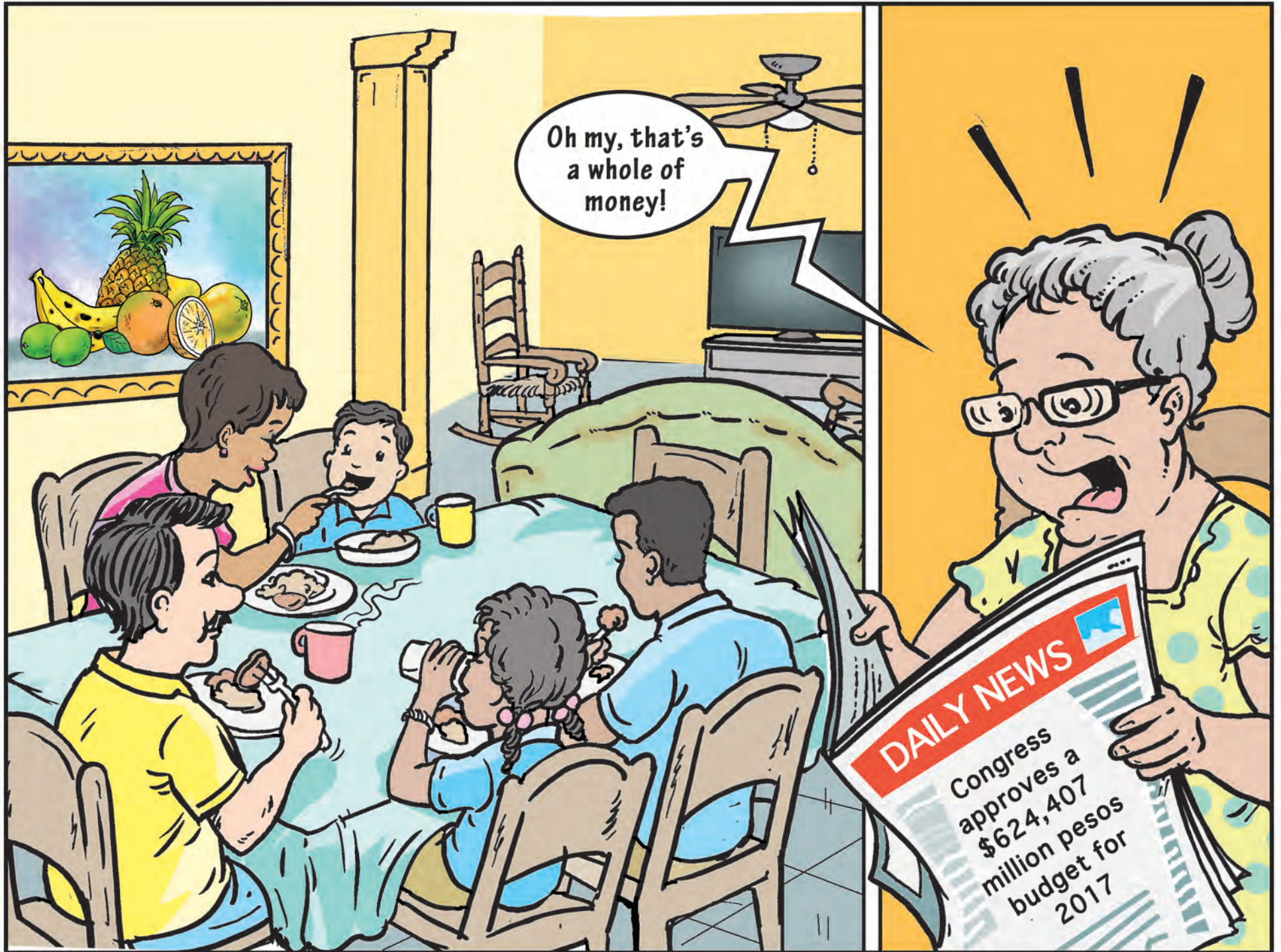


Al servicio
de las personas
y las naciones.



On a breezy morning, while having breakfast, Belkis' and José's family learned about some very important news.





Oh my, that's a whole of money!

DAILY NEWS
Congress approves a \$624,407 million pesos budget for 2017



What's going on, mother?



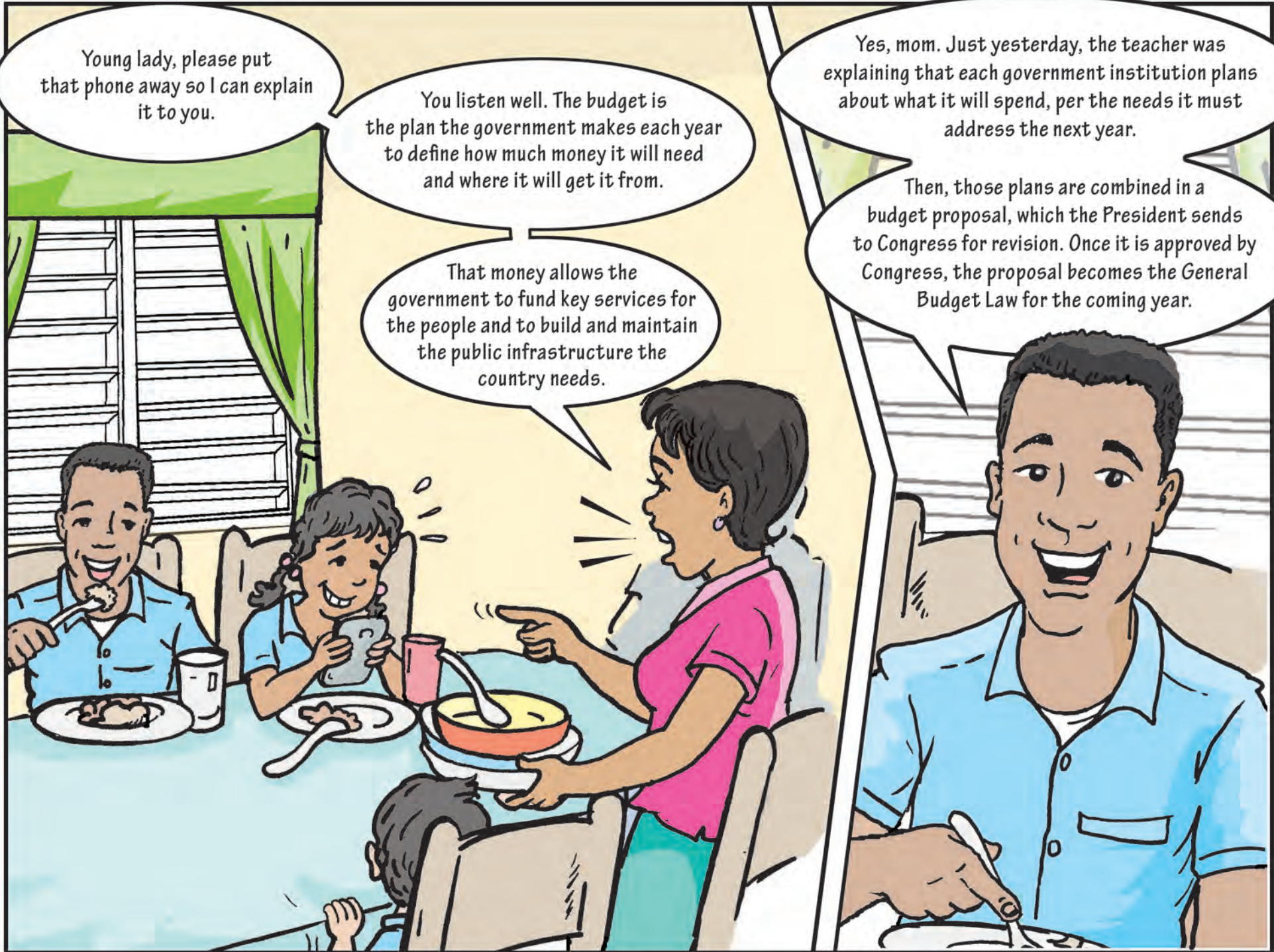
I think she probably won the lottery or something...



Nah, I wish. It says here that the national budget for next year was approved already.



What's a budget? What does it mean that "it was approved"?



Young lady, please put that phone away so I can explain it to you.

You listen well. The budget is the plan the government makes each year to define how much money it will need and where it will get it from.

That money allows the government to fund key services for the people and to build and maintain the public infrastructure the country needs.

Yes, mom. Just yesterday, the teacher was explaining that each government institution plans about what it will spend, per the needs it must address the next year.

Then, those plans are combined in a budget proposal, which the President sends to Congress for revision. Once it is approved by Congress, the proposal becomes the General Budget Law for the coming year.



These kids know too much now!
It seems that they are getting a lot from
the new extended schedule at school. Time goes
fast. Sooner than later they will finish university
and I will leave them the corner store to
administer, so I can finally retire.

By the way,
Mrs. Minga, does the
paper say what the
government will spend
the Budget's
money on?

It doesn't specify that much, but it says
here that the government has several priorities
for next year, such as:

1 Improving healthcare access
for low income people, taking
in account both quantity and
quality



2 Strengthening
potable water
access



3 Strengthening public
safety throughout the
national territory



4 Increasing access and
quality of education at
all levels



5 Continuing to
reduce extreme
poverty



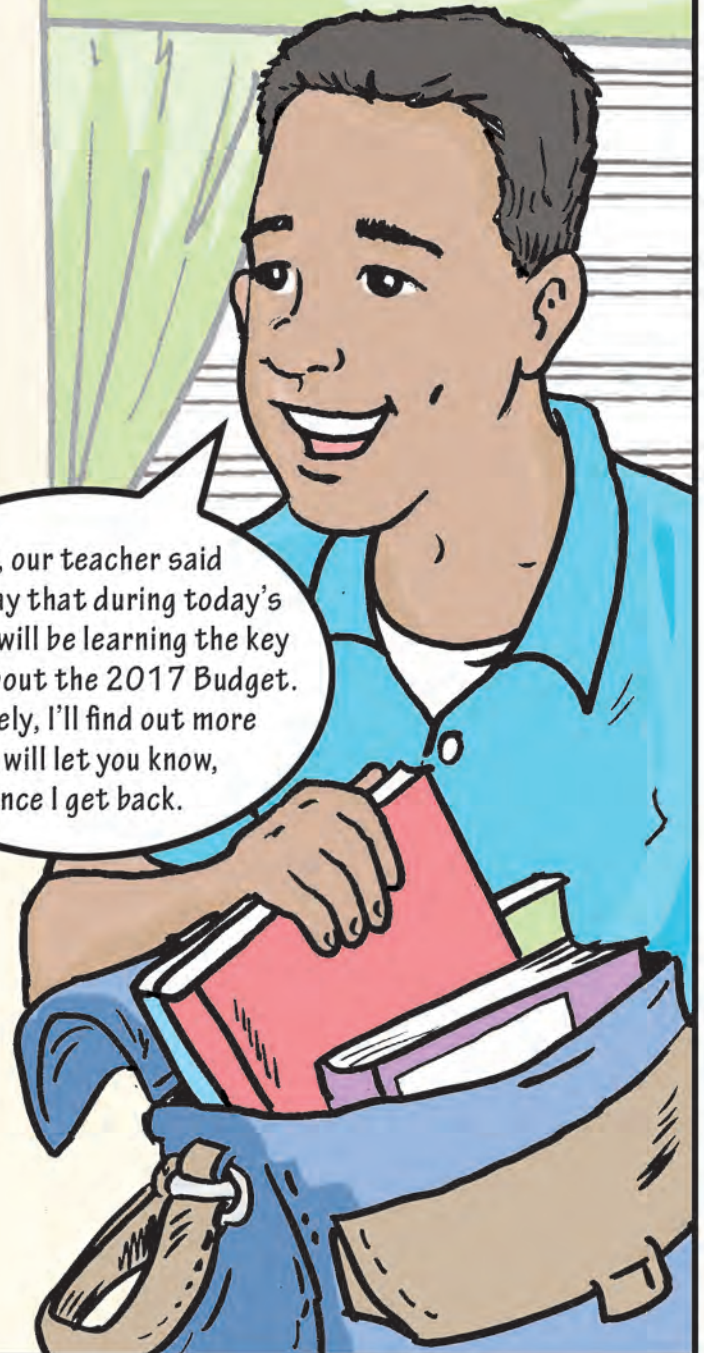
You heard that, José?
That the main investments will go
towards healthcare, potable water,
public safety, education and
poverty reduction.

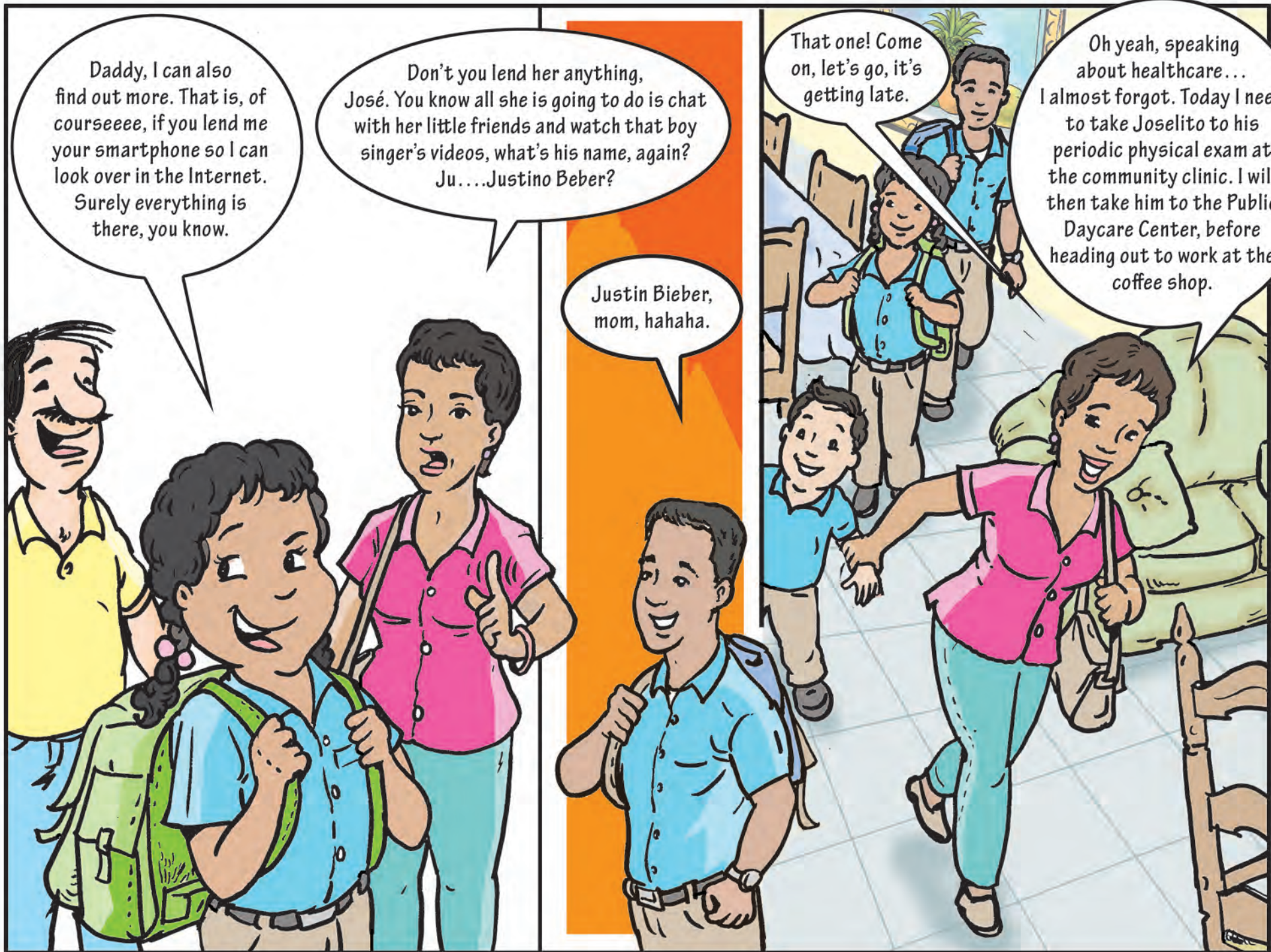


Aha, but we ought to find
out more about those investments.
Maybe someone at the shop will know
more details. You know that all key
info gets there first.



Dad, our teacher said
yesterday that during today's
class we will be learning the key
details about the 2017 Budget.
So surely, I'll find out more
and will let you know,
once I get back.





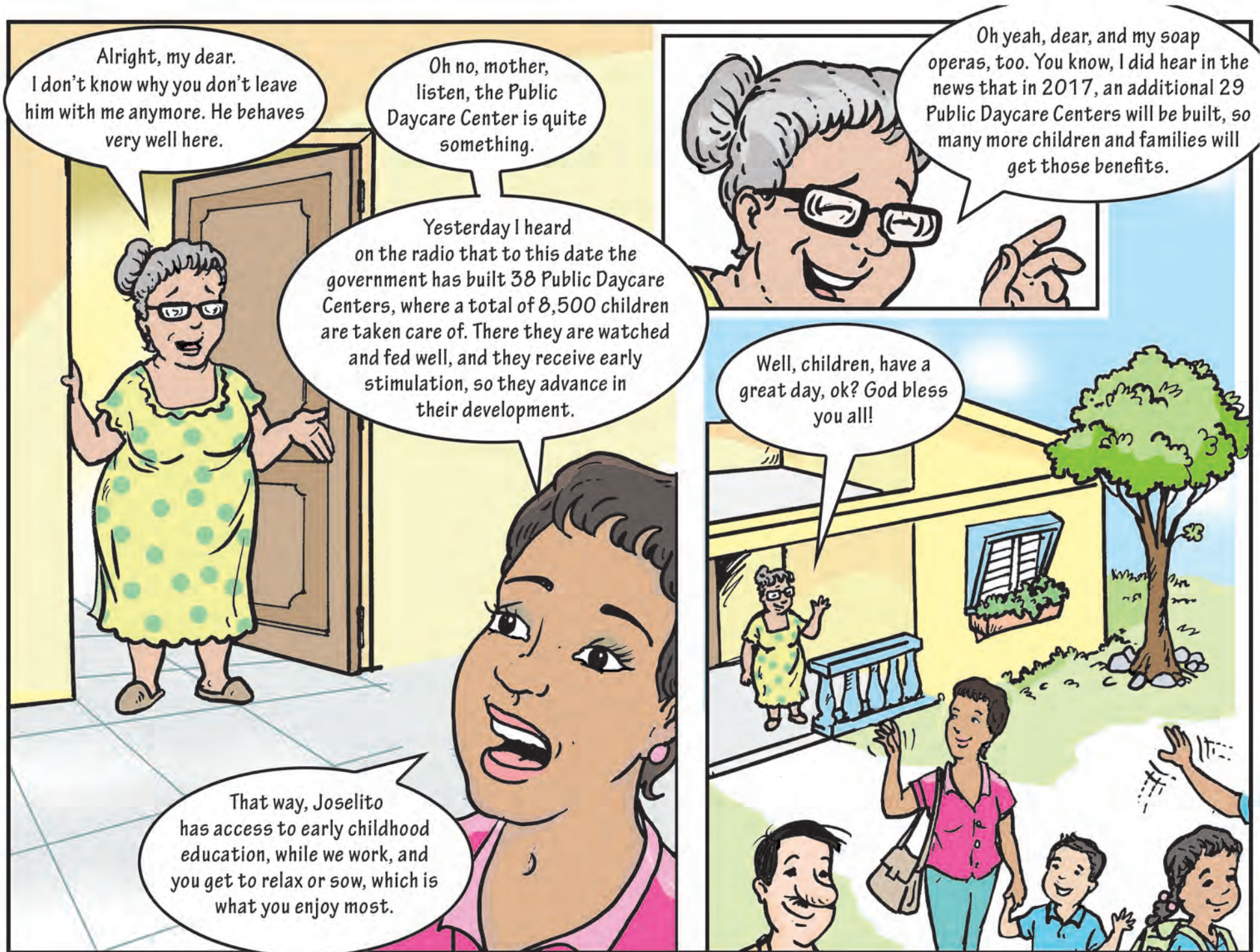
Daddy, I can also find out more. That is, of courseeee, if you lend me your smartphone so I can look over in the Internet. Surely everything is there, you know.

Don't you lend her anything, José. You know all she is going to do is chat with her little friends and watch that boy singer's videos, what's his name, again? Ju....Justino Beber?

Justin Bieber, mom,ahaha.

That one! Come on, let's go, it's getting late.

Oh yeah, speaking about healthcare... I almost forgot. Today I need to take Joselito to his periodic physical exam at the community clinic. I will then take him to the Public Daycare Center, before heading out to work at the coffee shop.



Alright, my dear. I don't know why you don't leave him with me anymore. He behaves very well here.

Oh no, mother, listen, the Public Daycare Center is quite something.

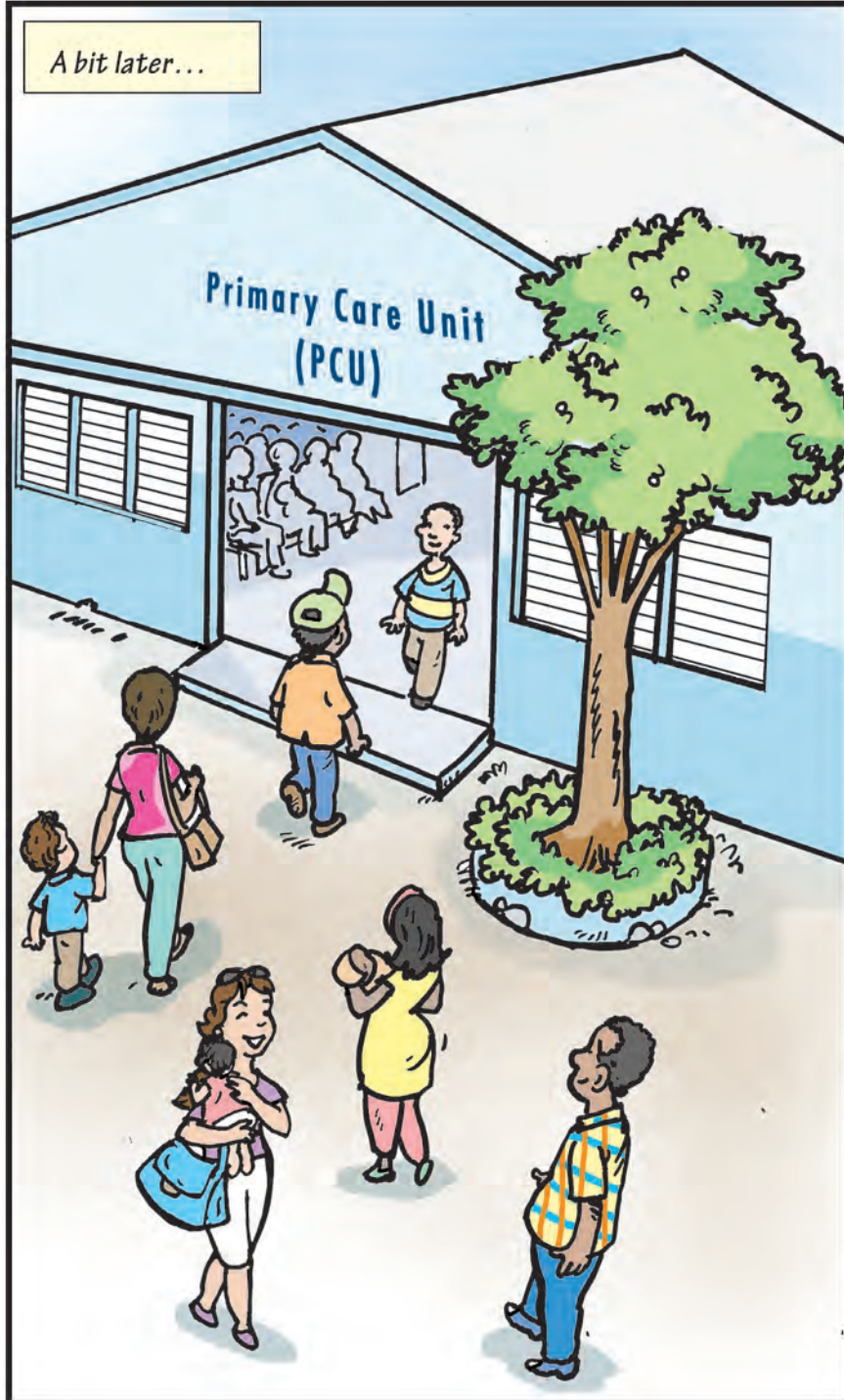
Yesterday I heard on the radio that to this date the government has built 38 Public Daycare Centers, where a total of 8,500 children are taken care of. There they are watched and fed well, and they receive early stimulation, so they advance in their development.

That way, Joselito has access to early childhood education, while we work, and you get to relax or sow, which is what you enjoy most.

Oh yeah, dear, and my soap operas, too. You know, I did hear in the news that in 2017, an additional 29 Public Daycare Centers will be built, so many more children and families will get those benefits.

Well, children, have a great day, ok? God bless you all!

A bit later...



And, in other news, the 2017 National Budget approved yesterday by Congress, not only has education as a priority but, it also approved a 20% increase in public expenditure on health, for a total budget of RD\$ 71,907.1 million in this sector.

Now that's good news for all of us! I'm curious as to what that money is going to be spent on.

Hey sister, come and sit here, and listen to this important news they are announcing.

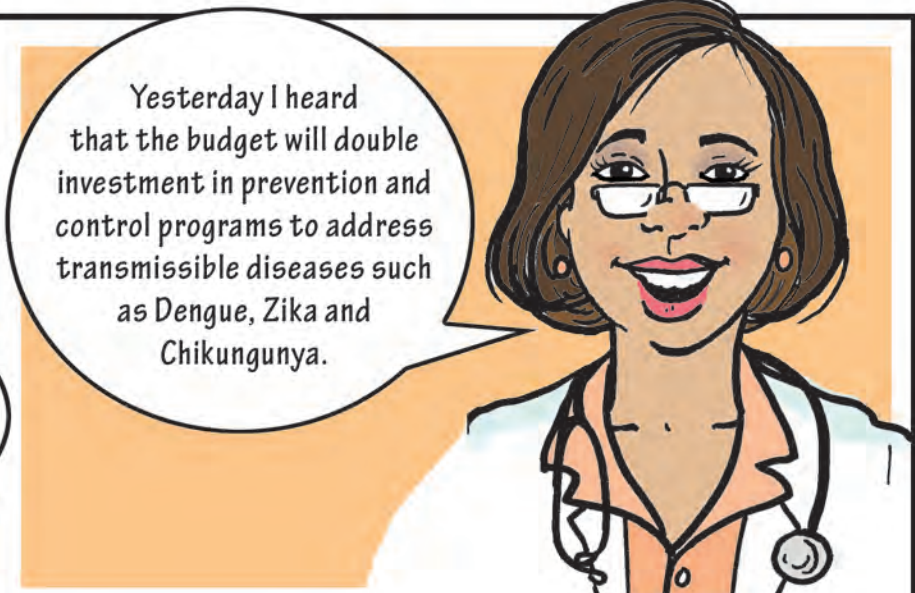
The Ministry of Public Health will get an increase of RD\$ 16,207 million, which will be destined to modernizing the public hospitals network, as well as to improving its equipment, paying pensions to doctors, and increasing in salaries of healthcare personnel.

Wow



You heard that doc?
They just announced that a total of RD\$4,286 million will be spent on a salary readjustment for us, including social security payments.

Oh yes, Nurse Peralta, that way we will be able to provide the services in better conditions. Persevering has finally paid off.



Yesterday I heard that the budget will double investment in prevention and control programs to address transmissible diseases such as Dengue, Zika and Chikungunya.

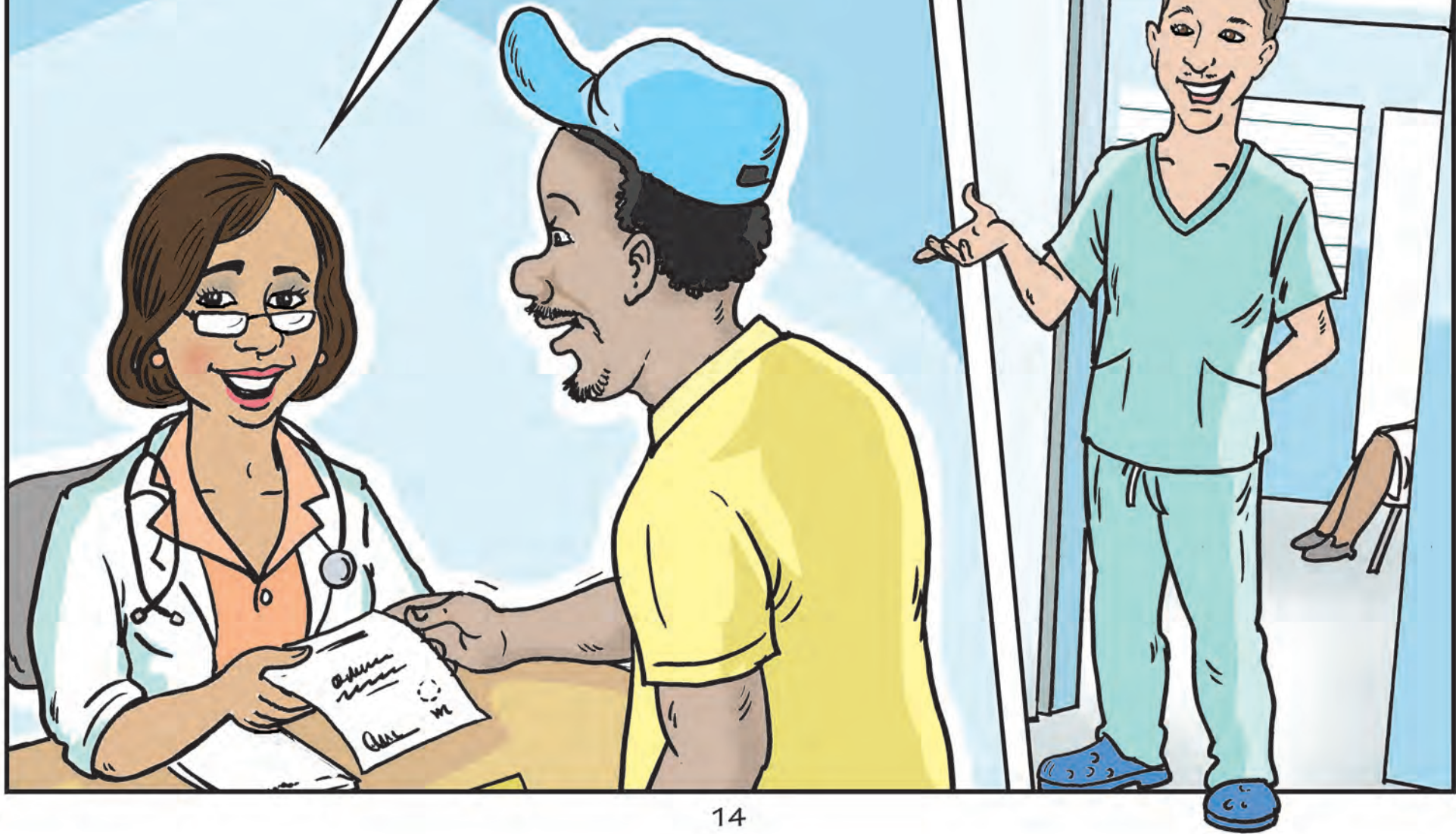


That's quite necessary, Doc. They also announced that there will be key investments to address demand of pharmaceuticals, which will benefit more than 1.3 million people, mainly those on the most vulnerable segments of the population.

For the users of public health services, that support for their prescriptions will be of great help.

The other important thing I heard was that the Budget will continue to support the Basic Immunization Program in 2017. With this money, close to 10 million vaccines will be covered, such that we will advance towards universal coverage of immunization among infants and pregnant women.

That's right, Doc. I'm actually happy, because they also announced that the reconstruction of the hospital in my town (San Francisco de Macorís) will be completed next year, as will the Luis E. Aybar Health Complex, which is quite advanced already.



The Budget will also cover modernization of infrastructure in several other hospitals of the public health network, such as Santiago's Regional Hospital (José María Cabral y Baéz), the Marcelino Vélez Santana Health Care Center, and the Juan Bosch City Hospital in Santo Domingo, among others.

These investments will improve access and quality of the healthcare services we offer, Nurse Peralta.

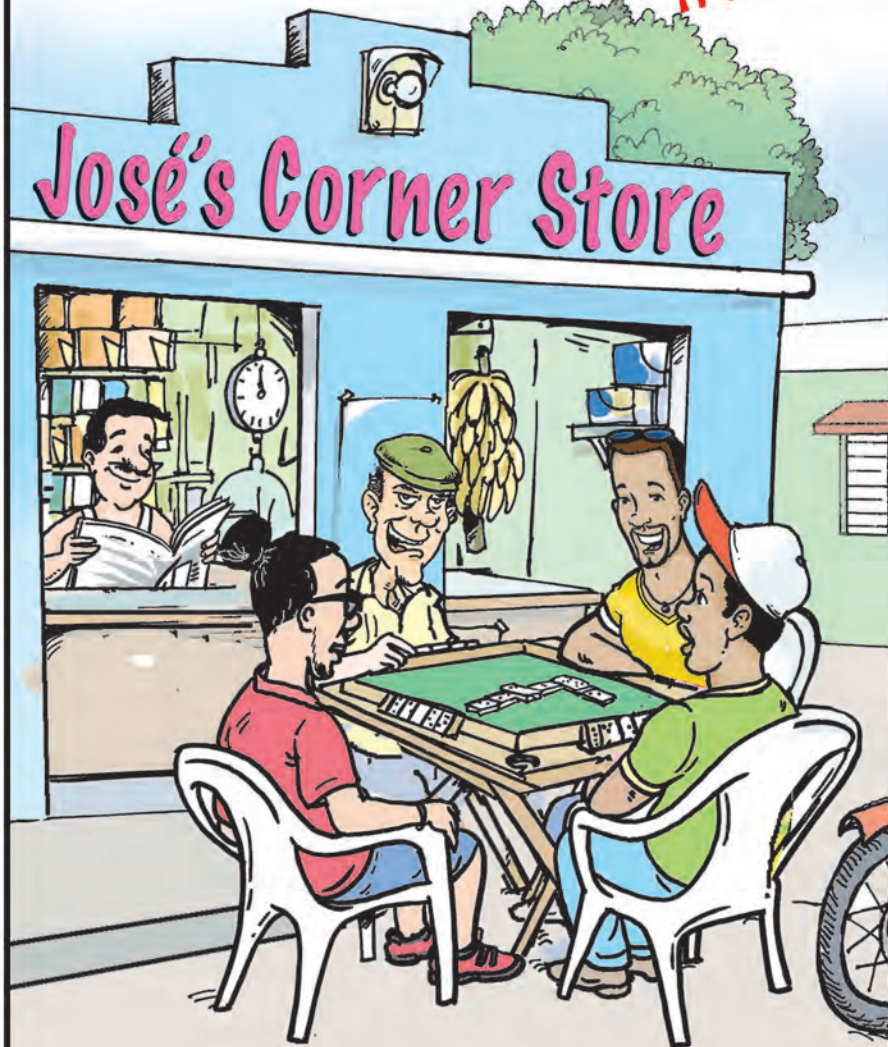
By the way, Nurse, could you be so kind and send in the next patient, please? Remember also to call the corner store and have them deliver a fresh drink or something, please, I'm a bit thirsty.



Of course, Doctor, right away. Next, please!

Meanwhile, at the corner store...

¡RIIIING!
¡RIIIING!



Hello, yes, it's coming.

Hey you, Vitico, please quit that Dominó game and go make this delivery to the Doctor at the Primary Care Clinic. Quick, you know that she's impatient and then she'll tell others we are slow.



So, as I was saying, José, I think we oughta pay much attention to that news about the National Budget, because that money comes from us, the people.



This is what the paper says here, Mr. Papolo. Look:
 For each RD\$ 100 that the government gets during 2017, RD\$ 76 will come from taxes, such as the Value-added Tax (VAT), income taxes, excise taxes imposed on the sale of fuel, etc., and RD\$ 24 will come from loans.

Where will the government's money come from in 2017?

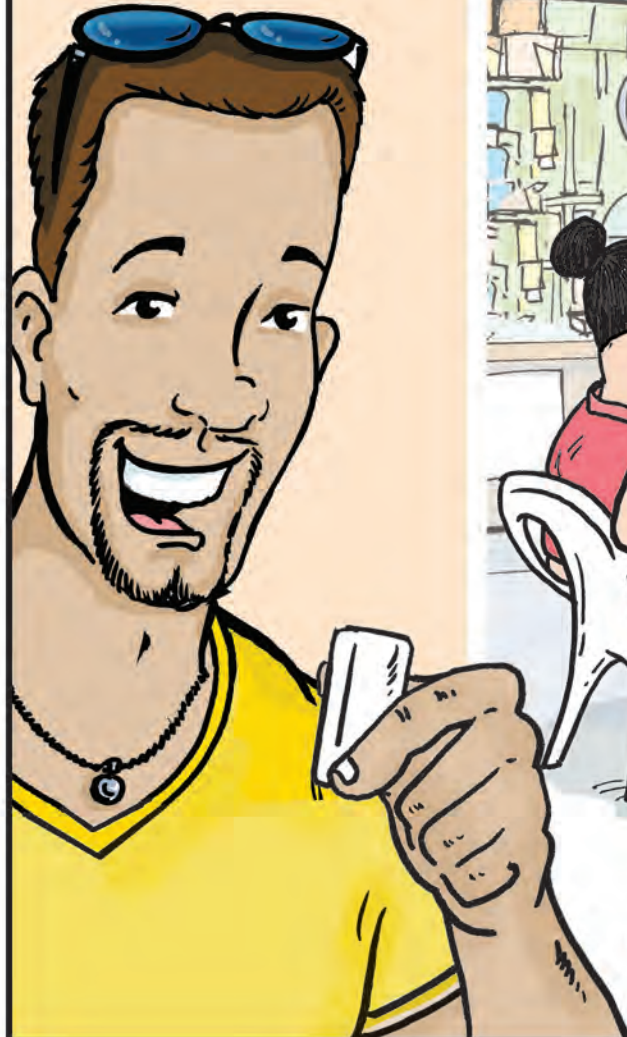


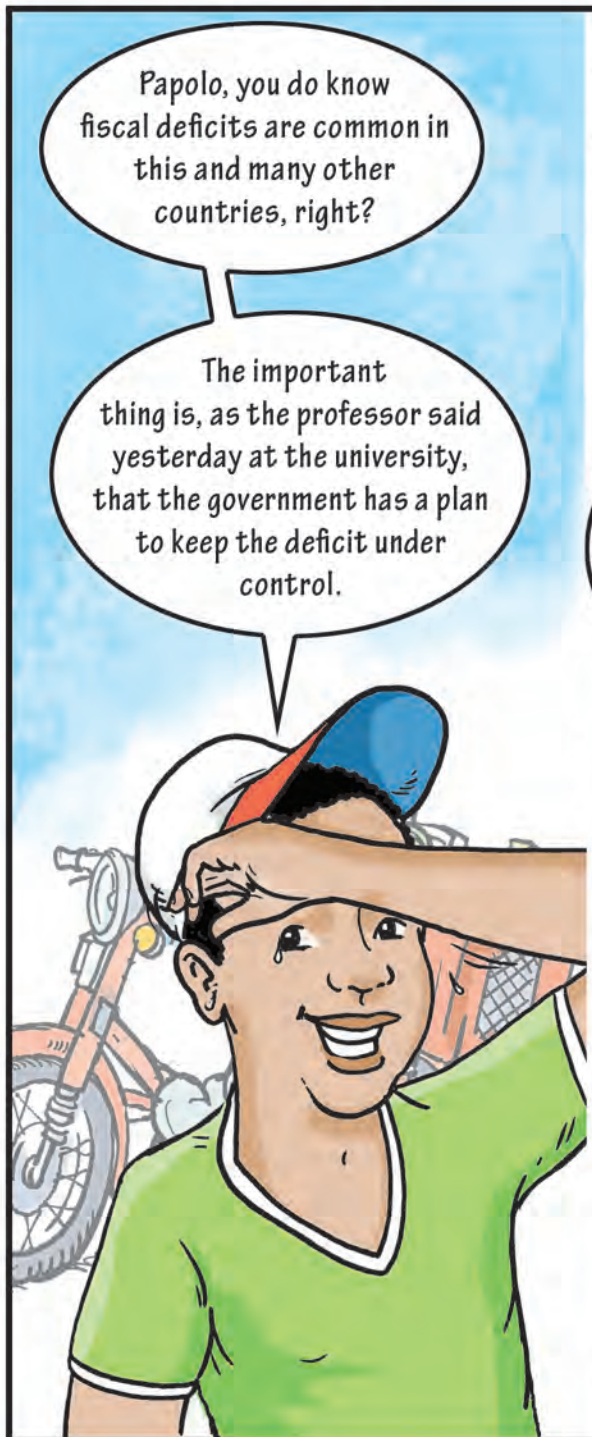
Hey, so, the government wants to collect a total of RD\$ 539,513 million as income in 2017. How will it manage to do that?

It says here that there's a plan for improving tax collection, which intends to strengthen the government's Tax Administration Agency and the General Customs Agency.

The idea is to continue extending coverage of tax collection to every person and to every business applicable, such that the government will collect more money.

What I find doubtful is the fact that the government will once again spend more money than it is going to collect. That's what they call a fiscal deficit. In today's morning news, they announced that in 2017 that deficit will reach RD\$ 84,894 million.





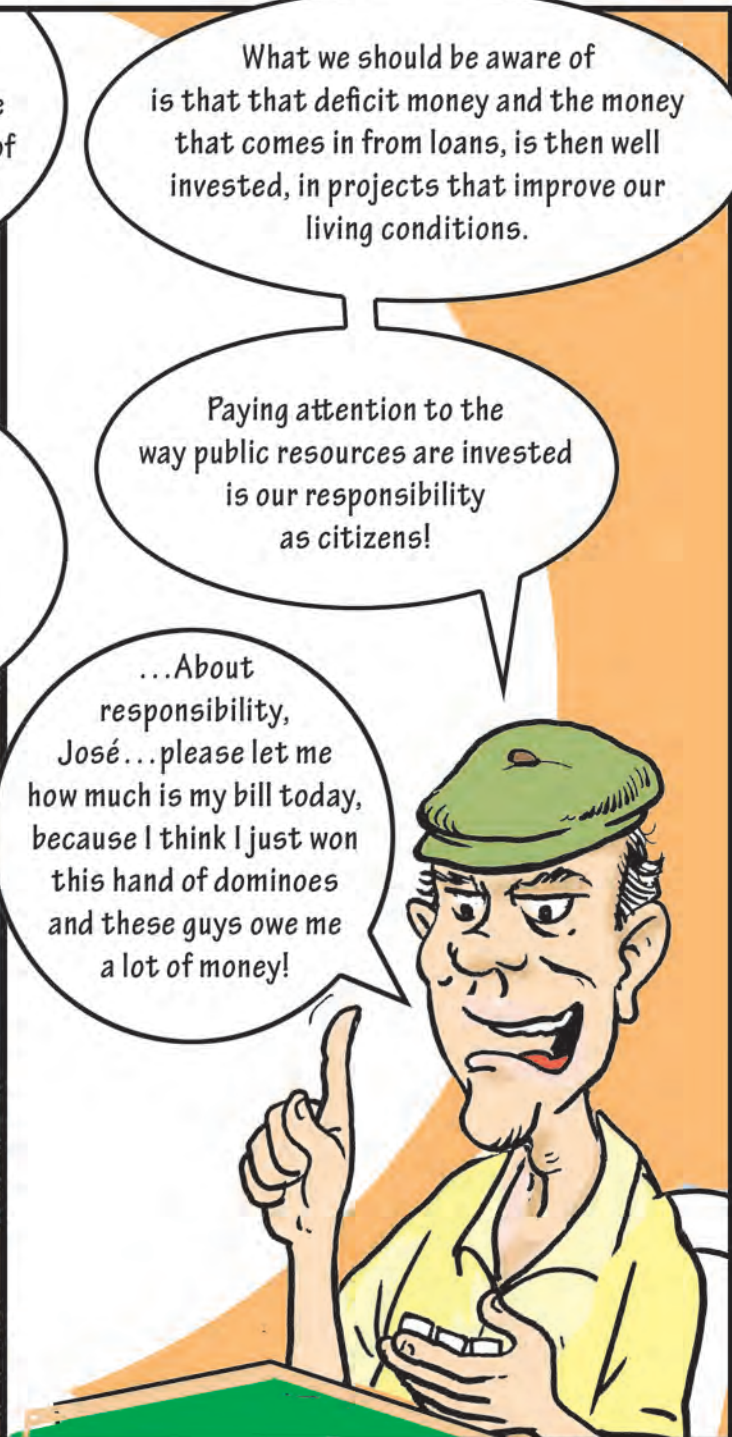
Papolo, you do know fiscal deficits are common in this and many other countries, right?

The important thing is, as the professor said yesterday at the university, that the government has a plan to keep the deficit under control.



They say here that next year the government will continue controlling the deficit, which will be equivalent to 2.3% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Oh, and it also says here that to cover that deficit and other public obligations, the government will borrow less money than last year. Specifically, government loans will be of RD\$ 171,886 million in 2017.



What we should be aware of is that that deficit money and the money that comes in from loans, is then well invested, in projects that improve our living conditions.

Paying attention to the way public resources are invested is our responsibility as citizens!

...About responsibility, José... please let me how much is my bill today, because I think I just won this hand of dominoes and these guys owe me a lot of money!

Sometime later...

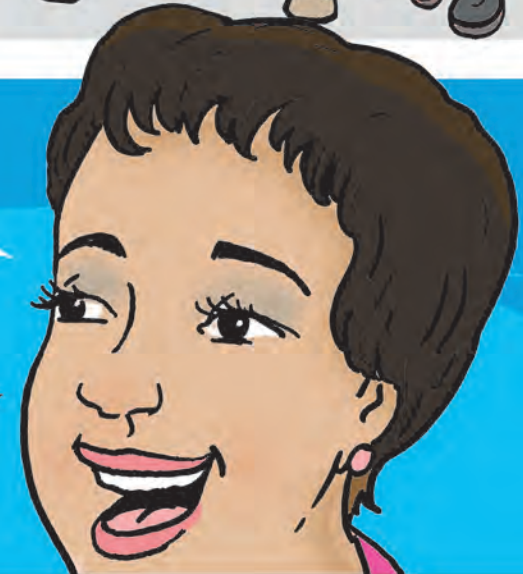
Oh yeah, dear. So, what else did they say in that news about the National Budget?

Well, sister, they announced that the government will continue to give high priority to public safety.



I really do hope so, sis, because we need to feel safe in our neighborhood.

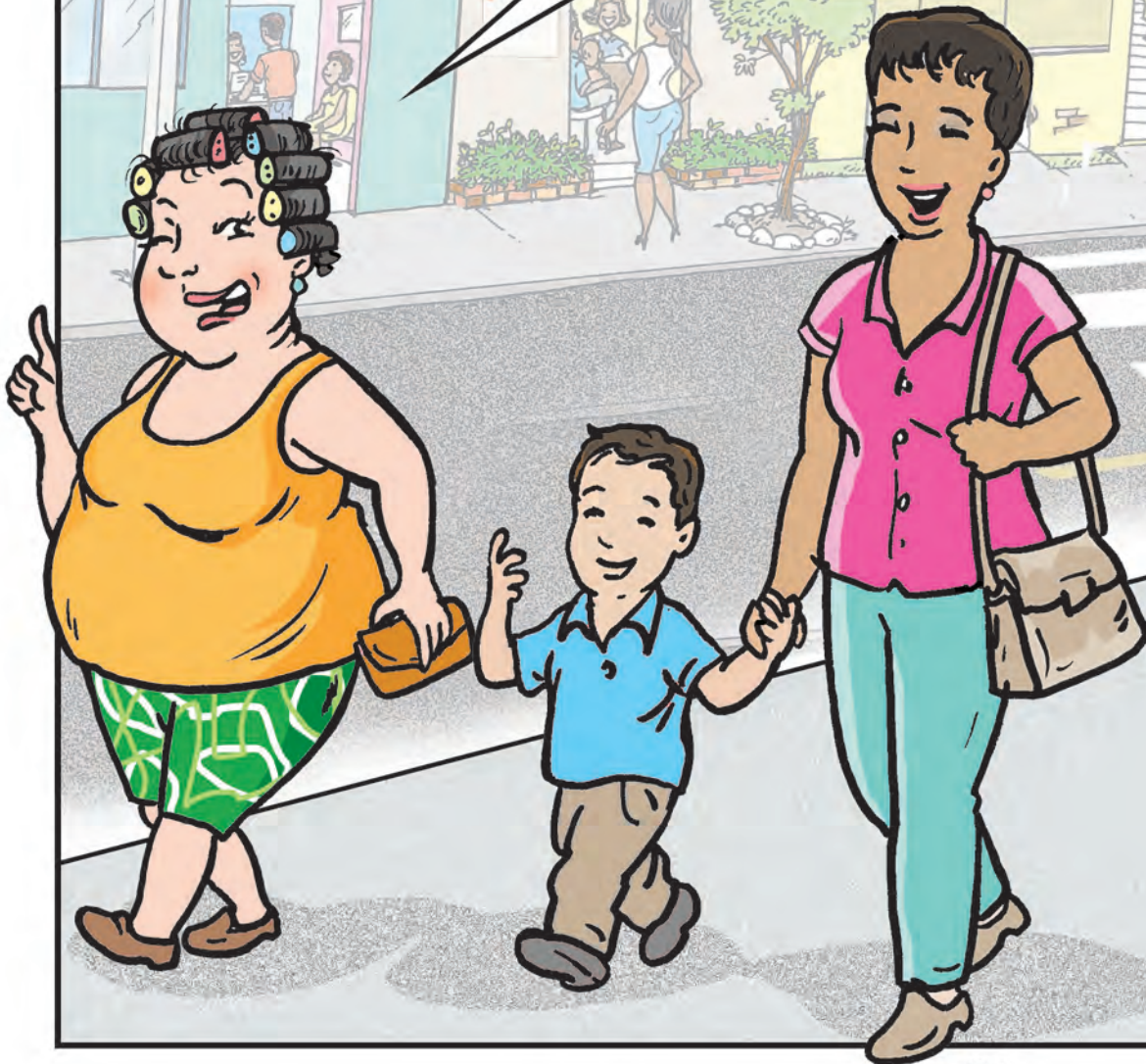
I'm curious now, do tell me more, please!

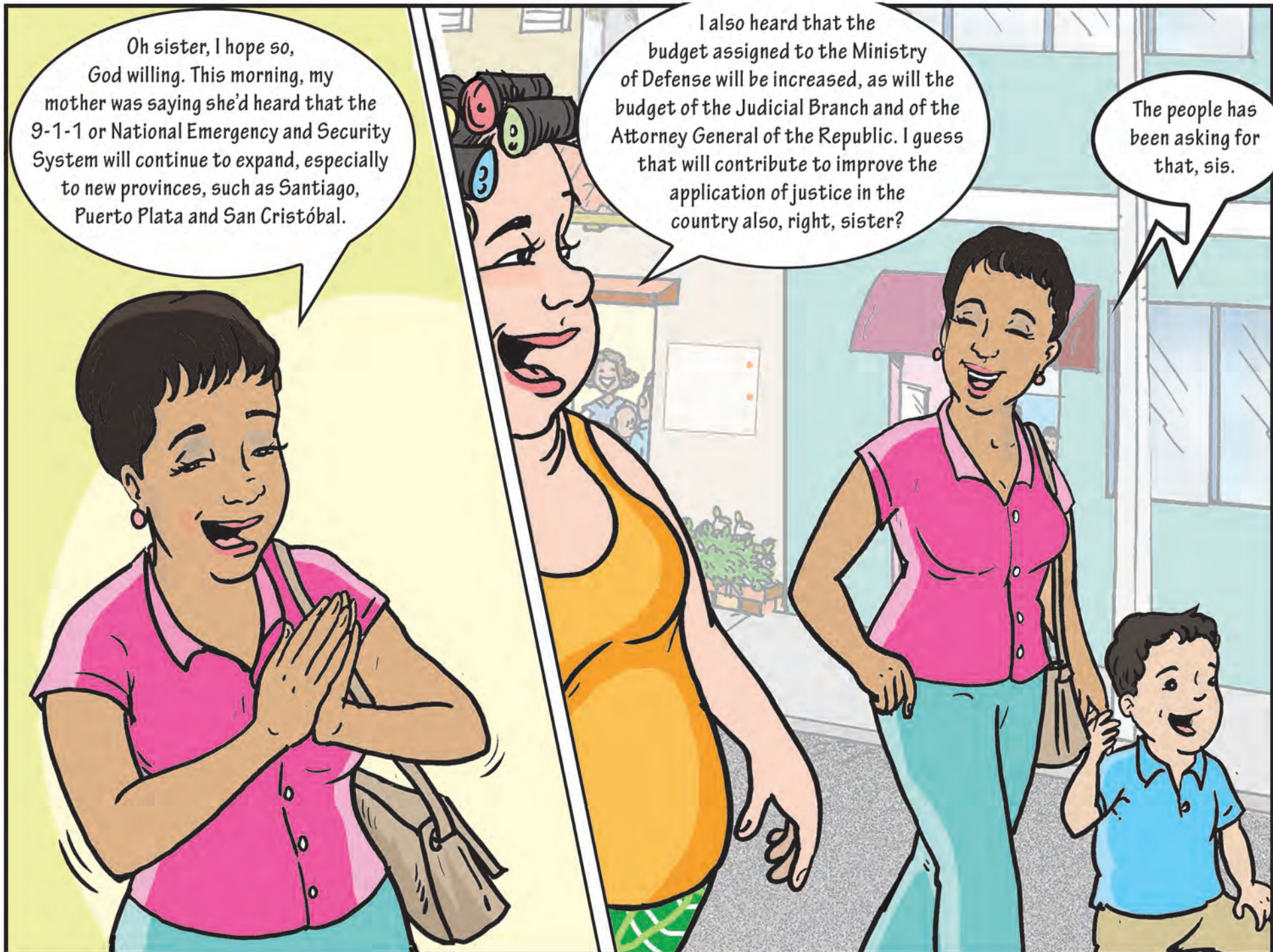


That's right, sister. Listen, my brother, Momon, the one who's a police officer, he's going to be happy, because he'll finally get a salary readjustment.

Also, police officers will be included in the National Social Security System, and for the first time ever, that will grant them protection in case of an accident, among other benefits.

You remember the time when he fell from his patrol motorcycle, and had the hardest time, right?





Oh sister, I hope so, God willing. This morning, my mother was saying she'd heard that the 9-1-1 or National Emergency and Security System will continue to expand, especially to new provinces, such as Santiago, Puerto Plata and San Cristóbal.

I also heard that the budget assigned to the Ministry of Defense will be increased, as will the budget of the Judicial Branch and of the Attorney General of the Republic. I guess that will contribute to improve the application of justice in the country also, right, sister?

The people has been asking for that, sis.



I heard, as well, that the subsidy of the National Family Health Plan is also among the government's priorities for next year. You know, my mom has really taken advantage of that Plan's coverage and I actually think she's now even healthier than myself.

Oh sister, you funny woman! Please, do send kind regards to her on my behalf.

Let me leave this boy here at the Daycare Center, I think it's actually time for his meal. However, let us not let this topic of the National Budget cool down, OK? It will be good for us to follow up and see that those investments do happen in 2017. What do you think, sis?



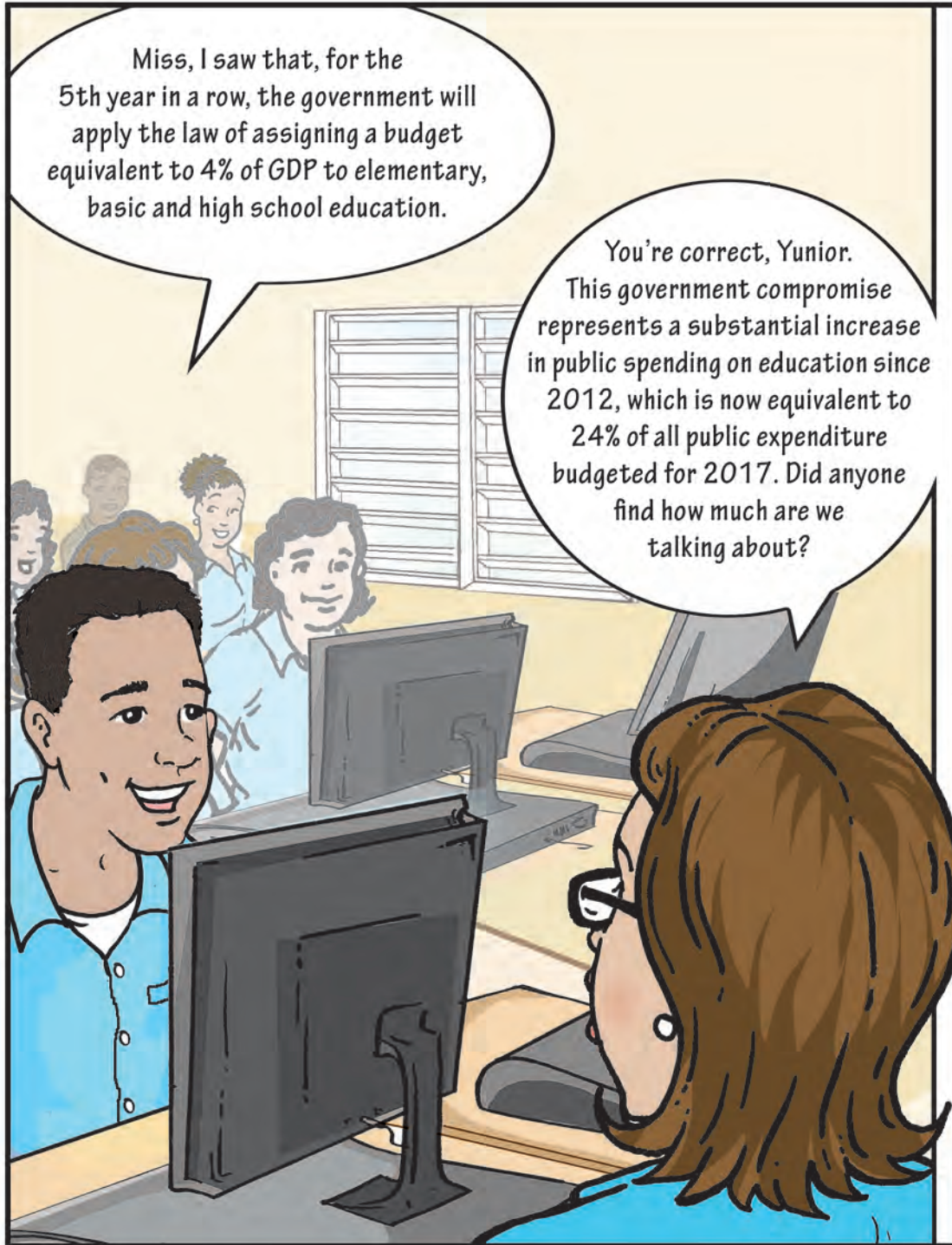
Amen, sister, we must watch out for that! Well, have yourself a good afternoon. Good bye, Joselito. Send my greetings to Mrs. Minga, and tell José that I will send him the money that I owe the corner store tomorrow, along with another list of things I'm going to take on credit.

Haha, see you later, sister.

Meanwhile, at the high school...

Alright, students, you already had enough time to search on the website of the Budget Directorate (www.digepres.gob.do).





Miss, I saw that, for the 5th year in a row, the government will apply the law of assigning a budget equivalent to 4% of GDP to elementary, basic and high school education.

You're correct, Yuniar. This government compromise represents a substantial increase in public spending on education since 2012, which is now equivalent to 24% of all public expenditure budgeted for 2017. Did anyone find how much are we talking about?



Me, me, me, teacher! The amount budgeted for elementary, basic and high school education is RD\$ 142,999 million, which will serve to provide public education services to more than 2.4 million students throughout the country.

That's right, Ana.
These students, including you
guys, of course, will also receive
materials and meals. By the way,
what other types of investments
will be made in education?
Anyone else?


Me, teacher. School infrastructure
will be built, expanded and/or rehabilitated in
4,373 communities nationwide.

Yes, Miss, but also, to
improve the quality of education, the
government will continue to invest
in teacher's training and development of
the teaching career. This will
include providing training
to 97,000 teachers.




Yeah, Miss, but let's not forget that there will be an investment increase in college education as well. For the State University, that increase will represent an additional RD\$ 500 million.

Oh, and the 2017 Budget also includes the Adult Literacy Program, which is almost reaching its goal, with only 70,000 more adults remaining, who will be included next year.



Impressive, you guys! Finally, before the bell rings, I want someone to explain to the class which will be the investments related to the environment that are budgeted for 2017.



About that, Miss, what I personally found most hopeful was that, starting in 2017, there will be an increase in the budget assigned to the environmental sector. This is because the next four years have been declared by the President as the "Four Years of Water", which will require prioritizing investments in the preservation of forests, soil and rivers, among other key natural resources.

In fact, Miss, in 2017, the budget assigned to the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources will increase in 25.6%, for an additional RD\$ 1,454 million that will go to this sector, mainly for a higher transfer of funds to the National Institute of Hydric Resources to be used in the construction of the Monte Grande Dam Project.

Yes, Miss, and there are other priorities too, such as a forest cover program and an integrated watershed management program, among others.

That's right, teacher, I saw that, as part of this effort to improve our water sources, a total of 11,207 hectares of land will be reforested in our country.



Teacher, we got all these answers right! Wouldn't you consider having us exonerated from tomorrow's exam?

OK, now, back to a serious note, Miss, another thing that caught my attention was the fact that as part of the budget assigned to the health sector, the government has included an increase of RD\$ 2,341 million to expand access to potable water to more Dominican households.

Yes, teacher, and that will include expanding the quantity of households with access to this basic service, as well as the treatment of water, with an increase in the number of aqueducts that have water chlorination technologies, to guarantee its quality and contribute to the population's health.

And back home, at the end of the day...

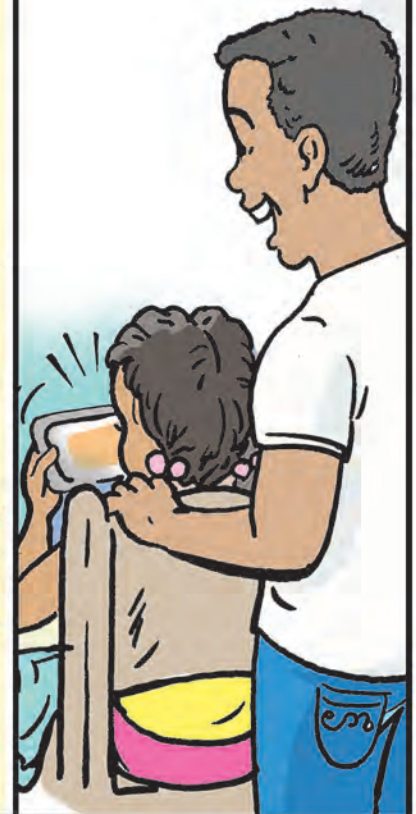
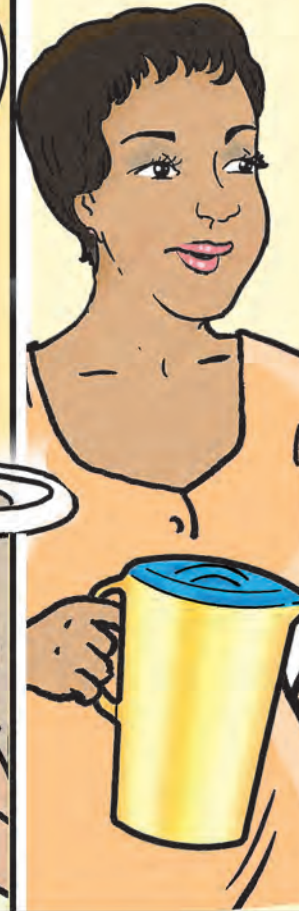
Dinner is ready, please
come over to the table,
everyone!

Joselyn!
Put that cellphone away, young
lady, I've told you I don't want
that on my table.

Yeah,
right, Joselyn,
don't you try to
fool me!

Oh, no, mom,
I just wanted to show you
guys something I found,
about that topic grandma
Minga was mentioning
this morning.

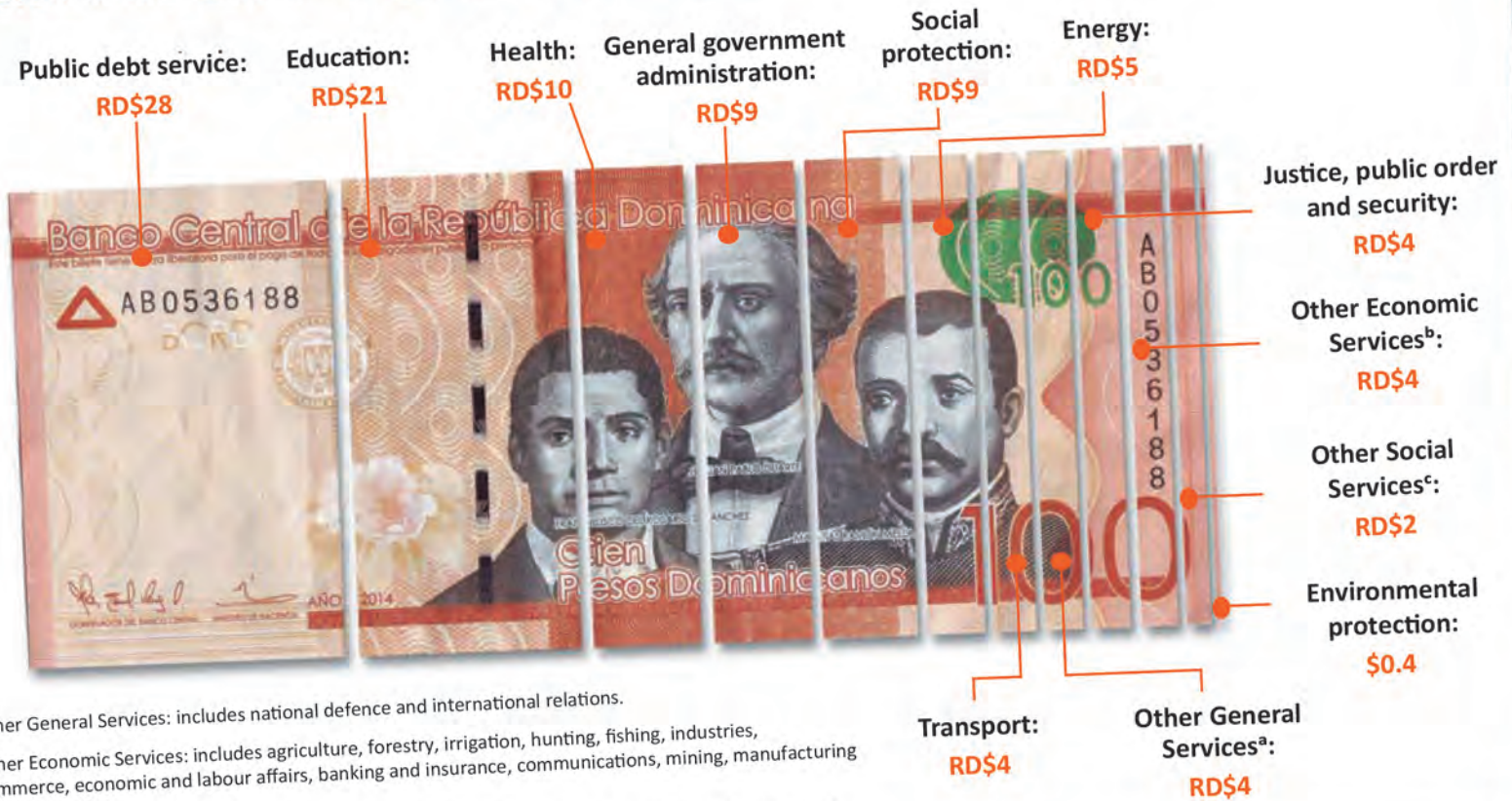
Mom, it's actually
true. Joselyn,
show her.



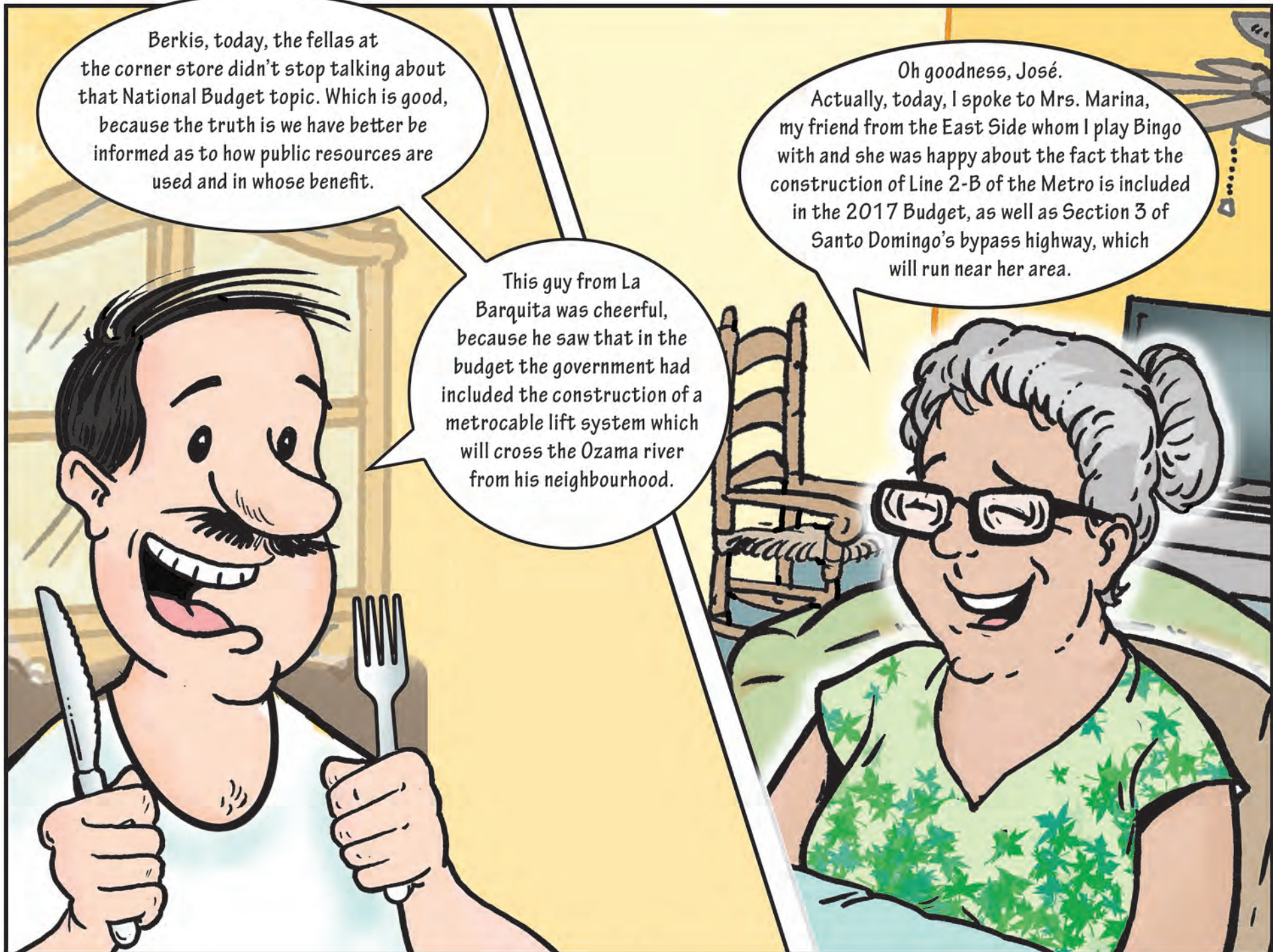
Oh, wowww, my girl.
Look, mother, you can see there how the National Budget will be distributed next year.

You see that, for each RD\$ 100 the government pays in 2017, RD\$ 21 will go towards education, RD\$ 9 will go to general government administrative expenses, RD\$ 10 will go to health, RD\$ 9 will go to social security and assistance programs, and RD\$ 5 will be spent in the energy sector, while RD\$ 28 will be for paying public debt obligations, and so on.

Where will the National Budget money go to in 2017?




- a. Other General Services: includes national defence and international relations.
- b. Other Economic Services: includes agriculture, forestry, irrigation, hunting, fishing, industries, commerce, economic and labour affairs, banking and insurance, communications, mining, manufacturing and construction.
- c. Other Social Services: includes housing and community services, sports and recreation, and culture and religion.




Berkis, today, the fellas at the corner store didn't stop talking about that National Budget topic. Which is good, because the truth is we have better be informed as to how public resources are used and in whose benefit.

This guy from La Barquita was cheerful, because he saw that in the budget the government had included the construction of a metro cable lift system which will cross the Ozama river from his neighbourhood.


Oh goodness, José. Actually, today, I spoke to Mrs. Marina, my friend from the East Side whom I play Bingo with and she was happy about the fact that the construction of Line 2-B of the Metro is included in the 2017 Budget, as well as Section 3 of Santo Domingo's bypass highway, which will run near her area.




Oh grandma, that's nothing, wait until you hear that the Budget also included the reconstruction of the road between San José de Ocoa, Nizao and Sabana Larga, which means you'll be able to get to your hometown faster than ever.



Is that so, son? Please don't you motivate your grandma anymore. I know that she misses her people so much that if she could, she would want to hit the road tomorrow morning.



As soon as I can, I'm taking the bus there!



José, did you hear about the social protection programs?

I heard that in 2017, the "Eating is First" Program will reach 900,000 poor families. That will be good for them, but also for the corner store, because they'll be able to come and get their groceries every month, and as such, will improve their food security.

The important thing is that, to receive their cash transfer through the Solidarity Program Card, the families must assume the compromise of sending their children to school every day and taking them to their regular check-up at the family's physician.



That's it, Minga. I think next year we'll do quite well, especially if we're about to take advantage of that thing about the small business credit opportunities the government will offer. Maybe, with one of those small loans from the Banca Solidaria of PROMIPYME, we might be able to include the bakery area that Berkis has always dreamed of in the cafeteria.



Dad, I heard about that. The government will keep up with the key support to the productive sectors, with more that RD\$ 3,800 million in credit opportunities, which we'll be available through the Agricultural Bank, the Special Fund for Agricultural Development, Banca Solidaria, Bandex, and the Reservas del País Foundation.



Very well, my son. I hope that you, and Joselyn and also Joselito, when he grows up, will use this National Budget information wisely and that you remain very attentive to the adequate investment of our public funds.

And now, let's say a quick grace for our food, please, I'm dying to take the first bite already!



The end

For more information on the 2017 National Budget, visit the
webpage: <http://www.digepres.gob.do>

If you wish to request any specific information, you can send
an email to info@digepres.gob.do or contact the Access to
Information Office with attention to:

Budget Directorate Access to Information Office Representative

Telephone: 809-687-7121, Ext. 1038, Fax: 809-221-7202

Address: Juan Pablo Duarte Government Offices Building
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*Al servicio
de las personas
y las naciones*

