



# Truth as a Principle

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# Active Tourism Increases

By Francisco **MENÉNDEZ**

CIÉNAGA DE ZAPATA, MATANZAS.- Nature and adventure tourism is growing today in the world and in Cuba, where it has been practiced for a long time, thanks to the availability of extremely interesting places. Such places include swamps, two of which,

in addition to being important wetlands, allow tourists organizing their active vacations and practice activities such as hiking, birdwatching and getting in contact with nature in general.

A sign of the importance of those places is the priority tour operators such as Ecotur give to the Lanier and Zapata swamps, just to mention some.

The Lanier Swamp is located in the Isla de la Juventud (Isle of Youth) municipality, while the Zapata Swamp is situated in the Matanzas province – both, in Cuba’s western region.

Isla de la Juventud, previously known as Isla del Tesoro (Treasure Island) or Isla de Pinos (Isle of Pines), is one of Cuba’s most interesting places that stands out for being the perfect scenario for ecotourism trips.

It is a small Caribbean island, the second largest in the Cuban archipelago, with 3,056 square kilometers.

Cuba’s second crocodile farm is located there, in Cayo Potrero de Lanier, where 21 people take care of the saurian raised there – 80 of them, in the captivity area.

The Lanier Swamp, situated in the southern zone of the Isla de la Juventud, is considered at present a National Park. It has about 100 square kilometers of extension and is Cuba’s second most important wetland, after the Zapata Swamp, which many experts consider the largest in the Caribbean.

The Zapata Swamp covers an area of 3000 square kilometers, 56 percent of which are covered by forests, with about 900 different floral species, many of which are autochthonous of the place, according to estimations.

In addition to such a biodiversity, there are over a hundred fauna species, including 12 mammals, 160 birds, 31 reptiles and a large variety of amphibians and invertebrates.

Because of all those treasures, this area was declared a Biosphere Reserve and is a real paradise for demanding travelers searching for active vacations.



The Zapata Swamp is situated in the Matanzas province, in Cuba’s western región. PHOTO: Infotur

## The Interesting Belen’s Arch

By Tom **MIX**

HAVANA.- In the old part of this capital, in an interesting and historic street, a structure that is often photographed by tourists who visit Cuba from different parts of the world is found: the Belen’s Arch.

The site, demarcated by the walls of the former convent and the Luz and Acosta streets, has witnessed the passing of the centuries.

The church’s works finished from 1718 to 1720 and from 1740 to 1750, the square fountain was built. Then, in 1772, the Belen’s Arch was made to connect the convent to the neighboring homes, which were acquired for the extension of the works.

With the passing of the years, an astronomic, geomagnetic and meteorological observatory was opened there.

The city’s first historian, Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, stated that “some of those squares, the largest – by the way – such as those of Belen and Santa Clara, were made after removing the lining of the sidewalks opposite to the temple buildings, thus having enough space for carriages transit.”

Recently, the book *Desafío de una utopía, una estrategia integral para la gestión de salvaguarda de La Habana Vieja*

(Challenge of a utopia, a comprehensive strategy for the management of Old Havana’s safeguard) included among the ancient city’s peculiarities “a set of small squares, linked to monasteries and old temples, the Espíritu Santo, Santa Clara, San Agustín, San Isidro, Belén, Santa Teresa de Jesús, el Ángel...”

The building of the former convent, with the only arch in Havana, has a lot to say, while the surrounding edifications tell the other part of the story: in a corner, a housing property as part of an international cooperation project.

A plan by architect Alejandra Ledesma Hernández, of the Restaura Company, attached to the Historian’s Office, gives the square a new face, with vegetation and benches; in the long term, there are also plans to rebuild housing spaces.

In the nearby area, Havana’s largest religious architectonic complex and the city’s first construction with baroque features, is located.

A church, a convent and a beautiful vaulted arch (actually three) are part of the Our Lady of Belen Convent, built at the beginning of the 18th century. Its mission, in principle, was to function as an institution for ill people’s recovery. Originally, and until the 19th century, the Belen Convent



The Belen’s Arch was made in 1772 to connect the convent to the neighboring homes acquired for the extension of the works.

PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

belonged to the Order of Discalced Carmelites and then it was occupied by the Clare nuns. The Jesuit fathers used it as a college until the beginning of the 20th century.

In the corner of the Compostela and Acosta streets, the Arch can be considered a curiosity in Old Havana and the city in general.

The Belen’s Arch is a peculiar construction full of history and although less famous than other sites of the city, it is part of the ancient religious complex composed by the Our Lady of Belen convent and church.

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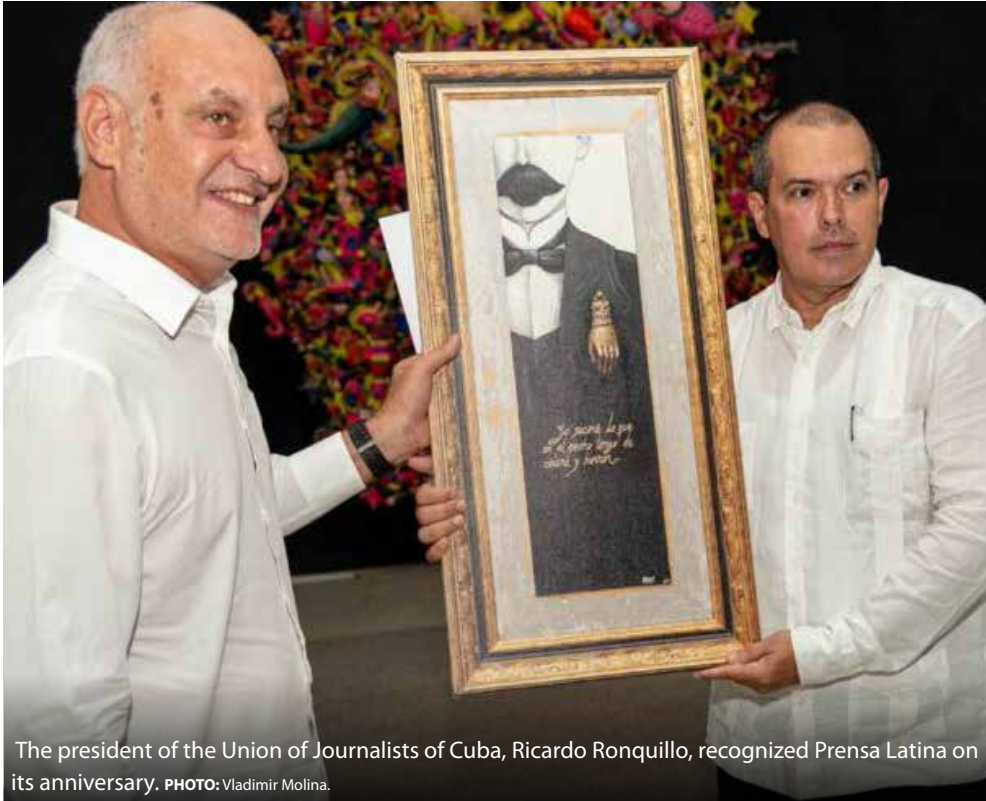
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# 65 Years with the Truth as a Principle



The president of the Union of Journalists of Cuba, Ricardo Ronquillo, recognized Prensa Latina on its anniversary. PHOTO: Vladimir Molina.



The celebration took place at the headquarters of the Casa de las Américas. PHOTO: Vladimir Molina.

By Ernesto **VERA**

HAVANA.- The Prensa Latina Latin American News Agency celebrated its 65th anniversary amidst the battle against disinformation and the media campaign launched by the communication monopolies, intelligence bodies and governments interested in keeping it in silence.

According to the agency's president, Luis Enrique González, Prensa Latina, an institution that has correspondents in 36 countries, collaborators in dozens of nations and over 100 agreements with international media, overcomes a variety of daily obstacles thanks to its professionals' creative intelligence.

González stated that the major challenge the agency faces is the blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba for over 60 years, which prevents access to financial mechanisms, technology and its free use. Prensa Latina has not only survived the most varied challenges throughout these 65 years, but has also developed itself and has become an essential referent for those who, from the Global South and the world, defend objective multilateralism in international communication, he added. On the difficulties this Havana-based agency faces, its Vice-President, Luisa María González, commented that self-financing is sought through the diversification of its services and their scope, taking new tendencies and new technologies development in mind.

González highlighted the agency's approach to multimedia, in addition to permanent exploration of sources of self-financing, which include the increase of its offer of information products and

institutional and private advertising, recently favored with the approval of the Social Communication Law.

She added that in addition to its daily service, the Agency delivers 350 reports in seven languages, including radio, television and photography works and has alliances with about one hundred alternative media. It also delivers over a dozen publications in physical and digital formats.

## BIRTH

Prensa Latina's Constitutional Act registration, inscribed barely three months after the triumph of the Cuban Revolution, marked the birth of an agency that emerged to break major corporations' media monopoly.

The signing of the legal instrument, on April 1959, opened a hard path directed at defending the people's struggles and their right to independence, sovereignty and self-determination.

Such an irreverent audacity was predicted to last one month; the media hegemony of large information transnationals was so subjugating that the intention of amplifying the voice of the popular causes seemed a challenge doomed to failure.

However, two months after that initial action, Prensa Latina – which Latin American journalists of the time called the agency that was needed – broadcasted its first news to the world under the abbreviation of PL and with that inspiration, it celebrated its 65th anniversary last June, the day officially chosen as its foundational date.

## Parliament Publishes Two New Draft Bills

By Melissa **KING**

HAVANA.- The National Assembly of People's Power (Cuban Parliament) put forward the Immigration and Migration drafts bills for people's consideration, with the purpose to promote citizen participation and contribute to legal culture.

The legislative body included the texts of both bills in its official website, in addition to the two email addresses to which those interested can send their opinions and suggestions on these topics.

The first of these regulation proposals has the objective of regulating attention, protection, identification and legal documentation of foreigners visiting or residing in the country, the Parliament said in its website.

The Immigration bill will also rule the social insertion process of its residents in accordance with the regulations established in the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba and the international legal tools on immigration.

In the meantime, the Migration bill has the intention of regulating the process under a systemic conception of development, addressed at having a regular, orderly and safe flow of people.

The National Assembly likewise recently put forward for people's consideration the bills on Transparency and Public Information Access, Administrative Procedure and Honorary Titles and Medal Award System of the Republic of Cuba.

These legal proposals will be put forward to analysis and discussion by parliament members, in light of their timely presentation to the Cuban National Assembly.



Cuban Parliament published the Immigration and Migration drafts bills for people's consideration. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

# NGOs Condemn Policy that Maintains Cuba in Terrorist List

Text and Photo: DeisyFRANCIS

WASHINGTON.- The United States lacks the moral and legal capacity to include and maintain Cuba in a false list of countries that sponsor terrorism, non-governmental and solidarity organizations in this nation warned in recent public statements.

The Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization IFCO-Pastors for Peace, the New York-New Jersey Cuba Sí Coalition and the December 12th Movement agreed on the damage such a measure causes the Cuban people amidst the strengthening of the blockade.

Last May 15th, the Department of State announced that Cuba was not included in its 2023 report of "countries that do not fully cooperate in the fight against terrorism," IFCO recalled while stating that the document was obediently sent to the Congress.

However, it made it clear that the removal of Cuba from that list "initially appears to be a retreat by the United States Government from its aggressive policy of asphyxiation against Cuba along its 64-year history of sanctions and blockade."

Nonetheless, that is not the case. Cuba suffers "the brutal extraterritorial sanctions of the United States" and "still remains in the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism (SSOT), the organization added.

The NY-NJ Cuba Sí Coalition stressed that the fact that the United States maintains Cuba in the SSOT list while admitting that the island "cooperates in the fight against terrorism," means that it actually fears the Caribbean nation's constant example and impact on the world politics. The SSOT designation and the unilateral U.S. siege in force for over 60 years continue "seriously affecting the Cuban economy, causing Cuba thousands of millions, while asphyxiating the Cuban people and preventing medical supplies, food and essential technology to enter the country," they stressed.

To the December 12th Movement, the United States must stop using Cold War tactics to try to promote the so-called change of regime in Cuba.

In a recent visit to Washington DC, director of Legal Affairs and Analysis of the U.S. Division at the Cuban Foreign Ministry, Rodney González, spoke to **The Havana Reporter** about the blockade, which "not only affects the island and its people, but also U.S. citizens."

The latter "are prevented from freely traveling to Cuba, having commercial, cultural and friendly relations, having a first-hand vision of what happens" in the island, he said. The official added that bilateral relations between the

United States and Cuba are subjected to the manipulation of those who do not want rapprochement between our peoples and governments.

On the list of countries that do not fully cooperate in the fight against terrorism and the list of state sponsors of terrorism, he acknowledged that "both topics are extremely politically motivated, lack objectivity and legitimacy on the part of the United States Government."

Days prior to leaving the post, on January 2021, the then president Donald Trump included Cuba again in its list of State Sponsors of Terrorism, from which it had been removed in 2015 during the Barack Obama administration.



Non governmental and solidarity organizations in United States condemn the policy that maintains Cuba in Terrorist List.

## Another Arbitrary Action

By DeisyFRANCIS

WASHINGTON.- The Government of the United States arbitrarily maintained Cuba in the worst of the categories (Tier 3) of the Department of State's annual trafficking of people report, published last June 24.

Presented by Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking of people, Cindy Dyer, the unilateral and biased report says that the Government of Cuba does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking.

The report indicated that it "is not making

significant efforts to do so," therefore "Cuba remained on Tier 3."

Through this type of exercise, which is politically motivated, Washington's authorities arrogate to themselves the illegitimate right of judging others. To justify Cuba's designation, the report, which makes reference to 2023, uses contradictory and unreliable arguments that continue to twist and defame the medical collaboration work Cuba has conducted for decades in over one hundred nations.

In addition, it tries to torpedo such cooperation, including future initiatives that could benefit the peoples of both countries in the field of health.

"Penalization" in this tier could mean, for the country in question, sanctions such as the freezing of non-humanitarian and non-commercial aid, or the United States' rejection to allowing those countries receiving loans from multilateral institutions.

Nothing is more similar to a part of the long list of prohibitions the economic, commercial and financial blockade of the Government of the United States imposes on the Cuban people for over 60 years.

Cuban authorities have reiterated throughout the years that such designation

bears no relation to Cuba's true mission in its active combat against trafficking of people.

In statements to the press on the topic, years ago, the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs made it clear that the Government of the United States has no political nor moral authority whatsoever to judge sovereign States, nor to issue designations of conduct.

In this sense, the ministry described this type of report as "unilateral, illegitimate, without international acknowledgement of any type," which "meets a purely political and manipulative objective, as weapon of pressure against other States and without respect, consideration or attachment whatsoever to international efforts to combat trafficking in persons."

That report is said to deliberately disregard Cuba's exemplary and comprehensive work in preventing, fighting and responding to this scourge and obviates the island's zero-tolerance policy against trafficking.

Cuban minister of Foreign Affairs Bruno Rodríguez denounced that the constant inclusion of the island in unilateral and arbitrary reports only tries to maintain and justify the criminal policy of economic asphyxiation against the Cuban people.



Secretary of State Antony Blinken presented the unilateral and biased report. PHOTO: Internet.

# Scientific Potential to Foster Comprehensive Projects

By Lourdes **NAVARRO**

HAVANA.- Minister of Science, Technology and Environment (CITMA) Eduardo Martínez affirmed that Cuba has a great scientific potential to foster comprehensive projects with an impact on all the society.

Many of these projects are there, they were ideas of the historic leader of the Revolution, Fidel Castro, and they have to be put into practice again with Cuba's great scientific potential, said the head of Citma.

He thus referred to national priorities on science, technology and innovation and their management, recently approved at a meeting of the Council of Ministers that focused on contributing to finding a solution to the problems the country faces.

Such priorities are concentrated on key sector of the economy and the society because of their immediate contribution. They will be managed through Strategic Government Projects that will initially focus on the increase of foreign currency incomes, following the export of goods and services, the minister added.

On the work program, Martínez made reference to the need of increasing nickel production, achieving a return on cigar incomes, developing new Biotechnology products, strengthening the tourism sector and creating new exportable products and services.



Minister of Science, Technology and Environment (CITMA)  
Eduardo Martínez. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

He also talked about the importance of introducing technologies for the production of sugarcane and its byproducts, as well as a financial strategy that endorses exports and minimizes the impact of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the government of the United States.

In this context, the minister commented that in order to

buy corn and soybean, over 500 million dollars are needed; however, "upon the basis of science, we have developed corn and soy varieties whose yields are higher and we must introduce those results."

On the other hand, we are working on a vaccine against the dengue fever, first for us but also for this to become an export item, he said.

The minister stressed that even though projects are focused on economic topics, their impact should reach all the society. "We have to put projects into practice and leave the vicious circle in which we are, and have an impact that the population can see," he affirmed.

The official also explained that the country has a portfolio of over 6,500 projects and science and innovation priorities should be focused on increasing foreign currency incomes from the export of goods and services.

"The entrepreneurial system needs to invest more in science and innovation in order to develop itself, so do local governments. We have to better avail of international cooperation and negotiation of intangible assets which are created with projects' own development," he commented.

It is necessary to identify all scientific-technological results that have not been applied in the country and design a line of action for their introduction, he stressed.

On top of that, it is important to boost Nanotechnology, New Biology and Artificial Intelligence, considered essential for a nation's scientific development.

## Protecting Forest Heritage

By Cira **RODRÍGUEZ**

HAVANA.- With a forest heritage that covers 34 percent of its earth's surface and continues to constantly grow every year, Cuba's main priorities include the protection of such heritage.

The forest area covers 4,117,584 hectares nationwide – with about 19,000 hectares added on average every year – and is composed of natural forests and established plantations, deputy director of the State Forest Service (SEF) Antonio Guzmán recently indicated.

Other data provided by the specialist show that 46.32 percent of Cuba's total wooded area is composed of forests that protect water and soils, while 23.05 include conservation forests.

The positive increase in Cuba's forests is the result of forest farms' comprehensive development, through a national plan implemented in 1990 that included the creation of 1.678 plantations.

Cloning gardens, seedbeds and other sources managed through selection, were also created, with emphasis on species such as *Pinus caribaea*, *Hibiscus elatus*, mahogany, cedar and eucalypt trees.

According to Guzmán, the most important values of these ecosystems, which have a high economic and environmental impact, are the wood and its by-products, in addition to the so-called environmental services, such as water and soils' protection. SEF gives special priority to reforestation with native and exotic timber-yielding and

fruit species – vital for the national economy – and to the preservation work conducted in all 153 protected areas, which cover 16 percent of the country's surface, he added. The legal norms in force in the country, such as Law 85, are crucial for Cuba's forest heritage conservation and management, in addition to the fact that the nation is

signatory of 17 international agreements on biodiversity, fight against climate change and the protection of the environment.

SEF is also part of six international collaboration projects sponsored by the Forest Development Fund and other foreign institutions directed at the preservation of the Cuban forest heritage. An example of this are the actions conducted for the comprehensive management of the Maisinicú basin and the Zaza River, financed by the World Nature Fund with the purpose to contribute to ecosystems' restoration and their capacity to provide quality water, as well as to improve productive

ecosystems in the rural sector of the Sancti Spiritus and Villa Clara provinces.

An additional project, implemented by the United Nations Development Programs and executed by the National Protected Areas Center, influences on the reforestation of over 2,000 hectares and the mitigation of soils' degradation.

Other important actions include the Mi Costa (My coast) plan, financed by the Green Climate Fund to strengthen coastal resilience to climate change along the southern coast, reduce the biosphere's main vulnerabilities and reforestation plans for degradation reduction.



Cuba's main priorities include the protection of forest heritage. PHOTO: Granma.

# Silvio Rodríguez: New Verses Turned into Song

By: Adis**MORERA**

HAVANA.- In each harmonic gift, virtuous Cuban singer and songwriter Silvio Rodríguez expresses beauty and cleverness and in his most recent record production, *Quería saber* (I wanted to know), new



*Quería saber* (I wanted to know) is the most recent record production of Silvio Rodríguez.

PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

verses turned into song go beyond musical excellence.

Available at the artist's YouTube channel, the 11-theme album, recorded at the Ojalá Studios from 2019 to 2024, is a mixture of topics and genres that defends nuances and tolerance and appeals to hope in times of crisis, the musician said in an interview. *Quería saber* is the first album he has recorded in the last three years and the 22nd produced along his career; in addition, "it is the continuity of what I have made, the songs I decided to compile on this occasion," Rodríguez stressed.

The exceptional singer and songwriter recently talked about how difficult it is to name a record; "first, it was going to be called *Canciones del siglo XXI* (menos una) (21st century songs, except one), although perhaps it should be called *Quiero saber* (I want to know), because that is what inspires me," he said.

The only song that is not from this century is the last one, *Tonada para dos poemas*

(Ballad for two poems), by Rubén Martínez Villena, he stressed.

According to the artist, he composed this music at the beginning of the 1970s, when Roberto Fernández Retamar asked him to make a record with poems by José Martí, "and I told him I did not dare, because of the quality of those recorded by Pablo Milanés, Sara González and Amaury Pérez," he recalled.

At the time, Fernández Retamar suggested him to do it with poems by Martínez Villena, a poet and revolutionary of the 1930s that they both admired.

I was able to put some of his verses to music, but the only thing I decided to show was my closeness to these two intense alexandrine quatrains, which are so valid, he recalled.

Then, I recorded a version with Emiliano Salvador, Eduardo Ramos and Leoginaldo Pimentel, members, just like me, of the then Grupo de Experimentación Sonora del Icaic, he added.

On August, 2015, he wrote the melody after which the new record is entitled, which connects us to wisdom, knowledge and the interests we have as human beings.

The theme "is like a journey through life; it has some details that evoke some moments of my own existence. But in general, I think it is a rather open song that is not limited to anyone or anything in particular."

In addition to the two compositions mentioned above, the album also includes *Viene la cosa*, *De pronto la tatagua*, *Para no botar el sofá* (editorial song), *Danzón para la espera*, *La cuota diaria*, *Ciudad*, *Nuestro después* and *Ángel ciego*.

Under Rodríguez's musical direction and production, *Quería saber* includes other outstanding Cuban song champions, such as Jorge Aragón and Frank Fernández in the piano, in the theme *Ángel ciego*; Niurka González in flutes, clarinets and choirs; Oliver Valdés (drums and percussion); Emilio Vega (vibraphone and congas), among others.

## Return of the El hombre de Maisinicú

By Alma**LABRADA**

HAVANA.- The documentary *Maisinicú, medio siglo después* (Maisinicú, half a century later) (2023), by filmmaker Mitchell Lobaina, renders a deserved tribute to the 50 years of that master piece of the Cuban seventh art: *El hombre de Maisinicú* (The Maisinicú man) (1973).

Exhibited with great audience rating in 155 Cuban movie theaters, as part of the tributes for the 63rd anniversary of the Ministry of Interior, the piece is a remembrance of Manuel Pérez's master piece, which explores the heroic deeds of Alberto Delgado, who infiltrated the enemy lines at the Escambray mountain range at the beginning of the Cuban Revolution.

The audiovisual includes an interview to the film's main producers, in order to approach viewers to the original locations and the importance of that film piece.

According to Lobaina, the purpose of the documentary is to approach youngsters to the feature film, as he stresses the need of constantly rediscovering this.

The synopsis of the 1973 film reads that "there are still counterrevolutionary gangs that try to maintain terror among the population and reestablish contact with the

United States Central Intelligence Agency."

One morning, the corpse of administrator Alberto Delgado is found in the Maisinicú farm and researches reveal a tense and violent atmosphere, a conflicting personality, it reads.

Delgado's itinerary in the last months will allow knowing the bold infiltration of this agent of the Cuban intelligence services, who discovers the bandits who operate in the area, adds the synopsis.

*Maisinicú, medio siglo después* was a dream come true thanks to the collaboration of the film director, who praised the discovery the author conducted with this production, in addition to considering that being at the Trinidad city (Cuba's central region) half a century later, was an extraordinary human experience.

At the launch of the documentary, at the Acapulco movie theater, in this capital, information was provided about its soon screening in the Cuban television, together with the video of the song entitled *El Hombre Maisinicú*, by Cuban singer and songwriter Silvio Rodríguez, which includes scenes of the film.



Voces del Sur Global  
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# Volcanos in Wait and Potential Tragedies Ahead

By Luis **BEATÓN**

SAN SALVADOR.- The presence of volcanos, either active or wrapped in a kind of eternal dream – like that of Boquerón, in San Salvador – always keeps the population on the alert. No tragedy has happened in the last years as part of the symbiosis between the volcanos and earthquakes that affect this country.

Recently, there were reminiscences of the event that happened on Thursday, June 7, 1917, when “the noisy and booming city of San Salvador experienced one of the most tragic nights in its history,” stated a chronicle in which historian Carlos Cañas Dinarte talks about the tragedy that plunged the Salvadorians into mourning.

Dinarte says that the people from the capital were the victims of an earth tremor that affected the municipalities of Armenia and San Julián (west), in the department of Sonsonate, and Sacacoyo, Tepecoyo and Ateos, in La Libertad, in addition to other places located by the large fault line that goes along the coastal range, from Caluco, in Sonsonate (west) to the mouth of the Ilopango lake, in San Salvador (center).

According to Dinarte, there were two additional earthquakes that night, and from the second to the third



A constant monitoring of the San Salvador volcanic complex is conducted through a network of seismic stations and cameras.

PHOTO: Internet.

(which happened at 7.30 and 8.45 p.m.), “the San Salvador volcano is cut out against the bottom of the night, because of the flames coming out from several parts of the seven cracks in the secondary craters that were created by the earthquakes of magnitude 5.4 and 6.7 on the Richter scale.” The tragedy knocked at the Salvadorians door. The reporter commented that of “the 9,000 houses the Salvadorian capital had, 200 remained intact and about 1,050 people died the night of the tragedy in San Salvador.”

That was the last eruption of the giant that snoozes today, which at some point can be felt again and is under the

constant surveillance of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN).

Many wonder: Could it wake up again? Everything is possible, even false alarms, as the one that happened last April 3 when the local people of El Carmen, at the side of the volcano, reported gas emissions coming out of the earth.

However, it was all an accident attributed to an underground drinking water network valve.

When coming out to the surface, the water puffed up the dust and caused the appearance of gas emissions or smoke, stated the Ministry of Environment in its social media; but there was alarm.

Precautions, however, are taken all over the country, including the capital, where a constant monitoring of the San Salvador volcanic complex is conducted through a network of seismic stations and constant monitoring cameras, including temperature measuring and water and gas sampling.

Experts affirm that earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions have affected the so-called Pacific Ring of Fire for decades and caused the death of thousands of people, and even changed the structure of the planet.

El Salvador, in addition to 25 nations, is part of this ring of fire that makes the region vulnerable because of the disasters, some of which have gone down in history because of their level of devastation.



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# Bucanero: Years of Quality and Tradition

By Melissa **KING**

HOLGUÍN.- The Bucanero S.A. Brewery, located in this eastern province, celebrated 27 years of work with a sustained tradition and quality of its products, endorsing its preference among Cuban drinkers.

The brewery's general manager, Erick Williams, said that the entity has a large potential and can be able to produce

1,800,000 hectoliters by 2032, thanks to its staff excellence.

In light of that objective, the company opened a new line of barrel production last June, which is manufactured by the Italian Comac Company as part of a project that hopes to increase the offer of products in the national and international market.

According to Williams, that investment – with a value of four million euros – doubles the yield of the brewery plant.

The general manager told **The Havana Reporter** that in addition to this second line of barrels, Bucanero hopes to reestablish the bottle line capacity in the next two years.

For that project, the first step includes replacing the bottle labeling, filling and transporting machinery, which will allow doubling the volume of beer and malt.

With the use of barrels and bottles, the company fosters the use of a circular

packaging, said Williams, who added that those forms of marketing ratify the company's commitment to recycling and the protection of the environment.

In that sense, the company's technical director, Luis Miranda, commented that Bucanero tirelessly works to reduce its water and energy demand, as well as the emission of carbon dioxide.

For the last two years, the company has increased its production volumes, while reducing the demand of those natural resources, thus reducing the brewery's impact on the environment, Miranda added.

According to beer maestro Juan Gabriel Romero, Bucanero stands out today in the market for the quality of the raw materials used and its products, which are in great demand for its refreshing taste.

He also said that something that characterizes the brand's beers is the use of malt and Cuban sugar in its production.

The factory, built in collaboration with the former Democratic Republic of Germany, started working on May 1997.

At present, it is a joint venture between the Corporación Alimentaria S.A. of the Cuban Ministry of Food Industry and the Canadian Cerbuco Brewing Inc., a subsidiary of the Belgian Interbrew N.V. Company – considered one of the world's largest beer production company.



New line of barrels at Bucanero S.A. Brewery in Holguín. PHOTO: TeleCristal.

## Press and Tourism

Text and Photos Benjamín **MICERINOS**

HAVANA.-The International Journalism and Tourism Seminar, recently held in this capital, confirms the efforts Cuban professionals of different sectors make to recover the travel industry, experts say.

The meeting, held from June 17 to 21 and organized by the José Martí International Journalism Institute (IIPJM), was attended by 60 specialists, 45 of which were from Colombia, Mexico, Uruguay, Ecuador, Canada and Cuba.

The event's first three days included debates, talks and exchanges on heritage topics and Colombian traditions, as well as speeches by renowned scholars from the University of Ottawa, Canada and Cuban academician José Luis Perelló, in addition to director of Technologies of the Cuban Tourism Ministry Pavel Pavón.

Participants toured important tourist sites in Havana, such as the La Bodeguita del Medio and El Floridita restaurants, the Havana Club Rum Museum and the Tropicana Cabaret, in addition to the Varadero resort, in the western province of Matanzas.

At the seminar, associate professor of the Carleton University of Ottawa, Hilary Becker, stated her interest on the benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) linked to tourism.

"We are in the presence of a technological revolution of major influence, but it is necessary to know it and study it in depth," said Becker, who added that robotics,

communication and travels are linked to that development, as well as finances and bank systems.

For his part, Cuban researcher and professor Perelló spoke about the large possibilities the travel and tourism sector has in the Caribbean, which includes 32 tourist destinations, with 36.9 million inhabitants, a total area of 2,754 square kilometers and 239,681 land kilometers.

He said that this region has a great biodiversity, with ecological, socio-historical and cultural values, and added that during the first half of 2024, the main destinations in the field of business trips were the Cayman Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands and the Dominican Republic, while Belize, Curacao and Aruba stood out among the family destinations. The Caribbean depends on air travels, which were also affected by the pandemic of COVID-19 and at present, airline companies with less than 72 percent of occupancy cancel

their flights.

Of all trips, 20 percent of seats are reported in the Caribbean interconnectivity.

Issuing countries to the Caribbean region are headed, like before, by the United States and Canada, with 12 and 14 percent, respectively.

In the first half of this year, Canada reported 37.78 million trips outside its borders.

In the meantime, the Caribbean's first destinations, where there are 584 four and five-star hotels, are the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Puerto Rico and Cuba – the latter, amidst the efforts made to recover its tourist sector in spite of the difficulties the country faces.



The meeting was attended by 60 specialists, 45 of which were from Colombia, Mexico, Uruguay, Ecuador, Canada and Cuba.

PHOTO: Prensa Latina.



# First International Political Humor Biennial Festival

By DaiLAFÁ

HAVANA.- The first edition of the International Political Humor Biennial Festival, held in the Cuban capital from June 14 to 24, focused on denouncing neofascism, which tries to grow stronger in the present world.

The event's program, which stands out for the creativity and variety of topics presented by 46 artists from 22 countries, included graphic exhibitions, workshops, folk song exchanges and film screenings.

The festival honored political humor tradition in Cuba and was linked to the famous Graphic Humor forum, traditionally held at the San Antonio de los Baños town since 1979.

The Political Humor Biennial Festival was summoned by the Cuban Ministry of Culture, the National Visual Arts Council and the La Jiribilla Magazine and works selected were exhibited at the central exhibition of the 23 y 12 movie theater, in the capital, among other locations.

These pieces showed the impact of globalization seen and interpreted from the political humor perspective.

In this context, famous Cuban caricaturist and illustrator Arístides Esteban Hernández (Ares) granted the Honorary Award to outstanding artist Manuel Hernández for the

relevant imprint he has left on Latin America's graphic humor.

The Festival's jury decided to grant three awards, to artists Cau Gómez, from Brazil; Oğuz Gürel, from Turkey, and Salar Eshatkah, from Iran.



Exhibition in the National Library of Cuba connects the tradition of Cuban humor and caricature of the 19th century with the present. PHOTO: Endrys Correa.

The Grand Prize was granted to Belgian artist Luc Descheemaeker, in recognition of the excellence of his work, entitled Iceberg and for his capacity to reflect on neofascism in a synthetic and convincing way.

The Festival included a theoretical event, a bipersonal exhibit by caricaturists Arturo Kemchs and Iván Lira and an exhibition of Cuban humor publications, such as Palante, Dedeté and Melaíto.

A collective exhibit of caricatures of Fidel Castro was also conducted, in addition to the exhibition of Los fideles, at the headquarters of the Juventud Rebelde newspaper.

The 18th edition of the San Antonio de los Baños National Humor and Satire Event was also conducted, with a collateral exhibition of Political Humor from the Humor Museum collection.

The event included audiovisual presentations, concerts and activities in communities and places of social interest. Cuban Deputy Minister of Culture, Lizaette Martínez, said at the opening of the Biennial Festival that there is a need for art to become a platform to talk about love, peace and social justice in light of neofascist attempts to rewrite history.

Cuba will always have a room for friends, for fair fights, for plurality and whatever opposes the hegemonic power that promotes war and hatred because of economic and strategic interests, she said.

## Manuel Mendive, happiness dwells in everyday life

By DaimarelysPÉREZ

HAVANA.-Cuban visual artist Manuel Mendive's philosophy is that happiness is present in everyday life, a maxim he included in his most recent exhibition, on display in this capital.

Mendive. Pan con guayaba, una vida feliz, is the name of the work exhibited at the National Fine Arts Museum, where the performance maestro displayed wisdom, creativity and ancestral religiousness, to show the audience the essence of his work.

In an exclusive interview with **The Havana Reporter**, the artist, who will celebrate his 80th birthday next December 15, talked about the simplest things in life. "Everything I do, I do it with love. I paint, put colors, draw, meditate, think about the past and the present," he said.

The 2001 National Visual Arts awardee also talked about the future, about "how things will happen."

In relation to the title of the aforementioned retrospective exhibition, the maestro made reference to certain values the people have, such as humbleness, empathy or the meaning of sharing with others.

The most important thing is that if I have a piece of bread or biscuit and I also have so many brothers with nothing around me, I will cut it into small pieces and we will all eat. That is happiness; that is love and friendship, he stressed.

Those same feelings make me wish everyone a long life, added the creator, who was also granted the UNESCO Five Continents Medal (2009) and the Knight Order of the Arts and Letters of the Ministry of Culture and

Francophonie of France (1994), among other distinctions.

According to Cuban artist Lesbia Vent Dumois, who was also granted the National Visual Arts Award (2019), "in Mendive, nothing is unwarranted nor happens by chance."

He has always said that since he was very young, any material was good for him; palm tree trunks, for sculpture; the earth, glass, sand, metals, mixed or not, for painting in board supports, Vent Dumois commented.

Painting over popular or contemporary dancers' skin allows combining the sound with the colors of the Caribbean; his famous performances dignify mixed-race people and the perfection of the human body.

A modest man, always with a smile on his already old face, rather laconic and very natural, Mendive shared with THR his vision of art.

The genesis of a creative search falls within discovering the mystery of creation from the very energy that comes from the Orishas (divinities) of the Yoruba pantheon.

To the artist, a wisdom linked to the African roots means accumulating ancestral knowledge.

With his sophisticated performances – a discipline that comes from the artist's actions or those of other participants, either live, documented, spontaneous or written – the maestro displays the Cuban identity, sensuality and tradition.

Questioned about how much he still has to do in relation to his work, Mendive said that only God knows. "I rather want to continue painting and loving this world; if the world does not love me back, it does not matter, I love myself."



The artist, who will celebrate his 80th birthday next December 15, talked about the simplest things in life. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

# Alliances in the United States

Text and Photos Deisy FRANCIS

WASHINGTON.- Since its foundation, the Prensa Latina Latin American News Agency fosters alliances with alternative media to face major corporations that control the news world, the agency's first vice-president Luisa María González affirmed during a recent visit to the United States.

That was precisely what she stated in each stage of a tour that included Miami (Florida), New York, New Haven (Connecticut) and Washington DC, on occasion of the 65th anniversary of this mass media, born on June 16, 1959 on the initiative of leader of the Cuban Revolution Fidel Castro.

"We want to extend our message to all the Spanish-speaking population in the United States; that is why alliances with the mass media are important, because although small, they have a major impact on those communities," González commented after the signing of two collaboration agreements with programs in two local stations in Connecticut. PL's first vice-president signed the agreement with John Jairo Lugo, host of the

Barricada program, on WPKN and the La voz del migrante, on La Voz Hispana Radio.

Barricada has a multi-ethnic working team, of community organizers, that tries to reach the Latin community with an alternative message.

"Our goal is to create a transnational network of news to weekly broadcast to our audience the most recent events our peoples face. Those who live at the South, at the other side of the border," reads the official site.

La voz del migrante has a similar objective, but focused on that segment of the population. Lugo, co-founder and director of the Unidad Latina en Acción (ULA) coalition in New Haven, expressed his satisfaction for being able to strengthen ties with Prensa Latina and sharing this agency's information services in the future.

During her stay in Connecticut (northeastern region), González visited the Latin American and Caribbean Center of the Central Connecticut State University, where she was welcomed by its director, PhD Mary-Ann Mahony.

When also analyzing collaboration possibilities, Mahony regretted the persistence of the U.S. blockade on Cuba, which, if it were not in place, would allow fostering "the way to work together."

The official also had talks with former state legislator Edwin Vargas and spoke via Zoom to Tony Pecinovski, director of the United States Communist Party's publishing house International Publisher, who stated his interest in the Prensa Latina editorial materials.

In addition, González had exchanges with Yale University professor José A. Espin, as well as with state representatives Jimmy Sánchez, Geraldo Reyes and Juan Candelaria. The Prensa Latina vice-president also attended the Spanish-American Press Congress held in New York, signed a

collaboration agreement with Radio Miami Today and received, on behalf of the agency's staff, an acknowledgment plaque granted by the José Martí USA Cultural Association.

Veteran Cuban journalist settled in that city, in south Florida, Max Lesnik, said: "from here, we continue the example of Prensa Latina and are thus heirs to that journalistic tradition that has been preserved throughout the years, in spite of everything."

"The truth is that Prensa Latina – its name says it all – is the voice of the Americas," he stressed.

González's visit took place amidst the celebration of the agency's anniversary, an entity that at present has offices in 35 countries, including the United States, Latin America and the main European, Asian and African capitals.



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Opening of the Photo Exhibition '65 Years at the Service of Truth', Washington DC, June 6, 2024.



Signing of collaboration agreement, Prensa Latina-Radio Miami Today.



Acting permanent Ambassador of Cuba to the UN, Yuri Gala; Founding president of the Spanish-American Press Congress, Amin Cruz, and Prensa Latina correspondents to the UN and the United States, Elizabeth Borrego and Deisy Francis.

# The Surveyor Park and its Curious Dimension

Text and Photos Roberto F. CAMPOS

HAVANA.- The Surveyor Park, a site linked to the history of the railroad, is an uncommon scenario for visitors, which is nonetheless highly appreciated by those who want to have a graphic memory of their trips to Cuba. Some historians talk about the importance of this park, located in the surrounding area of the Central Railroad Station, in Old Havana, where a group of centenarian locomotives are exhibited.

The Monument's Restoration Company of the City Historian's Office built this outdoor museum to celebrate the 490th anniversary of the San Cristóbal de La Habana, founded on November 16, 1519.

The exhibit there includes four steam engines that are over one hundred years old, such as the Baldwin 1112 locomotive that was manufactured in 1878 and was used for the shooting of the Cuban film José Martí: el ojo del canario (José Martí: the eye of the canary), by filmmaker Fernando Pérez.

In light of the restructuring of the sugarcane sector, the City Historian's Office took the responsibility for locating 40 steam engines all over the country, for historical purposes and 23 of them were taken to the capital.

The name of this site, the Surveyor Park, makes reference to the professionals who were responsible for measuring and outlining fields, as recorded in a plaque fixed in this place.

Some of the attractions for which thousands of travelers from all over the world visit Cuba include its railroad system, opened 187 years ago.

This service started operating in Cuba in 1837, for the transportation of goods and passengers; since the beginning, it was an important means of transportation. Spain's first train was built in Cuba, a pioneer in the Caribbean and the Ibero-American region, thus its importance.

According to history, a Royal Order was received in the island on September 1830 stating that José de Jesús Herrera y Herrera had appealed to the King of Spain to request permission for the building of an iron path from Havana to San Antonio.



# A Women President in Mexico

By Lianet **ARIAS**

HAVANA.- When candidate and standard-bearer for the ruling National Regeneration Movement (MORENA) and its allied parties, Claudia Sheinbaum, became Mexico's first women president-elect, the general elections of June 2 had already made history. A confirmation of this is the unseen number of people summoned to the polls (over 98 million) and the positions at stake (over 20,000) – which included the country's highest number of judges and nine local governments, one of these in the capital city. In these elections, considered the nation's largest, the citizens also elected those who would hold 128 senate positions, in addition to 500 federal representatives; 1,098 local representatives; 1,802 municipal presidents; 1,975 legal officers; 14,560 managers and 204 city councilors. Several months prior to the votes, another element characterized these elections: the fact that two women, Sheinbaum and Xóchitl Gálvez – of the right alliance, composed of the Institutional Revolutionary, National Action and Democratic Revolution parties – were running for the Presidency.

The third candidate, Jorge Álvarez Máynez, of the Citizens Movement, did not have real chance, according to most of the opinion polls, which predicted a big victory of the pro-government candidate over her closest opponent during all the campaign.

That is why Sheinbaum's victory in the elections was not a surprise, nor that she also made history, as she became the candidate who reached the highest number of votes in Mexico's democratic history, with about 36 million – 59.76 percent of the votes.

Gálvez fell well behind, with 27.45 percent, while Máynez fell third, with 10.32 percent – an outcome that was previously predicted by mechanisms such as the electoral result program of the National Electoral Institute and the initial count, whose estimates indicated a landslide victory of the MORENA representative.

In a country long labeled as extremely sexist, the arrival of a women, for the first time, to the Presidency of the Republic, not only debunked myths to a certain point, but also confirmed politicians and analysts'

judgment on the model of country chosen by the majority of those who exercised their right to vote.

As of October 1st, Sheinbaum will succeed president Andrés Manuel López Obrador, whose project achieved unquestionable results in six years in fields such as poverty, inequalities and unemployment reduction. During her campaign, the bachelor of Physics and former head of the capital Government, highlighted the model of humanist transformation undertaken by López Obrador, which she promised not only to continue but also to add other elements, such as attention to salary gap between men and women.

The drive of the Sigamos haciendo historia (Let's continue making history) pro-government coalition did not stop in the presidential election's resounding outcome, as MORENA and its allies – the Labor and Green Ecologist parties – won in seven of the nine local governments in dispute.

At the elections, in which over 60 percent of the population participated – in a country in which voting is not compulsory – the alliance also won two thirds of the majority required in the House of Representatives and was close to do it in the Senate.



Claudia Sheinbaum, became Mexico's first women president-elect in these elections, considered the nation's largest. PHOTO: Internet.

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# Cubaindustria 2024, the Challenge

By TeyunéDÍAZ

HAVANA.- Cuba has installed productive capacities whose adequate exploitation is essential for the development of the national industry, the entrepreneurial interaction and the application of science and technology, which are closely related to this process.

In that path, the country hosted the IV edition of the Cubaindustria 2024 Fair, held from June 17 to 21 in parallel with the IV International Scientific Convention and an exhibition on the industry's potentials. The event concluded with the signing of 43 legal instruments, including contracts and letters of intent to develop business projects and alliances aimed at integration and complementation.

In tune with the motto the Ministry of Industries (MINDUS) selected for this event, 'For higher international complementation, integration and insertion for industrial development,' the Recycling and Chemical, Light, Electronic, Iron & Steel and Metal-Mechanic Industries entrepreneurial groups got together to increase visibility of their capacities and potentials.

According to experts, each of the events, congresses and exhibition fairs had as main topic the industrial development policy.

The exhibition, held at the Pabexpo fairground, was attended by over one thousand participants, 168 from 11 nations, which ratified relations between producers and technological and commercial partners of the sector, MINDUS Deputy Minister Ernesto Cedeño commented.

Cedeño made emphasis on the holding of the online seminar on the Eurasian Economic Union industrial cooperation support mechanisms, the III Design Forum and the launch of new products directed at the population, exports and the economy in general.

Meetings between the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and Cuban business executives

were important to identify international cooperation projects, he stressed.

In parallel, ten congresses were held at Havana's Conference Center as part of the IV International Convention, including the XVI International Recycling Congress, the IV Electronic and Automation Congress and the XIX Metallurgic Congress, attended by 1,300 delegates from countries such as Germany, Brazil, Costa Rica, Colombia, Mexico, Argentina and Russia.

Such events favored an extensive exchange between specialists, academicians, scientists, experts, students and technological partners, who presented works with a high technical-scientific level focused on evaluating and finding a solution to the main problems the economy and the industry face.

Academic presentations dealt with topics such as international integration, complementation and insertion of the industry and its development; exploitation of installed capacities, and increase of productions to meet, as long as possible, the demands of the national economy and exports.



The Cuban company RC and the Italian NCR Biochemical expanded ties during Cubaindustria 2024. PHOTO: Panchito González.

## Debate on Fishing Resources Depletion

By MaríaMAYORAL

HAVANA.- With FAO's support, Cuban experts try to counteract the loss of biodiversity and the depletion of fishing resources in the country's insular platform, the United Nations body indicated.

The object area of attention is the Gulf of Guacanayabo, in the country's southeastern coast that includes the provinces of Granma, Camagüey, Las Tunas and the Jardines de la Reina archipelago.

According to the report, the Cuban Fishing Research Center (CIP) heads the initiative, with the assistance of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the financing of the World Environment Fund.

An analysis workshop was conducted on the ongoing actions for fishing organization in light of the project 'Improving biodiversity management and protection in the coastal area of the Gulf of Guacanayabo (Conpesca Guacanayabo), the report said.

CIP researchers, officials of the Fishing Industry Entrepreneurial Group, workers of the sector and private fishermen of the municipalities in which the project was implemented – Santa Cruz del Sur, Camagüey; Manzanillo, Granma, and Amancio, Las Tunas – attended the event.

On behalf of CIP, researcher Carlos A. Ocano presented an update on the state of shrimps' catch affected by drought; the increase of salinity in estuaries; illegal fishing in raising areas, and the low contribution of freshwater to the coastal zone because of the damming of the region's main rivers, especially the Cauto river.

FAO affirmed that several protection actions are linked to the prohibition of arts that are not highly selective, in addition to reproductive close seasons, the demarcation

of protected sea areas and zones of raising, and the establishment of catching quotas.

In this regard, a proposal was defined for the 2025-2026 fishing season in zone A of the Cuban platform (Gulf of Ana Maria and Guacanayabo), which includes species of interest such as the national red snapper, the Cuban biajaca, the small-tooth sawfish, the tarpon, the southern stingray, the parassi mullet, the institution indicated.

The forum also analyzed experiences on the handling and cultivation of mangrove oyster, a resource affected

in the country because of coastal pollution; salinity; the increase of water temperature and the mean sea level; deforestation and mangrove cutting, and free-access fishing.

With an approximate amount of 1.3 million dollars, Conpesca Guacanayabo contributes to the preservation of sea biodiversity through the sustainable management of resources, FAO said.

The Gulf of Guacanayabo contributes to the Cuban fishing production with about 28.6 percent; lodges some of the region's largest and best preserved mangroves, sea pastures and reefs, and is home to about 55 percent of the Caribbean's endemic species, the body added.



FAO'S support is the Gulf of Guacanayabo, in the Cuban southeastern coast. PHOTO: Trabajadores.

# New Tobacco Season in Preparation

By Alina **LÓPEZ**

PINAR DEL RÍO.- Cuba intensifies preparations for the new tobacco season, which will include 22,000 hectares, in order to supply over 25,000 tons to the national industry.

About 14,000 hectares of that total are located in this western province, said president of the Tabacuba Entrepreneurial Group Marino Murillo, who added that the resources the season demands are higher and will be guaranteed.

In this regard, he noted that the country already has 50 percent of the fertilizers needed and most of the phytosanitary products, while others are to be received after the signing of agreements with the suppliers.

The official explained that this will be a tense season because of the conditions present in the international market for the acquisition of consumables and their transfer; however, "we have those resources and will go on with the development program addressed to the producers," he stressed.

A distinctive feature of this season is remuneration in foreign currencies to those who produce the so-called sun-grown tobacco and to farmers who supply considerable levels of raw material from the so-called 'second-class' tobacco plantations.

Murillo added that during the 2023-2024 season, 14,300 hectares of tobacco were sown, and although the sowing commitment was fulfilled, planned yields were not met.

The Tabacuba president highlighted that the Pinar del Río province speeds up preparations for the new season and the reconstruction of the tobacco barns used for leaves' natural curing, which were almost totally destroyed by hurricane Ian on September 2022.

In the meantime, new agricultural equipment was given to tobacco growers and representatives of

this province's productive structures as part of the development program the Tabacuba entrepreneurial group conducts.

Murillo commented that this was the third occasion in which Tabacuba facilitated tobacco growers the buying of modern tractors with the purpose to contribute to progress in their projects.



New agricultural equipment was given to tobacco s as part of the development program the Tabacuba Group. PHOTO: ACN.

Grassroots entrepreneurial units (UEB), such as the Isabel Rubio unit – which uses 10 hectares for tobacco growing in the Guane municipality – were benefited with the acquisition of new tractors for common use.

Tabacuba guarantees the import of agricultural equipment and tools for their sale to farmers linked to the work of this entrepreneurial group.

Such sales are made for the same value for which they were acquired in the international market and only a profit margin is charged in pesos (national currency). Our interest is to export cigars and create the perfect conditions for tobacco growers to produce, Murillo stressed.

# ECOSOC Warns about the Increase of Inequalities in Latin America

By Carmen **ESQUIVEL**



President of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Paula Narváez. PHOTO: UH.

SANTIAGO DE CHILE.- Inequalities increase in Latin America, even in countries that had been able to reduce them, warned president of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Paula Narváez.

The official participated online in the 4th Social Development Seminar organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), where she stated that an increasing number of people run the risk of staying behind.

From 1995 to 2010, many countries of the area had been able to reduce the gap; however, the combined effect of several crisis is creating new difficulties, she said.

Narváez, who is also the Chilean Ambassador to the UN, commented that the most difficult events in recent years include the pandemic of COVID-19, climate change, technological innovation and geopolitical conflicts.

Although some countries have made progress in the creation and strengthening of social protection systems, only 30 percent of the world population enjoys a comprehensive coverage, the ECOSOC president affirmed.

This means that more than four billion people must face poverty challenges, gender breach, population

aging, global warming and digital development and its effects.

However, this negative impact is not irreversible and countries and institutions must focus on making progress in conditions, without only making emphasis on catastrophic diagnosis, Narváez commented.

At her speech at the CEPAL seminar, the diplomat stated that social protection policies are essential to guarantee, among others, benefits, adequate incomes, and access to quality public services along the vital cycle.

Even in countries where these policies are guaranteed by law, there are economic disadvantages that limit the access of youngsters, women, native communities and immigrants, she recalled.

Narváez affirmed that investments in the sector can be increased through progressive fiscal systems, based on the principle of solidarity.

She finally added that governments should give priority to essential public expenses resources, including social guarantees, instead of addressing them to the defense sector, as it happens at present in many places.

# From Bolivian altitude to Paris 2024

By Jorge **PETINAUD**

LA PAZ.- Cuban modern pentathlon athlete Marco Antonio Rojas, already qualified for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, appreciated the attention and facilities given by the Bolivian sport authorities during his preparation in height conditions, essential to strengthen his aerobic capacity.

"Bolivia's solidarity has allowed us to improve our aerobic capacity in view of that competition and we are doing it, which people will see when we are at the sea level," he said in an interview with **The Havana Reporter**.

The athlete, born in the eastern province of Las Tunas 23 years ago, stressed the importance of the support received.

"For example, of the five events – horseback riding, running, shooting, fencing and swimming – I am stronger in swimming and training here has been strong; it has forced me to redouble efforts and that will help me," said the young athlete.

He recalled his beginning in sports, at the age of six, in gymnastics; at seven, he moved to swimming and then, at the age of 14, he started in modern pentathlon, a discipline in which, after qualifying at the Chile 2023 Pan-American Games, he now faces the challenge of improving historical results.

Rojas commented that his goal was to get to the Paris Olympics and improve the 15th place reached by his fellow compatriot Janet Velázquez in Beijing 2008, and to qualify among the first eight.

He added that he hopes to maintain his physical condition, complete another Olympic cycle in view of the 2028 games and help men modern pentathlon improve its position in the international ranking.

Rojas appreciated the welcome received in Bolivia, particularly by president of the national Modern and Military Pentathlon Federation, Nimia Hurtado, as well as the team of coaches, composed of Rigoberto Morejón, Miguel Méndez and doctor Víctor Hugo González.

He also praised "those who before our qualification at the Chile 2023 Pan-American



Cuban pentathlon athlete Marco Antonio Rojas qualified for the Olympic Games. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Games, contributed to our preparation in France," where he improved his riding skills, one of the factors that allowed him to finish fourth in Chile and qualify for the Olympics. "That is the reason why we say that the result we get in Paris 2024 will also carry the colors of the Bolivian and French flags, for their solidarity with the Cuban sport," Rojas affirmed.

Hurtado, for her part, said that the presence of this Cuban team in the heights is an important experience for the Bolivian Federation and particularly for her.

The visitors' high technical qualification gives them the knowledge to enrich a book in which her country's sport requires a specialized ministry, she commented.

## Arlen López and his Goal for a Third Olympic Gold Medal

By Waldo **MENDILUZA**

PARIS.- Cuban boxer Arlen López (80 Kg) ratified his intention to win the gold medal in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, which would turn him into a three-time gold medalist under the five rings.

Julio César La Cruz (92) and I have this goal here, for which we have trained hard, the 31-year old native of Cuba's easternmost province of Guantánamo, who won the gold medals at the Río de Janeiro 2016 and Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, told **The Havana Reporter**.

In 120 years of Olympic boxing history, since its debut in St. Louis 1904, only three boxers have reached the top of the podium on three occasions: Cubans Teófilo Stevenson and Félix Savon and Hungarian Lazlo Papp.

According to López, their training has been good and its ultimate performance will be seen in French soil, in the Tremblay-en-France commune, as part of a project by the Cuba Coopération France (CubaCoop) association directed at accompanying Cuban athletes who qualified for the games.

We just need to retouch the final details for a difficult tournament, because all athletes dream of

competing in Paris 2024 and are training hard for that, he said.

In this regard, he affirmed that no opponent will be easy and stressed the importance of assuming each bout as a challenge, and to foresee different scenarios. Cuba's five-boxer team that will participate in the big sport party arrived in France on Thursday and will make its debut on July 27th, one day after the opening ceremony of the games the City of Light will host for the third time, after the 1900 and 1924 editions.

López praised the quality and wishes of success of the other three members of the Cuban team: young boxers Saidel Horta (57), Erislandy Álvarez (63,5 kg) and Alejandro Claro (51), who are 22 years old on average and won medals in the last World Championship (Tashkent 2023).

They are also coming for the gold, for their names to be heard soon in the Olympic Games, to make Cuba proud. The ring will have the last word, but all the five of us will enter the ring with everything, López affirmed.



Arlen López (80 Kg) wants to win his third gold medal in the Paris 2024. PHOTO: Photo Ileana Piñeiro.

# Sancti Spíritus Makes Progress in the Earth's Fruits

Text and Photos Raúl GARCÍA

SANCTI SPÍRITUS.- Sancti Spíritus, the host to the July 26th National Celebration, is one of Cuba's best provinces in urban, suburban and family agriculture development at present, as well as in the rural and state sector as a whole.

The election of the province as host to the celebrations of the National Rebelliousness Day is endorsed by the contribution its workers have made in the production and services sector, as well as that of its farmers and other sectors of the society.

The agricultural progress of this province is present in eight of its municipalities, particularly Sancti Spíritus, Cabaiguán, Taguasco and Yaguajay, regions that supply vegetables and root vegetables, bananas, beans and exotic lines such as transgenic corn, soybean and garbanzo bean, in addition to black and covered tobacco.

In mountainous territories such as Trinidad and Fomento, the strategy is aimed at increasing the production of coffee and recovering crops such as cocoa in the Topes de Collantes region, even this area makes an important contribution to local, self-sufficiency programs.



The agricultural progress of this province is present in eight of its municipalities. PHOTO: Internet.

Jatibonico, where the Uruguay sugarcane mill is located, has the mission of increasing sugarcane fields, meeting agricultural programs and improving community conditions, among other projects.

The Sur del Jíbaro Agribusiness Company, in La Sierpe, establishes the guidelines as a State, Socialist company in the production of rice. It also has facilities and centers for livestock – buffalo, goat, rabbit, cattle – and food production.

In addition to crop growing, it also has a mini-industry that facilitates the production-benefit-commercialization cycle and offers guarantees in online and border sales, as part of the productive connection process.

Sur del Jíbaro, an important export region, stands out in the municipality's different activities, as well as in the economic transformations, improvement and development of rural communities and

health and educational facilities, among others.

In the meantime, the Sancti Spíritus municipality's first strategic line of development is to look after food production, mayor of the Municipal People's Power Assembly Jaile Rabelo Orellana told **The Havana Reporter**.

Progress is being made in the state and rural agricultural sector, while the San Andrés center – which is surrounded by the Zaza reservoir, the country's largest and the Cayaján River – is modernized with irrigation systems and the sowing of varieties of banana and high-yield crops.

Rabelo Orellana explained that in the Pojabo town, a canal is restored with the assistance of a Saudi international project in the El Caney neighborhood that will favor the assembly of irrigation machines for a 70-hectare area where onion, garlic and chili (Habano) is cultivated.

In light of the current challenges, resulting from the unfair economic and financial blockade imposed by the United States, we continue looking for alternatives and solutions, because we have the responsibility of giving the people of Sancti Spíritus better quality, said the municipal mayor.



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