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Cuban tourism sector holds its ground

By Roberto F. CAMPOS

HAVANA.- Amid unfavorable economic circumstances, few travelers and pressures of all kinds, Cuba's main tourism sector holds its ground by expanding its wings.

The above view was shared by many of the analysts who focused their attention on Cuba's 44th International Tourism Fair (FITCuba 2026), held online, from May 7 to 9, amid an atmosphere of optimism from its organizers.

Cuban Minister of Tourism Juan Carlos García confirmed that more than one thousand people from roughly 50 countries participated, while 120 stands appeared virtually.

The novelties included that tour operators and travel agents who had never visited Cuba registered and made contacts this time, while the event's website will remain available for a couple of months.

The in-person closing ceremony featured the celebration of the Public Day at the Josone Park, in Varadero's resort, which



More than one thousand people from roughly 50 countries participated in FitCuba 2026, celebrated on line.

served as an opportunity for those present to book leisure packages, tours and stays. The meeting highlighted the island's most outstanding scenarios and showcased an always active business display.

The event closed with the hopes, for the recovery of the travel industry in this archipelago, as Minister García expressed satisfaction with the outcome of FitCuba 2026.

He emphasized that this fair proved to be a great opportunity to engage with tourism industry professionals, from all over the world, interested in Cuba, featuring numerous expertise meetings, highly attended sessions, presentations, contents and unique experiences.

The minister also announced that the portal opened for the fair will remain active until July, aiming to follow up both business actions and intentions.

FITCuba 2026 was a platform of opportunities and a space where alliances that transcend borders were built, and as García said, despite the threats and unilateral coercive measures by the United States government (blockade), the meeting was a success.

In this virtual environment, Cuba reaffirmed its vocation as an authentic, safe and diverse destination, ready to welcome the world with much to offer and to continue building.

Attendees witnessed enriching exchanges, innovative proposals and a firm commitment to the development of tourism.

Gaviota Stands out in the Travel Industry

By Francisco MENÉNDEZ

HAVANA.- The Gaviota tourism group reaffirmed its prominence at Cuba's 44th International Tourism Fair, and took the opportunity to open the Territorial Governance Office in Varadero.

The bureau, which highlights the company's more than 30 years experience in the travel sector, is designed to enhance visitors' knowledge through cutting-edge technological solutions.

Gaviota officials explained that this model already operates with good results in the Cayo Santa María tourist hub, which endorses the importance of implementing the proposal in Cuba's main tourist resort.

The use of this smart ecosystem allows real-time monitoring of occupancy, mobility and safety in the tourist hub, optimizing decision-making and improving the capacity of attention to travelers' needs.

During its presentation at the Fair, the group provided an overview of projects and innovations, reaffirming its decisive role in the national tourism offer.



Gaviota Tourism Group has more than 30 years of experience in the travel sector. PHOTO: Internet.

In this regard, Marketing Vice-President Frank País Oltuski stressed that the chain works tirelessly to reactive the sector and that each FITCuba edition marks a new starting point for ideas that enrich the industry. The group consolidates its presence in beach, nature and city destinations with the support of its Gaviota Tours travel agency, the Transgaviota transportation services and the Gaviota Marinas.

The group's geographical distribution extends from Havana and Varadero to María la Gorda, Topes de Collantes, Cayo Santa María, Jardines del Rey, Holguín, Santiago de Cuba and Baracoa, with operations adapted to the particularities of each region.

In Havana, the company offers around twenty Habaguanex hotels in the historic center, a World Heritage site, which combine classic elegance and modernity, while in Varadero it has seaside facilities, tourist areas such as Oasis and Las Morlas, and the Gaviota Marina, with nautical excursions led by the Crucero del Sol.

Cayo Santa María is established as a star destination with dream beaches, nautical activities and the launch of the All-In product, which expands the all-inclusive experience through access to thematic areas like One Collection, Gallery and Las Dunas.

There, Playa Kids, an inclusive children's concept, was also introduced at the Playa Cayo Santa María hotel, along with the Splash water park, the largest in Cuba. Gaviota also inaugurated the One Collection and Playa Luxury Cayo Las Brujas hotels, alongside the Playa Luxury Cayo Guillermo, located on the famous Playa Pilar, offering a spa, butler service and exclusive amenities.

In Jardines del Rey, the Playa Coco and Playa Paraíso hotels, ideal for families, stand out. In eastern Cuba, Gaviota maintains references such as Playa Costa Verde and Playa Pesquero, the latter with a Luxury section.

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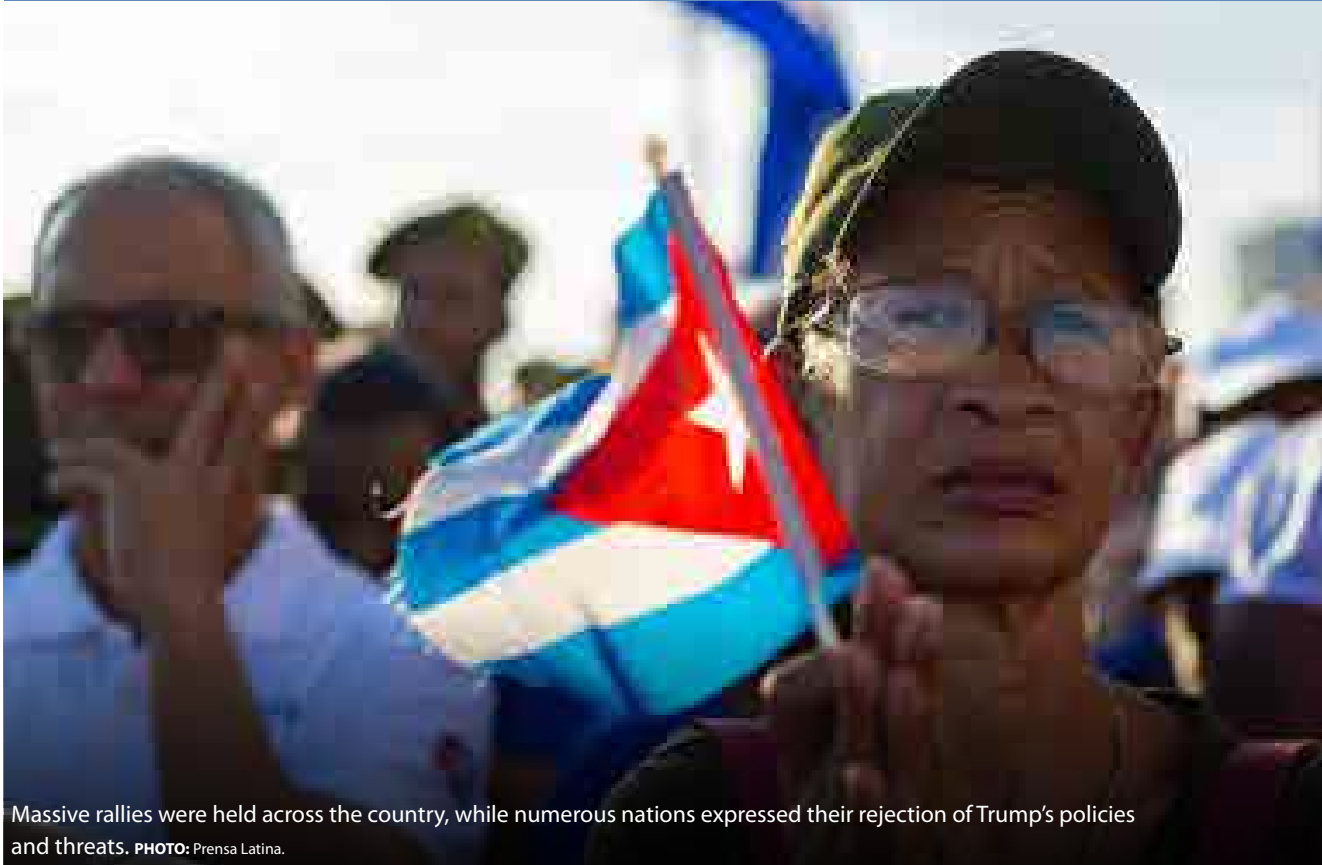
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Popular Support for Raúl Castro



Massive rallies were held across the country, while numerous nations expressed their rejection of Trump's policies and threats. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

By Bryanna **GONZÁLEZ**

HAVANA.- The leader of the Cuban Revolution, Raúl Castro, affirmed that as long as he lives, he will continue marching at the head of the Cuban people, defending the Revolution and "with his foot in the stirrup."

The message was delivered by Hero of the Republic Gerardo Hernández during a pro government rally led by

President Miguel Díaz-Canel, along with other leaders of the country, in rejection of the U.S. Department of Justice's indictment against Raúl Castro.

In his statement, the veteran Cuban leader expressed his heartfelt gratitude for "the solidarity of our people and friends worldwide."

Speaking at the mass gathering, Hernández asserted that Cuba's response to the violations of its airspace by the terrorist organization Hermanos al Rescate (Brothers to

the Rescue) 30 years ago —the justification used to try to prove the indictment— "constituted an act of legitimate self-defense, an undeniable right of any nation."

Addressing more than 250,000 people assembled in the capital, Hernández, who also serves as national coordinator of the Committees for the Defense of the the Revolution, recalled that Cuba timely denounced more than 25 violations of its airspace, between 1994 and 1996, and had sent alerts to Washington about the possible consequences.

"Their silence was complicity. Their inaction encouraged the terrorists," he emphasized.

The Hero of the Republic questioned the hypocrisy of the U.S. government and asked when they would try Trump for ordering the killing of more than 200 people in international waters, without presenting any evidence?

He argued that for the United States, the law is a tailor-made suit: tight for the weak and slack for the powerful.

Young jurist Rolando López described the United States' accusation against Raúl Castro as "absolutely fraudulent and illegitimate" and emphasized that the 1944 Chicago Convention establishes the exclusive sovereignty of the States over their airspace.

He also accused Washington's attempt to distort and manipulate proven and widely documented historical facts, which were duly and formally reported by Cuban authorities to the U.S. government.

Betina Palenzuela, daughter of Adriana Corcho, a victim of the 1976 attack on the Cuban diplomatic mission in Lisbon, spoke on behalf of the families of more than three thousand Cubans murdered in terrorist acts organized or financed from the United States.

"Raúl has dedicated his entire life to defending Cuba's sovereignty and peace among nations. We cannot continue to allow the genocide being orchestrated from Washington," she said.

Palenzuela recalled that more than 67 years of aggression, mercenary invasions, sabotage, and attacks on Cuban missions abroad, amidst a ruthless blockade, have cost the lives of more than 3,400 Cubans, victims of terrorism.

Flotilla Rumbo a Cuba Sails from Spain

By Fausto **TRIANA**

BARCELONA.- The flotilla Rumbo a Cuba set sail on May 10 from Barcelona toward the Caribbean island in order to transport photovoltaic equipment for the Juan Manuel Márquez Pediatric Hospital in Havana.

The initiative, which also includes medications and food, is led by the NGO Open Arms and is endorsed by more than 20 social and political organizations like Ecologistas en Acción, Asociación Amal Esperanza, Podemos, Izquierda Unida, Compromís, Comuns, Bildu, among others. Before crossing the Atlantic on its way to Havana, the ship Astral – from Open Arms – planned stops in Valencia, on May 13; Málaga, May 19; Cádiz, May 22, and Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, May 28.

At each stop, various well-known figures from the world of culture, as well as public representatives and influencers, were

expected to board the ship to support the initiative.

The mission will last about a month of navigation and the stages will take place from May 13 to 28, according to predictions by the organizers.

In statements to the press, director of Open Arms, Óscar Camps, highlighted the presence of Cuban medical brigades in emergencies in different contexts.

"They are professionals who are part of a long-standing tradition of international solidarity; they are present in demanding scenarios and they do it constantly, without focusing on media attention. That constant presence has made a difference in many contexts," he said.

Camps emphasized that the time has come to respond to that practice with actions and "give back a part of that solidarity wherever we can".



The flotilla Rumbo a Cuba transported photovoltaic equipment, medications and food. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

The NGO Open Arms, the Ecoo Revolución Solar Cooperative, and the rest of the participants are promoting this action, which aims to make even more visible the worldwide rejection of the economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba. "In a recent

exchange with **The Havana Reporter**, Camps said: "we hope to personally deliver all the photovoltaic material in order to ensure that, at least, the hospital's intensive care department can care for newborns and the vulnerable population that needs healthcare."

Donald Trump's Threats Escalate

By DeisyFRANCIS

WASHINGTON.- U.S. President Donald Trump escalated his threats against Cuba in early May, declaring in Florida his intention to take control of the island "almost immediately."

Trump, who days earlier had announced further coercive measures against the Caribbean country, said at a private dinner at the Forum Club in West Palm Beach that he would take care of Cuba, but first he would conclude his war in Iran, because he likes to "finish the job."

The Republican president emphasized he might send the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln to within 100 yards (91.44 meters) off the coast (with the clear objective of intimidation) and in that situation, he expects Cuba to say, "Thank you very much, we surrender."

Since assuming his second term in the White House on January 20 last year, President Trump has doubled down on his approach against the island. On his first day in office, he signed an executive order reversing belated but progressive measures taken by his Democratic predecessor, Joe Biden.

The Democrat president, who during his four years in the Oval Office aligned himself with Trump's Cuba policy, decided a week before the end of his presidency to remove the island from the United States' unilateral and arbitrary list of alleged state sponsors of terrorism.

Thus, one after another, a series of measures followed, all aimed at strangling the Caribbean nation with an unprecedented tightening of the economic, financial and commercial blockade – the longest running in history – with the objective of overthrowing the Cuban Revolution.

Trump also targeted remittances (suspended as of January 31, 2025); intensified the persecution of Cuba's international cooperation in the health sector through pressure campaigns that led some countries to withdraw from the program.

In addition, he ended the humanitarian parole program; suspended visas for cultural, sports and scientific exchanges, and in an unprecedented move, after a 23-year suspension, activated Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. The Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) also intensified its scrutiny of Havana's financial operations.

On January 29, a year after returning to power, the Republican president signed an executive order declaring a national emergency regarding Cuba, arguing that it represents an "unusual and extraordinary threat" to the U.S. national security and foreign policy.

Furthermore, he imposed an energy blockade and threatened punitive tariffs and secondary sanctions against any country, company or shipping company that attempted to sell oil to Cuba, a flagrant violation of the sovereignty of third-party States.

On May 1, he issued an executive order expanding his administration's unilateral coercive actions against Cuba, an extension of those announced in January, although without mentioning any specific entity or person.

Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez rejected this recent executive order. In a message on X, he described the increased economic pressure from the White House on the Caribbean nation as "reprehensible, but curious and ridiculous."



Trump said he would "take care of Cuba" after he concludes his war in Iran.
PHOTO: Internet.

Cuban Authorities Meet CIA Director in Havana

By RafaelARZUAGA

HAVANA.- The Cuban government informed about a meeting held in this capital between a U.S. delegation led by CIA director John Ratcliffe and representatives of the Cuban Ministry of the Interior (MININT).

"Following a request submitted by United States' government to welcome in Havana a delegation led by CIA director, John Ratcliffe, the leadership of the Revolution approved the holding of this visit and the meeting with its counterpart," the MININT expressed in a release published in the official website of the Presidency of the Republic.

The statement indicated that "the meeting was held on May 14, in a context marked by complex bilateral relations, to contribute to political dialogue between both nations, as part of the efforts to face the current scenario.

"The information presented by the Cuban side, along with the exchanges held with Washington's delegation, served to

categorically demonstrate that Cuba poses no threat to United States' national security, nor are there any legitimate grounds for including the island in the list of countries alleged to sponsor terrorism," added the communiqué.

At the meeting, consistency and coherence on the historic stance assumed by Cuba and its competent authorities in the battle, and

unmistakable condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and expressions was ratified, the release emphasized.

"Once again it was made clear that the island does not harbor, support, finance or permit terrorist or extremist organizations; nor are there foreign military or intelligence bases on its territory, and it has never supported any hostile activity against the

U.S. nor will it allow any action to be taken from Cuba against another nation," the publication stressed.

The statement also highlighted that both parties expressed their interests in developing bilateral cooperation between law enforcement agencies, with a view to enhancing national, regional, and international security.



Support for Hospitals

By Ana Laura **ARBEZÚ**

HAVANA.- The Japanese Embassy in Cuba and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will provide renewable energy equipment worth \$6.5 million dollars to 10 Cuban hospitals, four of them in the capital, official sources indicated.

The two year project is led by the Cuban Ministry of Public Health and the UNDP, with the participation of the Ministry of Energy and Mines, the National Electricity Union and local authorities, officials noted during an exchange.

The joint initiative aims to equip healthcare institutions with photovoltaic systems tailored to each site based on critical

energy demand, building's characteristics and location.

Organizers estimates that 2.6 million patients and 27,500 healthcare workers will benefit from the installation of those energy solutions.

The work includes the setting up of solar power generation equipment, like panels, power conditioners, storage batteries and

other components.

It also foresees strengthening the technical and institutional capacities of hospital staff and other stakeholders responsible for the operation, maintenance and management of this technology.

In thanking the Japanese ambassador for the donation, Cuban Deputy Minister of Health Julio Guerra said the initiative seeks to achieve energy independence in the current context the country is facing, and to help sustain medical care for the population during one of the most critical periods in recent times.

The official stated that this support comes at a time of great need and emphasized that the solidarity and respect with which these resources have been provided strengthen the bonds of friendship between Cuba and Japan.

The Japanese diplomat, Nakamura Kazuhito, highlighted that the donation as an expression of international cooperation and the solidarity of the Japanese people toward the Cuban nation.

"We are deeply moved and felt compelled to assist Cuba in this difficult time," the ambassador emphasized when recalling the official figures announced on the number of surgeries postponed due to the fuel crisis gripping the Caribbean island: 96,000 – of which, 11,000 involve children.

Cuba is facing a profound crisis in all sectors as a result of the oil siege imposed by the United States government since last January.

One of the government's first measures in response to the fuel shortage and the inability of health facilities to keep functioning was to prioritize medical care solely for urgent cases, emergencies, dialysis patients, cancer patients and the maternal and child health program.



The \$6.5 million donation of Japan and de UNDP will benefit 10 Cuban hospitals. PHOTO: Internet.

Participation in Research on Hydrology and Climate Change

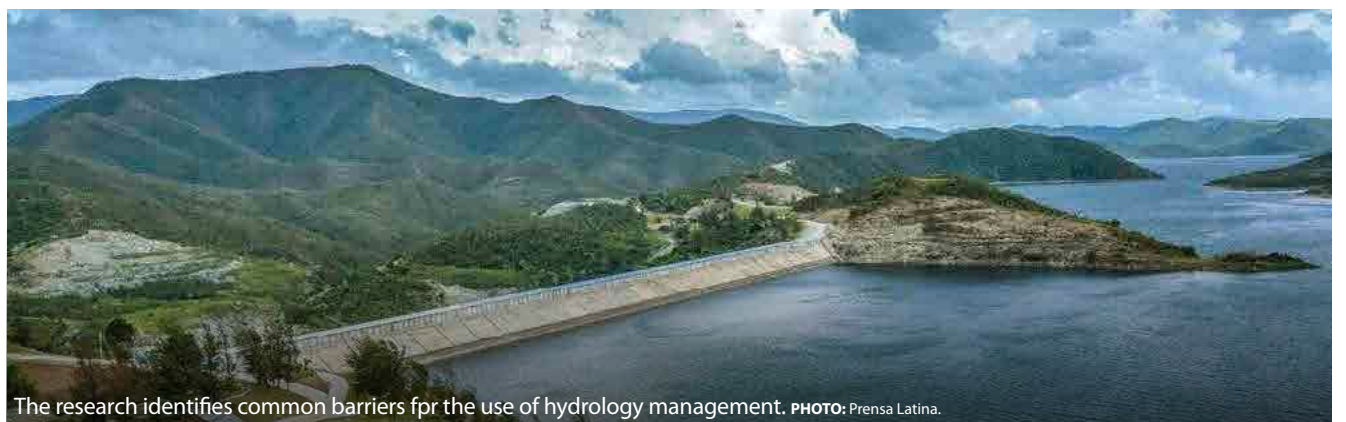
By **SBD**

CIENFUEGOS.- Cuba participated in an international scientific study on the use of hydrology management for water in Island Developing States, published in the journal *Water International*.

This collective effort, which resulted in the publication of the article: "Unlocking the potential of isotopic hydrology for water management in Island Developing States," involved institutions from Europe, the Caribbean, the Pacific and Africa, reported the Cienfuegos Center for Environmental Studies (CEAC), as was told to the Havana Reporter by sources linked to the research.

For the publication of this study, specialists from various regions worldwide, came together to analyze how isotopic hydrology can become a key tool in addressing the challenges of water management in Island Developing States (IDSs).

The research identifies common barriers that limit the application of these techniques, like the lack of baseline data, insufficient technical capacities and financial constraints, while proposing regional solutions based on cooperation, innovation and institutional strengthening.



The research identifies common barriers for the use of hydrology management. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

The study was led by the Centre for Sustainable Futures at the University of the South Pacific (Fiji), in collaboration with the Department of Environment, Development and Sustainability Studies at Södertörn University (Sweden), the Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology (Barbados), and the Mauritius National Environment Laboratory.

Researchers from the Isotope Hydrology Section of the International Atomic Energy Agency (Austria), the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, the Geotop Research Centre at the University of Quebec

(Canada), and the Geological Survey of the Feroe Jarðfeingi Islands (Kingdom of Denmark).

The CEAC, through the contribution of MSc. Alejandro García Moya, provided results derived from the Cuban National Network of Isotope Hydrology in Precipitation, established in 2016 with the support of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

This network enabled the first nationwide characterization of the isotopic composition of rainfall in the country, generating an open and useful database for sustainable management of water resources.

Angel Quintero's Award to Cuba and its People

By Mario **MUÑOZ**

HAVANA.- I imagine him with wide eyes and a broad happy smile. That is how beloved Cuban singer-songwriter Ángel Quintero must have been after winning the Cubadisco Award for Best Trova Album.

The joy of this recognition was especially felt by many of those who were at the Covarrubias Hall of the National Theater in Havana during the presentation of the most important annual awards in the Cuban recording industry.

"Porque Canción de luz / Homenaje a Angel Quintero" (Because Song of Light / Homage to Angel Quintero) was the testament of the troubadour (1956-2024), whose details he wove in his mind and on his guitar with passion, seriousness and joy in his final months.

Angelito, as known affectionately by his friends, was only able to hear a few tracks from the album recorded at the Ojalá Studios, but each piece was a pleasure for him. He proudly enjoyed the arrangements and vocals that supported his songs.

He was an artist until the very end: "Beatriz (Márquez) was recording today," he told

me shortly before his death; "Listen to Kiki (Corona)'s latest arrangement, it is much better than the previous one," he said happily about his CD, whose production was overseen step by step by his wife, journalist Estrella Díaz.

Behind the award lies the deep gratitude of his family toward singer-songwriter Silvio Rodríguez, the driving force behind the album's recording project; Ana Lourdes Martínez, its general producer, and the network of singers, talented musicians and technicians who participated in this collaborative work.

"Canción de luz..." (Song of Light...) is the singer-songwriter's final gift to Cuba and its people; a declaration of love, faith and hope.

In the liner notes accompanying the recording, Silvio Rodríguez wrote that Quintero stood out among that second generation of what was then called the Nueva Trova movement.

"Since he appeared, he knew how to shine with his own light, with songs that denoted a unique creative personality. His talent, combined with his frank and friendly nature, made him essential," said Rodríguez, one of the founders of the movement known as the Cuban Nueva Trova.

As said by Adolfo Costales, producer at the record label Producciones Colibrí and a great connoisseur of the Cuban trova and a friend of Quintero, "the album is a gem."

For René Baños, director of the Vocal Sampling group and a close friend of the singer-songwriter, this work reveals "the lesser-known Angelito, but one as real as his passion for love and friendship; his passion, always young, patient and deeply rooted in family, culture, history and Cuba." The CD includes eleven songs written by Quintero, performed by Silvio Rodríguez,

Beatriz Márquez, Frank Delgado, Miriam Ramos, Eduardo Sosa, Kiki Corona, Mayito Rivera, Marta Campos, Heidi Iguada, Juan Carlos Pérez, Leonardo García, Ariel Díaz, Carlitos Lage and Ángel Quintero himself.

With more than 40 years in the music industry, Angelito Quintero stood out for his constant experimentation and insightful lyrics that portray the reality of his country, including his album Paisano (2000), where he shared personal experiences of the Cuban diaspora and other Latin American nations.



"Song of Light / Homage to Angel Quintero" was the testament of the troubadour (1956-2024). PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

A Theatrical evocation of Juana

By Alma **LABRADA**

HAVANA.- The Bertolt Brecht Cultural Center, of Havana, recently hosted El nombre de Juana (The name of Juana,) a play directed by Osvaldo Doimeadiós in tribute to an artist who burst on the Cuban stage with a unique charm. Praised by the public and the critics, actress Monse Duany doubles herself to play the remembered Juana Bacallao (1925-2024) in this new proposal by the Nave Oficio de Isla theater company.

"With this show, we pay tribute to her remarkable figure by dramatizing that truth superimposed on the parade of anecdotes, characters, and rocambolesque situations that flooded her life," the group added on digital platforms.

After its presentation at El Mejunje, a cultural center in the city of Santa Clara, in the center of the country, the play returned to the Cuban capital with performances at the Bertolt Brecht Theater, at the headquarters of the Nave Oficio de Isla, at the National Museum of Fine Arts,

and the Martí Theater - the latter two located in Old Havana.

Neris Amelia Salazar made her debut with the song Yo soy Juana Bacallao (I am Juana Bacallao) at the Martí Theater at the end of the 40s. Recognized with the National Humor Prize in 2020, her talent transcended borders, and she shared the stage with important personalities of art in Cuba, such as Benny Moré, Celeste Mendoza, and Rita Montaner.

The artist, loved and admired by her compariots, graced Havana's nights in several of the country's most prestigious nightclubs, including Tropicana, Sans-Souci, and El Parisián.

El nombre de Juana returns a figure who is a symbol of Cuban identity and whom many remember for her likeable personality and authentic projection on stage.



Cuban actress Monse Duany doubles herself to play the remembered Juana Bacallao (1925-2024). PHOTO: Tribuna d La Habana.



Voces del Sur Global
Voices of the Global South



Silvio Rodríguez: Art is Freedom

By AdisMORERA

HAVANA.—Art is freedom, affirmed renowned Cuban singer and songwriter Silvio Rodríguez (79), who announced the release of his latest version of *Sueño con serpientes* (I Dream with snakes), along with the great Brazilian musician Chico Buarque.

"I believe that art should be as each artist feels it; art is freedom, and if there is no freedom, it is not worth it," the legendary troubadour stated in an exclusive interview with The Havana Reporter.

At the Ojalá Studios in this capital, where time flows amidst chords and the yearnings of a tireless creator, the artist spoke with this reporter, eager to meet the author of songs that accompany the dreams of several generations of Cubans and Latin Americans.

-What remains unchanged in you as a creator?

"The desire, more than anything, the desire.

"In some ways, my abilities have diminished; I have respiratory problems, projection issues and a lack of strength," said one of the key voices of the Nueva Trova movement.

"It takes a lot of strength to sing; the whole body concentrates energy on projecting the voice and countless muscles contract, and that gets affected over the years."

Cuba and music live in this distinguished man who raises the banner of creativity and virtuosity, because he possesses the ability to captivate with every melody and the sincerity of a true artist.

"I am a grateful and very lucky person," emphasized the man whose humbleness seems to ignore the immensity of someone who, guitar and inspiration in hand, summons thought in an act of poetic sensitivity.

-Where do you find inspiration to compose, and what do you seek to evoke in the audience?



Silvio Rodríguez, a man who raises the banner of creativity and virtuosity. PHOTO: Panchito González.

"I do not seek to evoke anything in the audience at all. I do not compose for the public; I have always composed according to my thoughts, my concerns and the things I notice and find interesting.

"Many times, I start composing because I had an interesting melody in mind, even my most celebrated lyrics, and suddenly, I realize I have written something with a bit of coherence and I leave it like that," he explained.

"Don't think I am a planner; I believe strongly in inspiration and also in hard work, because I put a lot of effort into everything I do."

Listening to him singing is a privilege treasured by his many admirers, in Cuba and in other parts of the world. There where his lyrics captivate, poetry becomes an accomplice to sing to the homeland, to love and life.

-Your lyrics are often very poetic. What role does literature continue to play in your work?

"As a child and young man in particular, and even as an older person, I read a lot of literature; I have always loved it. "In my early teens, I worked in journalism. I worked for the weekly newspaper Mella and later, in the Army, I was involved with several military magazines," he recalled.

When Silvio began composing, he never thought he would dedicate himself to it, he confessed. In a way, circumstances played a role; someone heard him and put him in front of a television camera.

It was an interesting experience for a 20-year-old guy who had just left the Revolutionary Armed Forces. As a young man, he also dabbled in drawing and design, disciplines he later abandoned "for music, for the guitar, for songs and the influence of what I used to read."



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Vietnam's Gift on the Centenary of Fidel Castro

By Moisés **PÉREZ**

HANOI.- The publication of the Selected Works of Fidel Castro by the National Political Publishing House Su That (The Truth) is the best gift Vietnam could have given to the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution on the centennial of his birth.

This assessment was echoed by René González, director of the Fidel Castro Ruz Center, who in a meeting with members of the Cuban state mission here described the Vietnamese publishing house's willingness to release the 23 volumes of the collection as an extraordinary sign of solidarity.

The visit González and his delegation paid to this nation, comes at the invitation of Su That itself and takes place at a particularly significant moment for Cuba, which in a context marked by the intensified blockade, pressures, and military threats from the United States government, and when getting ready to commemorate the centennial anniversary of the Commander-in-Chief.

"You can't say no to Fidel," was the response González received from executives of La Verdad when he sought support for the publication of the Selected Works, a project cherished by the Fidel Castro Center since its founding in November 2021, he recounted.

As the renowned historian shared, the collection will be translated into English and Vietnamese, it will be available on the Center's website, and will be gifted in digital format

to participants at the First International Colloquium "Fidel: Legacy and Future," to be held from August 10 to 13 at the Havana's Convention Center.

González also noted that the last volume of the compendium, number 23, is entirely dedicated to the correspondence between the leader of the Cuban Revolution and Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez, making it "a true manual of revolutionary ethics."

At the gathering, Sissi Abay, deputy director of the Fidel Castro Ruz Center, explained that it is an annotated edition of 15,000 pages with 12,544 footnotes; an extraordinary piece prepared in record time: barely three years of work, she emphasized.

"We couldn't reach the centenary of the Commander-in-Chief without having his Selected Works," said the researcher, adding that the aim of this compilation is to draw people into a measured and enlightening reading."

The 690 documents collected in the 23 volumes of the collection contain what is essential for understanding the thought of the historical leader of the Cuban Revolution, Abay assessed.

Officials from the Cuban state mission here expressed underscored the enormous importance and significance of this publishing event, while Ambassador Rogelio Polanco remarked how fitting it is that Vietnam is the one publishing Selected Works of Fidel Castro.

"That is Fidel's sowing, and the harvest we are reaping today," he affirmed.



The Selected Works of Fidel Castro will be published in Vietnam on the Centenary of Cuban leader. PHOTO: Centro Fidel Castro.

Ramonet Launches Book on Cuban Leader in Valencia

By Michel **DALÍ**

MADRID.- Spanish-French writer, essayist, and political scientist Ignacio Ramonet recently launched his book *Voces con Fidel. Memoria y legado revolucionario* (Voices with Fidel: Memory and Revolutionary Legacy) in Valencia, Spain.

Sources involved in Ramonet's tour of eastern Spain highlighted the impact of the book, published by the José Martí Valencian Association of Friendship with Cuba and the publishing house L'Encobert to commemorate the centenary of Fidel Castro's birth.

The volume brings together 44 new texts by intellectuals, activists, and politicians from around the world on the figure and thought of the historical leader of the Cuban Revolution.

Ramonet presented the book on May 13 at the Rector Peset Higher College in Valencia, alongside with Pascual Serrano, journalist and writer, and Javier Parra, visual artist and general secretary of the Valencian Communist Party.

A day later, at the headquarters of the Workers' Commissions PV L'Alacantí-Les Marines, Ramonet showcased the work together with David Rodríguez, a public school teacher and solidarity activist with Cuba, who compiled the texts with Serrano. The book also received support from the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the

Peoples (ICAP) and the Fidel Castro Ruz Center in Havana.

The Spanish-French intellectual and former director of *Le Monde Diplomatique* was received at the l'Alfàs del Pi Town Hall by its mayor, Vicente Arques. During the meeting, copies of the book were presented, and solidarity initiatives such as the "Against the U.S. Blockade, Energy for Cuba" campaign were discussed.

On Saturday, May 16, Ramonet met with Mayor José Morell at the Cheste Town Hall, along with Cuban Ambassador to Spain Marcelino Medina.

The book features contributions from Cuban authors such as Silvio Rodríguez, Aleida Guevara, Tin Cremata, René González, Abel Prieto, Israel Rojas, Rosa Miriam Elizalde, Fernando González, and Victor Dreke, among others.

Also included are works by authors from outside Cuba like Evo Morales, Pascual Serrano, Ignacio Ramonet, Atilio Borón, José Manzaneda, Sacha Llorenti, Willy Toledo, David Rodríguez, and Aníbal Garzón.

Each text is accompanied by a photograph provided by the Fidel Castro Center or the authors themselves, and complemented by a selection of Fidel's portraits taken by photojournalist Álex Castro, son of the historic leader of the Revolution.



Living for Art and Childhood

By Marlén **RUÍZ**

HAVANA.- With a focus on the legitimate enjoyment of those who know how to love, the International Arts Festival for Children Corazón Feliz (Happy Heart) stands as a stage where a culture of peace and holistic development converge.

The main motivation of this event, which aims at managing and promoting access to high-quality artistic content, emerged from the project Todas Contracorriente (All Against the Current) focused on non-violence against women and girls.

"During our travels across Cuba, together with our advisor, Dr. Julio César González Pagés, we noticed with concern that children were consuming cultural products not designed for their ages," singer-songwriter and leader of Corazón Feliz, Rochy Ameneiro, told **The Havana Reporter** in an exclusive interview.

"Faced with this reality, we decided to create a space exclusively dedicated to them. The event's title is inspired by the song Feliz, feliz (Happy, Happy) by renowned Cuban composer Teresita Fernández, and serves as a tribute to her work, devoted to the enjoyment of the youngest ones.

"It was a proposal from our artistic director, renowned playwright and writer Rubén Darío Salazar, who also directs the Teatro de las Estaciones company.

"Although music is the heart of the project, the public is offered a comprehensive experience including visual and performing arts, dance, storytelling, literature, culinary arts and creative workshops. This diversity allows each child to find their own form of expression and connection with the arts," she explained.

Ameneiro emphasized that environmental protection and ecological awareness are a recurring themes.

"We understand that there can be no culture of peace without respect for nature; therefore, we promote sustainability and the connection with the natural environment as pillars of our activities."

Corazón Feliz includes a reflection space entitled Pensar con el corazón (Thinking with the Heart), featuring lectures, panels and workshops where artists, educators, psychologists and cultural managers exchange knowledge about the creation of works for children and share best practices.

The goal, she assured, is to discuss about the current challenges facing artistic production for children, share valuable experiences and work to ensure that children receive the best proposals and messages, appropriate to their ages.

Corazón Feliz returned to the stage from May 25 to 31, in an edition that involved "a display of creative alliances and premieres of high artistic value."

Tributes were paid to the 70th anniversary of Pelusín del Monte, the national puppet created by Dora Alonso, with a major premiere by Teatro de las Estaciones. The work of singer-songwriters Rita del Prado and Rosa Campos was also honored.

The program included premieres by Teatro Tuyo and the show La Comadrita, by Rita del Prado and Dila Martínez in collaboration with Teatro La Salamandra.

To overcome the challenges posed by the country's energy and fuel crisis, the Organizing Committee concentrated activities in the municipalities of Old Havana and Plaza de la Revolución.



The objective of the International Arts Festival for Children Happy Heart was to promote access to high-quality artistic content. PHOTO: Cubarte.

Cubadisco 2026 Grand Prize

By Verónica **NUÑEZ**

HAVANA.- Musician Isaac Delgado won the Cubadisco 2026 Grand Prize with his album Mira como vengo (Look how I come), at the gala held in the Covarrubias Hall of the National Theater of Cuba, which brought together various gems of Cuban art on May 17.

The ceremony was preceded by the opening of the photographic exhibition Mi foto con Fidel (My Photo with Fidel), courtesy of the National Museum of Music. Conceived by maestro Jesús Gómez Cairo and curated by designer Santos Toledo, the exhibition features 22 portraits of emblematic figures like Bola de Nieve, Omara Portuondo, and Compay Segundo.

Culture has always been the stronghold of the nation, recalled Sonia Pérez, director of the museum, highlighting the tribute paid to the centennial of Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro.

Regarding the Cubadisco Awards, its president, Cary Diez, emphasized that this edition brought together 220 works in 12

areas, with 124 nominees in 35 categories. She also added that the process included tributes to institutions and individuals.

In Diez's words, the organizers worked to create an event where music lovers and the public could enjoy an art form that honors art itself, artistic training, and the will to create — one that is irreconcilable with mediocrity.

Honorary Awards were granted to Mayito Rivera, Pedrito Calvo, Pedro Lugo "El Nene", the Revé Orchestra, the Septeto Santiaguero, Gilberto Santa Rosa, José Alberto "El Canario", José Luis Arango, María Elena Vinuesa, and Víctor Torres, along with the International Jazz Plaza Festival and the University of the Arts (ISA).

Special Awards were given to Pancho Amat, Frank Fernández, Pablo Menéndez, the Camerata Cortés, the educational material Solfeo y Armonía (Solfege and Harmony), the collection of productions on the work of Berta Armiñán and the Franco-Haitian culture, and teacher Daiana García, among others.

In the patrimonial categories, the gala also recognized the Failde Orchestra for

Caminando Piango Piango; Miriam Ramos for Transparencia, and Maikel Dinza for Destino.

In jazz, Mayquel González won the award for Cháchara, while in instrumental music, Orlando Maraca Valle and the Camerata Cortés were recognized for Nueva Era. In the academic field, Ariadna Cuéllar was recognized for Serenata Concertada; the Orquesta de Cámara de La Habana for De todos los colores y también sinfónico, and Ernesto Oliva with the Camerata Romeu for De regreso a la aldea.

In other categories, Rolando Luna, Annys Batista, Waldo Mendoza, Yamira Díaz, Ernesto Blanco, the band Cuerdas del Alma,

Yilian Cañizares, Elito Revé y su Charangón, Wampi and María Victoria Rodríguez also received awards. The new "Online" category recognized the series El Jazz. Podcast Música al día (Jazz. Podcast Music of the Day).

In international collaborations, VoCe, by Gino Sitson, Alejandro Rodríguez and Nancy Morejón; Pizzetti & Montemezzi, by Marcos Madrigal and Alessandro Stella, and Nuit Parisienne à La Havane, by Roberto Fonseca and Vicent Segal, were among the highlights.

"Each of these works is the best of the human spirit and a permanent aspiration to showcase the best of our own culture and that of the world at large", Cary Diez said.



Isaac Delgado received the Grand Prize at CubaDíscO 2026. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Cuba Denounces U.S. Claiming Universal Jurisdiction

By Melissa **KING**

HAVANA.-Cuba denounced that the United States government flagrantly violates the principle of sovereign equality by claiming universal jurisdiction to judge nationals of other states.

This was denounced here by the Director of International Law at the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Yusnier Romero, on the television program Mesa Redonda, where he described as "unjust, Washington's accusation against the leader of the Revolution, Raúl Castro."

The diplomat warned that "it has become a trend for the United States to claim the power to judge everything that happens in the world," a practice he described as a

"quasi-universal and quasi-irresponsible" extension of its jurisdiction.

The expert responded categorically when asked if there is any legitimate legal debate surrounding the case against the Cuban leader: "This is not a legal issue. If it were a legal issue, there is no doubt that we would not be here in this program discussing it."

"The Republic of Cuba and the Cuban government are entirely right in that, in fulfilling its duty, it has exercised a sovereign, exclusive and absolute right," the diplomat emphasized.

Meanwhile, president of the Prensa Latina news agency, Jorge Legañoa, provided documentary evidence that dismantles U.S.'s narrative.

He explained that Hermanos al Rescate (Brothers to the Rescue) operated as the

terrorist arm of the anti-Cuban mafia in Miami and carried out 25 incursions prior to February 24, 1996, including overflights of areas of the capital to drop counterrevolutionary propaganda.

Legañoa posed a crucial question: What would the U.S. government do if a foreign aircraft flew over New York or Washington? "It would shoot it down," he answered, thus highlighting the double standards of those who now judge Cuba for exercising its legitimate self-defense.

Regarding the current legal proceedings, he warned that they lack legitimacy and are part of a psychological warfare strategy targeting audiences who did not experience the events of 1996.

Finally, he placed the offensive within the historical context: May 20 marks the

beginning of the neocolonial era in Cuba, a date the anti-Cuban right wing uses to trigger escalating agendas.

Deputy Foreign Minister Carlos Fernández de Cossío also described these acts as "provocations" to "create pretexts and move closer to the threat of military aggression." He warned that, in parallel, there is "a concrete, widespread and overwhelming war being waged against the Cuban people;" a war that for decades has imposed immense limitations on the national economy.

He added that the United States government is using the Cuban people as hostages, "in a cold and calculated manner, eager to gain political advantages and subdue a country that has fought very hard defending its sovereignty."



The current legal proceedings against Cuban leader Raúl Castro lack legitimacy and are part of a psychological warfare strategy. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Cuban Daniel Martín Subiaut Receives Honoris Causa in Mexico

By Liana **SANJOSÉ**

MEXICO CITY- The International Conference of the University Community granted in Mexico the Honoris Causa award to Cuban singer and composer Daniel Martín Subiaut, president of the Latin Institute of Music (ILM).

According to a press release, the creator, co-writer and director of the animated series Titoverse, likewise, for his contributions to culture while leading the ILM, he received the Defender of National Sovereignty Patriotic Award, and also Fathers of the Nation Medal.

The Conference-member institutions praised "his solidarity spirit; his dedication to achieving a better nation," since "his work has exalted" Mexico. They also commended his "commitment and dedication so that all citizens can be happy and preserve their history and values."

"On May 8, I completed 33 years of uninterrupted artistic life. Three-quarters of my 44 years of life in culture have created in me the commitment to be useful, to build paths for the benefit of childhood in Cuba and Ibero-America," Subiaut told The Havana Reporter.

He added that the aforementioned recognitions are "a

positive encouragement in the face of several binational (Cuba-Mexico) and multinational actions that are on the way, especially for childhood."

"I dedicate this award to the sovereignty and gallantry of Cuba in its most complex moment; a large part of what I am I owe it to what I learned there," he affirmed.

For more than six decades, the United States has imposed an economic, commercial and financial blockade on Cuba, which has gotten stronger since last January through an executive order signed by U.S. president Donald Trump, which has resulted in an energy blockade.

On May 1, the Republican president announced additional coercive measures against the island, declared his intention to take control of the Caribbean nation "almost immediately," and said that after the war in Iran, he might send the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln to about 100 yards (91.44 meters) from the Cuban coast.

Trump's threats triggered worldwide rejection and denunciation from civil society, governments, and politicians.



Cuban singer and composer received Honoris Causa from the International Conference of the University Community. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Guanahacabibes, a Natural Treasure for Ecotourism

By TeyunéDÍAZ

PINAR DEL RÍO.- The Guanahacabibes Peninsula stands out in Cuba as one of the regions with the greatest biodiversity in its terrestrial and marine areas.

Because of its features, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) designated it a Biosphere Reserve in 1987, one of six in the country.

Guanahacabibes is also one of Cuba's 14 National Parks, and covers an area of approximately 39,900 hectares.

Specialists consulted by **The Havana Reporter** consider this region a true natural treasure, ideal for ecotourism. They also highlight the peninsula's excellent state of conservation as a result of its isolation from human communities.

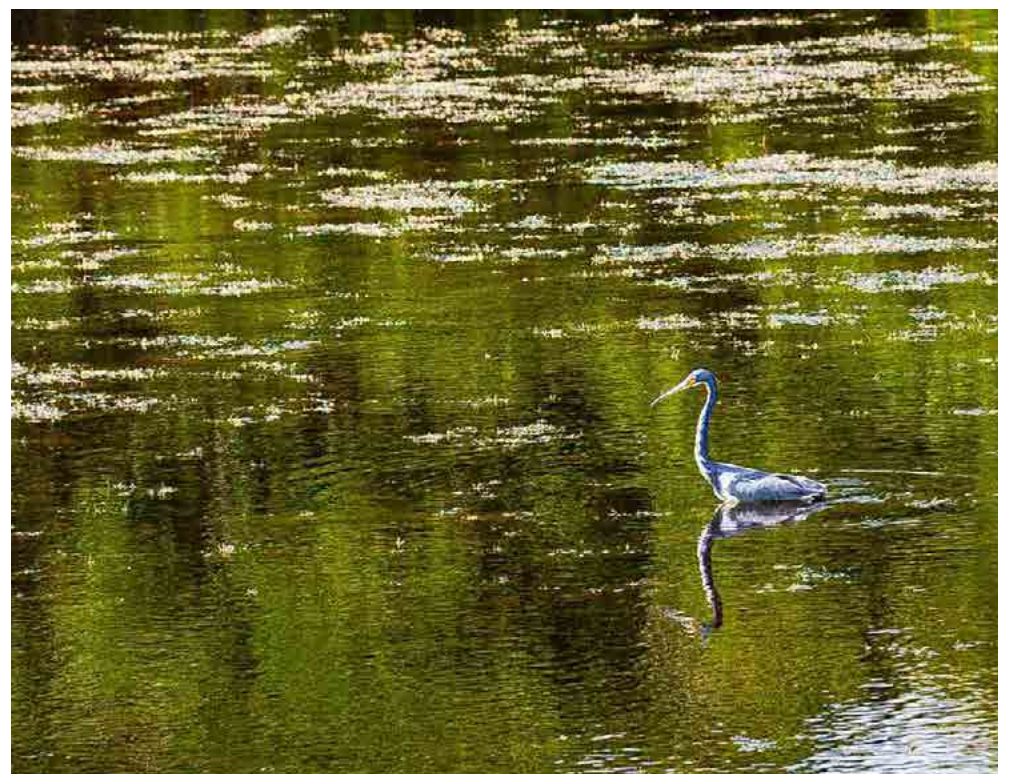
This region, located more than 130 kilometers from Pinar del Río city, has a

population of just 1,300 inhabitants in four communities, in addition to a team of researchers and specialists.

Experts in charge of the Management Plan conduct research on the monitoring and protection of natural resources; carry out sustainable ecotourism activities, and promote an Environmental Education program with local communities and visitors.

The ecotourism proposals the area promotes include trails such as Cueva Las Perlas (Pearl Cave), considered the largest of the more than 150 caves studied on the peninsula. The tour begins at the Visitor Center in La Bajada and leads to the cave, at a distance of 1,500 meters.

Other options include an excursion from La Bajada to Cape San Antonio, which lasts about five hours. This tour allows visitors to stop at sites with beautiful landscapes and appreciate specific elements of the environment, including birdwatching.



Sovereignty vs Interference

By Lianet **ARIAS**

MEXICO CITY.- The defense of sovereignty is emerging with greater force today from sectors of Mexican society and government, following controversial incidents involving U.S. agents and requests issued by that nation.

A few weeks ago, a car accident in the northern state of Chihuahua raised concerns: two of the four people killed in the crash were U.S. agents involved in dismantling a drug lab in the state.

The Security Cabinet later clarified that none of the individuals (reportedly from the Central Intelligence Agency) had formal accreditation to participate in operational activities in this Latin American territory.

Neither the institutions comprising the Security Cabinet nor the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were aware that foreign agents were operating, or were going to physically participate, in any such operation.

"This is something that should not be taken lightly by the Mexicans.

Any relationship with the United States government on any matter, and particularly on security, must necessarily go through

the federal government," stated president Claudia Sheinbaum.

In response, thousands of people marched in Chihuahua and supported the impeachment request that the official party, National Regeneration Movement (MORENA), plans to file against Governor María Eugenia Campos, from the opposition National Action Party.

MORENA leader, Ariadna Montiel, labeled Campos a traitor to the nation and argued that the offense committed by her administration in calling foreign agents

"outside the law" to intervene in the country is not only against Chihuahua, but against Mexico as a whole.

While Mexican law is clear and does not allow the participation of foreign agents in operations, the existing security agreement between the two countries also draws that same red line.

Sheinbaum has been emphatic in rejecting the repeated proposals from her U.S. counterpart, Donald Trump, to "support" the fight against organized crime in Mexico with U.S. military forces, and has stressed

that only Mexican troops will operate in the country.

Furthermore, despite the Republican's aggressive rhetoric, which has included claims that Mexico is not doing enough on security or that it is "governed" by the cartels, this Latin American nation is implementing a strategy with results that contradict the magnate's words.

During Sheinbaum's 19 months in office, law enforcement officers arrested 52,628 people for serious crimes and seized 28,000 weapons and nearly 400 tons of drugs, while U.S. authorities themselves acknowledge a decrease in the flow of fentanyl into the United States.

The Attorney General's Office (FGR) announced that it will thoroughly investigate the events in Chihuahua and apply the full force of the law against those responsible, given the presence of foreigners and the potential commission of crimes against national security.

Analysts, intellectuals and the media consider that what happened shortly after the controversy in Chihuahua is, to say the least, striking: United States requested the provisional arrest for extradition purposes of 10 current and former Mexican officials.



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Promote and Implement better programs for agriculture

By **The Havana Reporter Staff**

HAVANA.- President Miguel Díaz-Canel emphasized the importance of interconnectivity between the knowledge sector, the goods and services production segment, and public administration.

These criteria were shared during a recent meeting of the Technical Advisory Council of the Ministry of Agriculture held at the Havana headquarters of the Ministry's Logistics Business Group (GELMA), with the participation of entities involved in the development of the agricultural area in the country.

This link, he specified, must be brought to the territorial level, along with "all the included institutional framework with the necessary governance, and by implementing the digital

transformation process in a cross-cutting manner with Artificial Intelligence, in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals."

He also highlighted the importance of making a good use of the outcomes of each Technical Council meeting and referred specifically to experts' suggestions on how to do things better.

According to official reports, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba also said that "few things are as detrimental as failing to quickly connect the accumulated knowledge, which is one of Cuba's greatest strengths, with most pressing needs of life."

During the debates, the production of grains for animal feed was addressed, as well as the importance of the food industry and protecting national seed stock.

On this topic, Díaz-Canel referred to Cuba's

positive experience with potatoes, after breaking the myth that high yields are only achieved with chemical fertilizers.

"According to sources, in recent national meetings, the president also addressed agroecology issues and acknowledged farmers' advocacy for this method, particularly regarding grain programs for human consumption and animal feed

According to sources, in recent national meetings, the president also addressed agroecology issues and acknowledging farmers' advocacy for this method, particularly regarding grain programs for human consumption and animal feed.

He considered that "the best innovation we can achieve with all these programs is to have food," and emphasized that the best indicator of progress toward this goal will be the reduction of prices.

He pointed out the current complexity the country is experiencing regarding food and called for short-term solutions. "There are things that need to be more operational based on what we already have, extending good experiences we already have," he said. Díaz-Canel warned that if business plans are not applied to these programs, addressing on how to seek financing, how to achieve profits and efficiency, then everything will remain a wish list, not living up to what a program truly means.

He stated that there is a crucial idea regarding the entire country's economy: "a knowledge-based approach to production." In this regard, he affirmed that it is time to clarify how much could have been invested in science to achieve production levels, "because we also need to learn to measure our economy as a result of knowledge."



The Technical Advisory Council of the Ministry of Agriculture debated the impulse of development of that sector in Cuba. PHOTO: Estudios Revolución.

Iberostar in Cuba adapts to the tourism Situation

By **Benjamín MICERINOS**

HAVANA.- The Cuban branch of the Spanish hotel chain Iberostar is adapting to the nation's economic situation and challenges with a series of actions announced in this capital. In a statement, Iberostar Cuba indicates that this summer is all about reservations, as they will be offering online bookings and cash payment at the hotels, a new feature that will define the summer season.

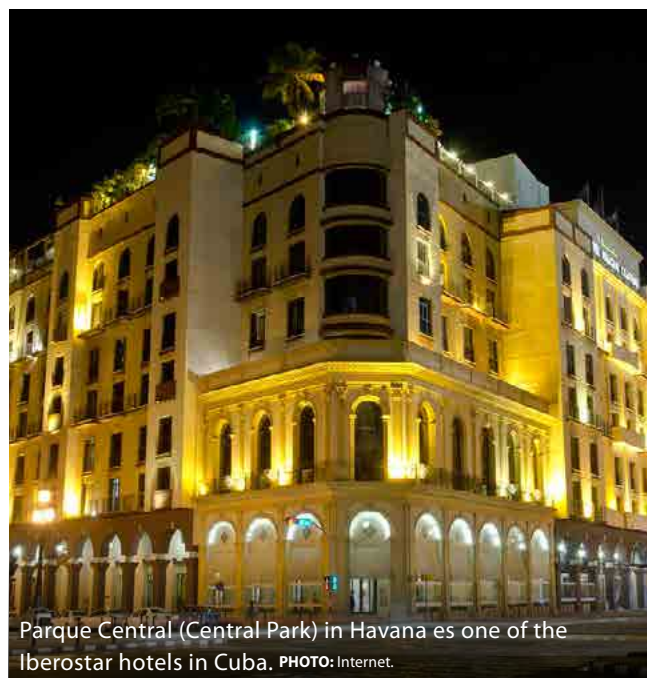
As a result, the Iberostar Cuba Hotels & Resorts chain will be available to national customers, who can access the offer through the company's website or pay directly at their preferred property.

The information adds that this convenience will allow access to numerous offers, with payments in cash, by Classic Card, or by international cards that do not have funds in U.S. banks.

With these new options, the hotel chain reaffirms its commitment to providing unique experiences for local clients, adding payment options and special offers to make every stay unforgettable.

The company, two-time award winner at Cuba's International Tourism Fair (FITCuba 2026) in early May, presented an impressive portfolio.

During this tourism exhibition, considered the most important in the Caribbean, Iberostar received the Grand Prize for Social Communication for the comprehensive



Parque Central (Central Park) in Havana es one of the Iberostar hotels in Cuba. PHOTO: Internet.

nature of its digital booth and the synergies generated between this space, the official presentation podcast, and the bilingual press release distributed across multiple platforms and channels.

The Cuban Ministry of Tourism (MINTUR) and the Cuban Association of Social Communicators (ACCS) also recognized the launch of the exclusive Star Prestige area at the Iberostar Selection Varadero.

Experts consider that all these resources organically communicated the novelties and milestones of the hotel chain and its work in the management of the Iberostar Origin Laguna Azul, the first hotel in the country under a lease contract since January 2026."

During the gathering, the capital hosted the first anniversary celebrations of the Iberostar Selection La Habana and the Capitol Level, the executive floor at the Iberostar Selection Parque Central."

This hotel chain promotes a responsible tourism model focused on caring for people and the environment, and has 20 hotels --- four and five-stars-- located in Cuba's main tourist destinations.

The company offers its guests five hotels in the heart of Havana and 14 on the shores of idyllic beaches in places like Varadero, Cayo Cruz, Cayo Ensenachos, Cayo Guillermo, and Holguín.

Economic Problems Impact Education

By Jorge **QUEVEDO**

HAVANA.- Cuba is adjusting the end of the school year across all levels of education in the face of a complex situation marked by a total lack of fuel, logistics limitations, and the tightening of the United States blockade.

Among the most impactful decisions for General Education is the gradual end of the school year from June 15 to 30

—a month earlier than initially planned— while Higher Education, exceptionally and temporarily, will not hold university entrance exams.

Education and Higher Education ministers, Naima Trujillo and Walter Baluja, respectively, talked about these and other aspects of Cuban education, explaining that evaluations have been made more flexible without compromising rigor.

Special education, which has been given priority protection, ended its school year in May, slightly

earlier than the rest of the system, while the operation of childcare centers will depend on the policies the country approves for workers.

The ministers noted that in some cases, these institutions have not been able to open for a full day due to limitations with cooking, food or transportation, but they will remain open and will be adjusted as decisions are made.

They added that training schools linked to sports, and the Ministry of Culture will also be closing earlier.

Furthermore, they announced that access to university and advanced technical programs will be based on students' high school academic performance, and that acceptance confirmations will take place in three stages this month."

According to reports, Cuba guarantees a place for all applicants wishing to enter higher education, with a plan of more than 45,900 enrollments for full-time programs, and of which more than 4,000 have already been granted through direct ways, such as contests and university colleges.

More than 47,500 places are offered for blended and distance learning programs.

After the academic year concludes, educational institutions will remain open as learning spaces, connected to the community youth network to serve the most vulnerable children and ensure they maintain their skills. Training programs related to social issues in the communities will also be held there.

The Caribbean nation has had a very difficult academic year, especially the second semester, hampered by U.S. executive orders, the energy blockade, and the entire network of measures aimed at stifling the Cuban people.



Due to the complex economic situation, the General Education finishes school year from June 15 to 30. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

University Promotes Strategic Projects

By Daimy **PEÑA**

HOLGUÍN.- The University of Holguín (UHo) is currently promoting 58 science, technology, and innovation projects focused on strategic sectors like sugarcane production, tourism, public administration, and territorial energy transformation.

The university's rector, Aniuska Ortiz, presented the scientific results and teaching adjustments that guarantee educational quality in the blended learning modality to authorities from the National Assembly of People's Power and the Federation of Cuban Women.

During this regular evaluation, it was highlighted that 40 of the research projects directly address real needs in this eastern province, while four territorial programs emphasize the development of public administration and efficiency in the tourism sector.

The Academic Vice-Rector, Roberto Pérez Almaguer, announced the opening of a Bachelor's Degree program in Tourism in the municipality of Antilla, an initiative that seeks to train professionals for this segment, the driving force of the economy even in the current complex context.

The academic strategy fosters independent learning and the integration of students into related institutions.

At present, the university also receives students from the provinces of Granma, Guantánamo and Santiago de Cuba, and also from the University of Computer Sciences (UCI).

At the meeting, UHo's social impact on food production and its collaboration with hospitals was also recognized.

Programs such as the Youth Network for Life and the Senior Citizens' Chair strengthen the institution's community ties.



The University of Holguín has 40 research projects directly address real needs in this eastern province. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Elite League: Between Resilience and Competitiveness

By Boris Luis **CABRERA**

HAVANA.- The fourth Cuban Elite Baseball League has completed its first 12 games per team with remarkable organizational stability, finding its rhythm despite a demanding schedule and an adverse context caused by the tightening U.S. blockade and energy siege.

Far from being hindered by the limitations, the tournament has maintained its course smoothly and has enjoyed acceptable support in the stands, where noisy fans continue to place their hopes on the show even when circumstances are far from ideal. The schedule, conceived as a tapestry of 40 games per team before the semifinals, is just beginning to show its seams. However, a common thread is already emerging: parity. A league diminished in star power, with several players enrolled in foreign circuits, has paradoxically found greater competitive balance.

In this scenario, the Industriales team sets the pace. Leader of the tournament despite numerous absences, especially of players enrolled in Italy's Series A, the team managed by Guillermo Carmona has built its case from the mound.

Their pitching, the strongest in the championship, imposes order where others falter, while the reinforcements have responded with the punctuality of those who understand the urgency.

Behind them, Cazadores de Artemisa is advancing steadily. Second in the

standings, they are validating the expectations of those who nailed them as the best-reinforced team. Under the guidance of Yulieski González, they display a rare balance between timely hitting and stable pitching.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, the Huracanes de Mayabeque has yet to find their footing. The presence of a star trio – Frederick Cepeda, Yordanis Samón and Denis Laza, heirs to the championship with Ciego de Ávila – has not been enough to stem a turbulent start. The problem originates and grows in the pitching, unable to hold leads or stop the opposing

team's momentum. The talent is there, but the equation doesn't add up.

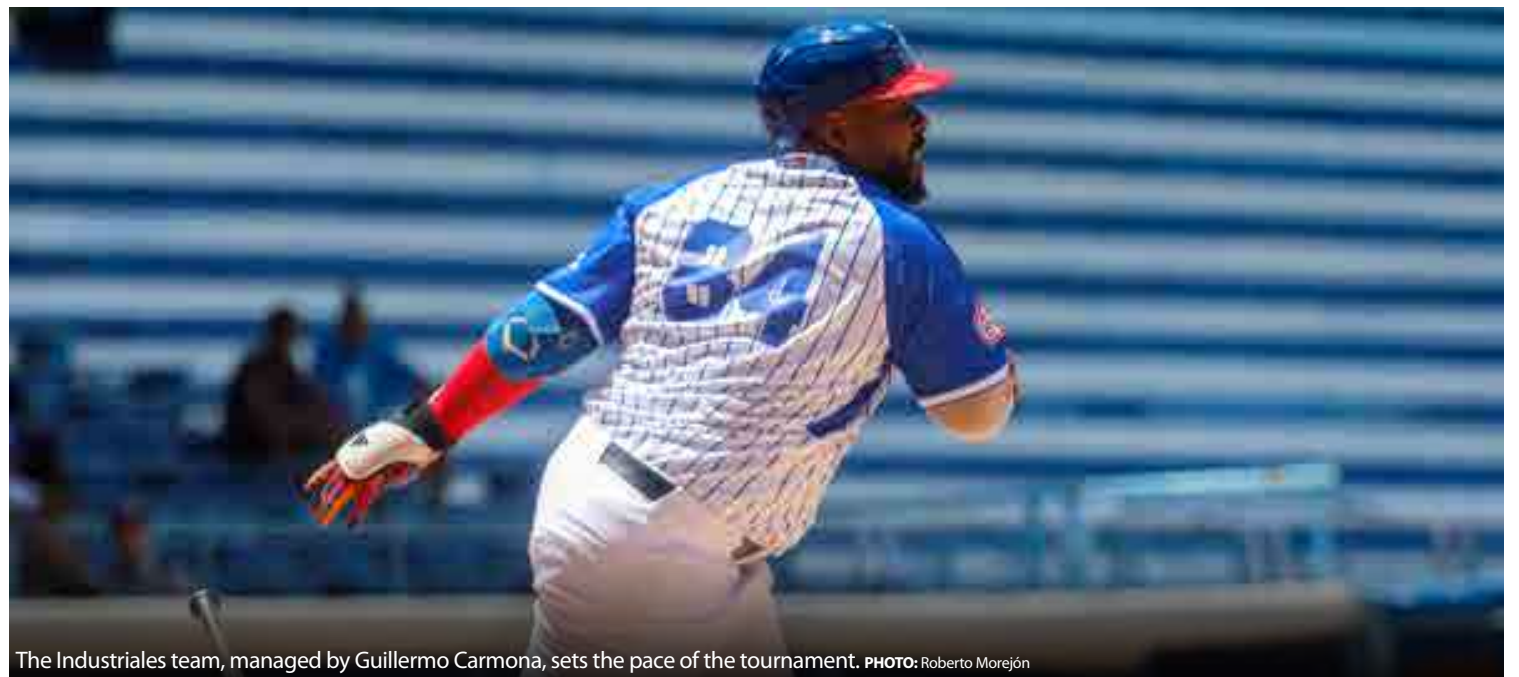
Matanzas has not quite found its stride either. Champions of the 64th National Series, the Cocodrilos are experiencing an uncertain start because of absences and the loss of their manager, Armando Ferrer, sidelined due to health issues. The team seems to be playing unenthusiastically.

Meanwhile, the numbers tell their own story. The league's batting suggests a fire is burning bright against a struggling pitching staff, averaging around 82 miles per hour, and a defense that falls below international standard.

Individually, the league boasts some high-caliber storytellers. Anyelo Videt defies logic at the plate with his high batting average; Yaser Julio González turns every at-bat into a threat with his power; and Cepeda, master of timing, continues to expand his legend, surpassing 2,600 hits in his career.

Yasiel González confirms his status as a natural RBI machine, while on the mound, names like Yosmel Garcés, Yunier Batista and Andier Reyes write chapters of dominance and control.

Thus, amidst difficulties and adjustments, the Elite League not only endures; it gains meaning.



The Industriales team, managed by Guillermo Carmona, sets the pace of the tournament. PHOTO: Roberto Morejón

Good News at the Pan American Wrestling Championships

By Lemay **PADRÓN**

HAVANA.- Despite not fielding full teams, Cuba finished second in the overall medal count at the Pan American Wrestling Championships held in the U.S. city of Coralville, Iowa.



Cuban freestyle wrestler Arturo Silot (97 kg) shined at the Xtream Arena, defeating all his opponents by technical superiority. PHOTOS: Internet.

A total of nine medals were won (five gold, two silver and two bronze), finishing second behind the host nation (23-4-2).

The same thing happened in each style, except in the women's competition, as in freestyle the island scored 2-0-0 vs 8-2-0 by the host team. In Greco-Roman, the result was 3-2-0 for Cuba and 7-1-1 for the U.S. team.

Under these circumstances, it was impossible to compete for a team ranking based on points, especially since there were also competitions in non-Olympic weight divisions.

A special mention deserves Cuban freestyle wrestler Arturo Silot (97 kg), who shined at the Xtream Arena, defeating all his opponents by technical superiority. The champion of the San Salvador 2023 Central American and Caribbean Games defeated Puerto Rican Edwin Morales by 11-0; Dominican Luis Pérez, 10-0 and local Stephen Buchanan, 15-4 in the final.

The rest of the Cuban champions also had a good performance, especially Greco-Roman wrestler Gabriel Rosillo (97 kg), who defeated Colombian Jhony Arias

by 8-0; U.S. Timothy Samuel Young, 9-1 and Honduran Kevin Mejía in the final, by knockout.

Kevin de Armas (60 kg) also excelled, with victories against Peruvian Abel Gustavo Sánchez (8-0), Dominican Yerony Arturo Liria (6-1), and Ecuadorian Clisman Adrián Carracedo (11-0) in the match for the gold medal. Tokyo 2020 Olympic champion Luis Orta also had a strong showing (9-0 against Colombian Julián Stiven Horta, 8-0 against Guatemalan José Alejandro Varela, and 5-3 in the final against host Otto Elliot Black).

In regards to the freestyle category, Geannis Garzón (74 kg) seems to be on track for glory after winning the gold medal with a 10-0 victory over Mexican Raúl Israel Jehu Palacios, 6-5 against Canadian Adam Skene Thompson, and 12-6 against U.S. Phillip Kannon Webster.

The silver medals won by Oscar Pino (130 kg) and Daniel Gregorich (87 kg) were within the realm of possibility, although it is noteworthy that the latter was defeated twice by the same opponent.

Pino beat Dominican José Antonio Núñez 9-0 and Puerto Rican James Owens Ford 8-0, but in the final, he drew 1-1 with U.S. Cohlton Michael Schultz due to scoring first. Gregorich defeated Mexican José Andrés Vargas 8-0, but lost 1-3 to U.S. Beka Melelashvili in the preliminaries, and then 6-8 to the same opponent in the final.

In the case of women, both Yaynelis Sanz (57 kg) and Milaimy Marín (76 kg) lost to the best in their respective categories.

Marín started strong, defeating Brazilian Meiriele Charamba 12-0, but succumbed 0-11 to the host champion, Kylie Renee Welker. She then went on to defeat Colombian Tatiana Rentería 7-0 for the bronze medal.

Sanz lost by knockdown to strong Ecuadorian Luisa Valverde in her first match and then secured the bronze medal with a 4-0 victory over Brazilian Giullia Peñalber.

These will be the Cuban wrestlers to compete in the World Championships to be held in Bratislava, Slovakia, from September 5-13.

A Baptism of Fire for the Global South

By Livia **RODRÍGUEZ**

NEW DELHI.- India hosted the BRICS foreign ministers' meeting, a crucial test in turbulent times, to bolster the bloc's ability to project political consensus into concrete roadmaps.

The meeting was particularly significant as it took place in a year in which the group celebrates two decades of existence and seeks to consolidate its position as an essential actor on the international stage.

During the two-day meeting, participants analyzed global and regional issues of common interest related to resilience, innovation, cooperation and sustainability, as well as the reform of global governance and the multilateral system, among other topics.

India officially assumed the BRICS rotating presidency in January 2026. The bloc currently comprises 11 emerging economies from four continents: Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates.

Belarus, Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda, Uzbekistan and



The BRICS meeting in India took place in a year in which the group celebrates 20 years and seeks to consolidate its position on the international stage. PHOTO: Internet...

Vietnam joined BRICS as partner countries in 2025.

The organization represents more than 46 percent of the world's population and nearly 36 percent of global GDP measured by purchasing power parity.

Its economic weight and growing influence on the international arena, stemming from the broad agenda of issues it addresses, make the intergovernmental group a key organization for the future.

The New Delhi meeting gained significance

because the Indian presidency aims to move from shared diagnosis to concrete implementation and foster exchange on important global issues of priority interest to the Global South, among other objectives.

Under the motto "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation, and Sustainability," New Delhi seeks to demonstrate that the bloc can be more than just a high-level forum; it can be an effective platform for development interests.

MAJOR CHALLENGES

The evolution of the BRICS over the past 20 years is not only reflected in the expansion of its membership and partners, but also in significant economic activity.

The bloc's New Development Bank has approved infrastructure projects valued at approximately one billion dollars, an alternative to the onerous and stringent conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund.

One of the cornerstones of the Indian presidency is facilitating intra-BRICS trade, which even before the expansion already exceeded 600 billion dollars annually.

To achieve the above objective, practical measures are being promoted, like the harmonization of customs procedures; mutual recognition of standards in selected sectors; the expansion of paperless trade, and cooperation among port authorities to reduce waiting times.

On the financial front, alternatives to the dollar are being discussed pragmatically, as this is not about confronting the current system, but rather about diversifying options to protect emerging economies from external volatility.



FOREIGN INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR THE CUBAN HEALTH SECTOR