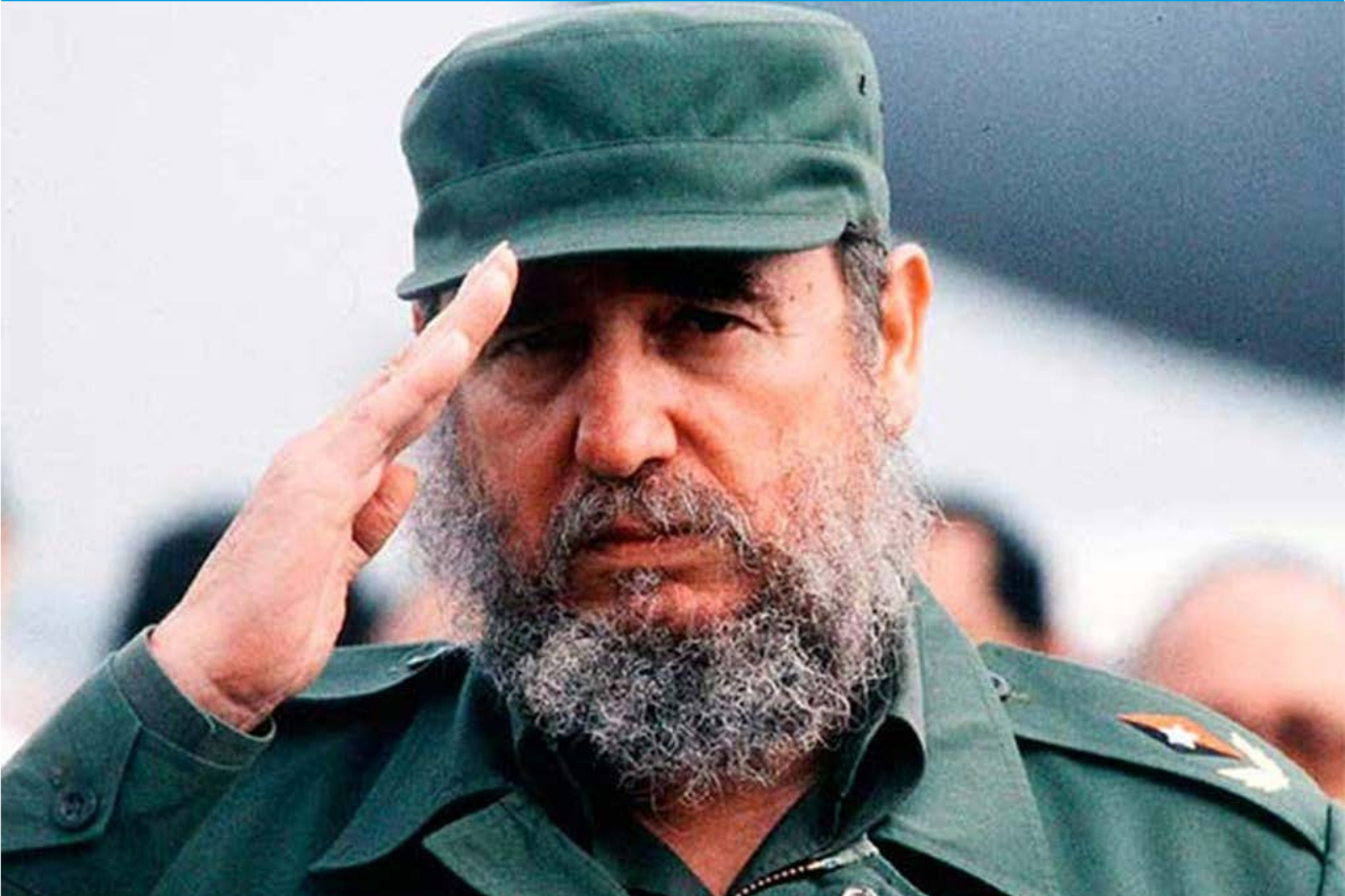




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Cuba Creates First Agritourism Network

By Alfredo **BOADA**

HAVANA.- Cuba has created its first agritourism network, which in its initial phase, comprises 18 farms in the western province of Pinar del Río, primarily dedicated to tobacco, livestock farming and diversified crops.

Jorge Freddy Ramírez, senior specialist at the provincial government's Territorial Development Department, told The Havana Reporter that the Vueltaabajo region treasures important traditional values that have endured for centuries.

He mentioned various features that attract visitors, including local lifestyles, production techniques, animal-raising

practices, and a culinary tradition featuring food that goes straight from the plantation to the table.

The official noted that the production units involved in this initiative have received training support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and that the network remains open to other initiatives intending to join.

Regarding the requirements to do so, he highlighted the need for farms to uphold the region's agricultural and livestock traditions.

According to the specialist, agritourism is a form of rural tourism that has been gaining ground globally over the past few decades.



The Vueltaabajo región, in Pinar del Río province, treasures important traditional values.

PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Agreement Boosts Multi-Destination Tourism with Mexico

By Lianet **ARIAS**

MEXICO CITY.- The Turismo Popular, Taíno Tours and Prelasa Tours agencies signed a collaboration agreement in this capital to boost multi-destination tourism between Cuba and Mexico.

During the ceremony, held at the Benny Moré Cultural Center, Tourism Counselor at the Cuban Embassy in Mexico, Aleinor Zerquera, told The Havana Reporter that the proposals include extending Turismo Popular's "Mundo Maya" (Mayan World) package to the Caribbean nation.

"The partnership between these three agencies has resulted in this initial product, which we will launch in August during the Josone Festival in Cuba —an event that closes the summer season in Varadero."

The official noted that this resort is the island's premier sun-and-beach destination. She added that there are many plans for future development.

"We are going to link the Mayan World with Varadero Beach," she explained, "but we will also connect it to the capital, Havana, and will incorporate nature-based products. In other words, we intend to expand this experience to showcase the

full range of attractions Cuba offers as a tourist destination."

Zerquera emphasized the significance of this type of arrangement, particularly at a time marked by the intensification of the economic, commercial, financial and energy blockade imposed on the island by the United States.

"Tourism is a vital source of revenue for Cuba; therefore, any increase in tourism operations —and every person who visits the island— helps to break the blockade," she affirmed, while also highlighting the solidarity of the Mexican people.

According to Erick Gómez, CEO of Taíno Tours, alliances like this "create great opportunities for all three companies" and allow them to offer "customers authentic and truly exclusive experiences in both countries."

Mario Escalona, director of Presencia Latinoamericana (Prelasa), considered this act a symbol of mutual trust, of the willingness to work together, and a commitment to continue strengthening the historical ties between both nations through tourism and culture.



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The World Needs Men Like Fidel Castro



The Cuban leader was born on August 13, 1926, in Birán, (today, the Holguín province) and passed away in Havana on November 25, 2016. PHOTO: Estudios Revolución.



The Caravan of Liberty arrived in Havana on January 8, 1959. PHOTO: Archives.

By Jorge **QUEVEDO**

HAVANA.- On the centenary of Fidel Castro's birth, Cubans today turn to his thinking to reverse the adverse conditions and attacks against the country, as the historic leader of the Revolution did so many times.

Fidel Castro led a victorious revolution along a socialist path despite the United States government's blockade and hostile policies. That situation of constant siege, far from diminishing, has now escalated to unprecedented levels.

It is in this context that Cuba celebrates the 100th anniversary of its leader's birth, on August 13, 2026.

When making the proposal to the Cuban Parliament, in December 2025, President Miguel Díaz-Canel affirmed: "This is Fidel's and Raúl's people: conquerors of the impossible! May 2026, the Year of the Centenary of Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, find us fighting and more united than ever!"

"Knowing the thought, life and work of Fidel is among the supreme objectives, in addition to striving to resemble him, day by day," stated Roberto Morales, the Party's organization secretary.

Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz —better known as Fidel Castro— was born on August 13, 1926, in Birán, Oriente (today, the Holguín province) and passed away in Havana on November 25, 2016.

He graduated as a lawyer from the University of Havana during a turbulent period in the country's history and, from that time on, fought for a better Cuba.

On July 26, 1953, he led a group of young people in the attacks on the Moncada and Carlos Manuel de Céspedes

barracks, in Santiago de Cuba and Bayamo, respectively. He was imprisoned and upon his release, he went into exile in Mexico, where he organized a return to Cuba to wage the armed struggle for definitive liberation.

Under the slogan "In 1956, we will be free or we will be martyrs," he landed on December 2 at Las Coloradas beach, on the southern coast of the former Oriente province. After an initial setback, he reorganized his forces, and as Commander-in-Chief of the Rebel Army, at the dawn of January 1, 1959, Fidel enters victorious into Santiago de Cuba.

He continued on a triumphant journey throughout the country until arriving in Havana on January 8 alongside the Caravan of Liberty.

It marked the beginning of the first socialist revolution in the Western Hemisphere, and from it, he designed, directed, and executed a foreign policy of clear independence and global reach.

Cuba gradually positioned itself on the international forefront, becoming an active and prominent component in the fundamental political processes.

There is hardly a past or present event about which he did not raise the alarm. Fidel was tireless in the pursuit of independence, equity, and social justice, and he also exercised an exceptional sense of solidarity.

Hundreds of thousands of Cuban combatants participated in internationalist missions in Algeria, Syria, Angola, Ethiopia, and other countries. Tens of thousands of Cuban doctors, teachers, and technicians have served in more than 40 Third World countries, while tens of thousands of young people from those nations have studied and graduated in Cuba.

Furthermore, the Cuban leader promoted comprehensive programs of assistance and collaboration in the field of health, as well as the creation of international schools of Medical Sciences, Sports, and Physical Education, among others.

He championed the Third World's global struggle against foreign debt, the squandering of resources on military spending, and neoliberal globalization, while also promoting efforts toward the unity and integration of Latin America and the Caribbean.

By 2007, Cuban State Security services had recorded 638 assassination attempts against Fidel at various stages of planning, of which over a hundred were actually set in motion but thwarted.

Upon his death in November 2016, his remains were transferred to Santiago de Cuba, retracing the route of the 1959 "Caravan of Liberty" in the opposite direction.

His ashes were laid to rest in the Santa Ifigenia Cemetery, near the mausoleum of the National Hero José Martí; near his comrades-in-arms from the Moncada Barracks, the Granma expedition, the Rebel Army, and near those from the underground resistance, and internationalist missions.

Also just a few steps from the tombs of Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, the "Father of the Homeland," and legendary Mariana Grajales, mother of the Maceo brothers, and close to the pantheon holding the remains of young revolutionary Frank País.

The mausoleum housing his ashes consists of a polished granite stone. In the heart of the rock, there is a square recess containing the urn, protected by a green marble slab that seals the niche and bears only the name engraved in bronze letters: Fidel.



Cuban President denounced that Washington has intensified its blockade policy by imposing an energy and financial siege. PHOTO: Estudios Revolución.

Cuban President Denounces Coldly Calculated Genocide by the U.S.

By CaridadSMITH

PINAR DEL RÍO.- Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel emphasized that the island is the "victim of a coldly calculated genocide" by the United States government, who has designed and implemented a policy of maximum economic strangulation.

At the event for National Rebellion Day (July 26), the president also denounced that Washington has intensified its six-decade blockade policy by imposing an energy and financial siege that is causing 'a deep crisis in the electro-energy system, blackouts lasting more than a day, the paralysis of industries, and hardship for tens of thousands of workers.

Díaz-Canel questioned the actions of State Department officials, whom he described as "experts at drafting sanctions, compiling lists and fabricating pretexts," comparing them to "the authors of edicts and military bands that inspired such fear and hatred during the dark ages of the medieval period or the Nazi occupations in World War II."

The head of state denounced Washington for declaring "a global war against leftist movements and designating Cuba as the capital of communism in the 21st century."

"By accusing Cuba, they are not merely seeking a scapegoat or an external agent; they are looking for someone to blame for the protests arising from sectors hardest hit by an economy that makes the rich richer and the poor poorer," he stated.

Díaz-Canel emphasized that "the immense suffering of Cuban families is supported by statistics," citing deaths caused by a lack of medicines and over 100,000 surgeries that cannot be performed due to blackouts and a lack of fuel for backup power plants.

"The only threat to security in the region, the true and real threat to world peace and human life, is the policy of aggression that causes famine, impoverishment, disordered migration, chaos, instability and tens of thousands of deaths worldwide," the president affirmed.

Foreign Minister Exposed U.S. Representative's Hypocrisy at the UN

By IbisFRADE

HAVANA.- Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla exposed the hypocrisy of the United States Permanent Representative, Mike Waltz, who had earlier commented on the situation in Cuba before the United Nations General Assembly.

At the hall of the the international body, the minister showed photos illustrating the harm Washington' blockade has caused on his country, particularly the energy siege. One of the images show surgeons operating in a room where the only light came from a mobile phone.

He also recalled the abuses committed by U.S. immigration authorities, citing the detention of a five-year-old boy and the image of a woman who died as a result of tactics employed by members of that agency.

"The United States representative spoke about corruption. It is surprising to hear

this from a representative of the current administration, which is known to be a true plutocracy and is characterized by institutional and legal corruption (...) A country where money and corporations rule. Where voters are manipulated," he stated.

He also described as slanderous Waltz's insinuations regarding Cuba's international medical cooperation, whose mission is to serve populations in remote, low-income areas, he added.

The minister referred to how the United States denies the existence of the blockade. "I invite Mr. Waltz to read the statements made by the White House spokeswoman on March 30, or those made the day before by the President of the United States himself, which confirm the existence of the blockade, specifically the total siege on hydrocarbons," he affirmed.

The Foreign Minister highlighted that the U.S. representative insults the Cuban people when he quotes Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro, "a man whom successive

U.S. administrations were never able to defeat."

"He has implicitly referred to the leader at the head of the Cuban Revolution, Army General Raúl Castro; on his behalf, I reiterate that he remains ready and poised to ride out in defense of our homeland," he emphasized.

Rodríguez Parrilla further noted that President Miguel Díaz-Canel, whom Waltz also mentioned by name, is "an illustrious son of the Revolution who, unlike you and U.S. politicians, will share the same fate as the rest of our people" in the event of an imperialist aggression.

Finally, he reaffirmed that Cuba will never surrender the sovereignty and independence for which its finest sons have already given their lives.

He concluded with a quote from the country's independence hero, Antonio Maceo, who declared: "Whoever attempts to seize Cuba will gather only the dust of its soil, drenched in blood, if he/she does not perish in the struggle."



Foreign minister Rodríguez showed photos illustrating the harm Washington has caused on his country. PHOTO: U.N.

Monoclonal Antibody Technology Transferred to Vietnam



Regulatory authorities presented the plant with its certification in the presence of Cuban Ambassador Rogelio Polanco. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

By Roberto **HERNÁNDEZ**

HANOI.- Cuban experts have completed the transfer of monoclonal antibody technology to Vietnam through Genfarma, a joint venture established by the two countries in August, last year.

During a ceremony at the Hoa Lac High-Tech Park, about 30 kilometers from downtown Hanoi, regulatory authorities presented the plant with its Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) certification in the presence of Cuban Ambassador Rogelio Polanco.

Genfarma Executive Director Bui Le Khoa received the certificate from Ta Manh

Hung, Deputy Director of the Ministry of Health's Drug Administration Department, who urged the officials and staff to maintain the national and international quality standards already achieved.

Manh Hung pointed out that this is the first time Vietnam has acquired monoclonal antibody technology, paving the way for the production of advanced medicines for the Vietnamese people.

In this regard, he urged to finalize the necessary administrative documentation to ensure high-quality, safe, and stable products. Manuel Enrique Montané, head of the Genfarma plant, highlighted key project milestones, including the implementation of the quality system, which involved the

qualification and calibration of over 120 pieces of equipment, and the performance of approximately 5,000 lab tests.

"Through the quality management system, we documented around 1,000 calibrations and more than 1,300 documents, a sign of our adherence to good practices," Montané affirmed.

Regarding production, he emphasized the manufacturing of 44,000 vials, comprising three batches of the Cimahir monoclonal antibody —the first of its kind produced on Vietnamese soil.

Cimahir is the Vietnamese brand name for Nimotuzumab, a monoclonal antibody used to treat head and neck cancer that has been tested in approximately 70 countries.

Highlighting the team's strengths, the Cuban scientist noted that 80 percent of the 74 employees are university graduates. As part of the quality system already implemented, approximately 350 documented training sessions have already been conducted, covering areas such as good manufacturing practices, product know-how, industrial safety, and job-specific training.

Montané and the rest of the speakers stressed that the results achieved this Tuesday marks the end of the first phase; regarding the future, the head of the Genfarma plant announced that they intend to expand the facility by nearly 20,000 square meters through their own efforts and with the cooperation of domestic and international partners.

Future plans include the construction of a plant for active pharmaceutical ingredients, the expansion of filling lines using new technologies (the current ones are already automated), and facilities for the production of blood-derived products. He also added that laboratory capabilities will be expanded to include a biological activity testing facility, which will ensure a closed cycle.

Genfarma Deputy General Director Norkis Arteaga stated that this achievement is the result of long-standing cooperation between the two nations, including Cuba's scientific knowledge and technological expertise alongside Vietnam's capabilities in investment, organization, production, and marketing.

The goal, she said, is to manufacture Vietnam-made medicines using biotechnology.

Meanwhile, Research Director Miladis Limonta affirmed that the next step is the production of new medicines at Genfarma, a facility open to adopting best practices in biotechnology and developing new technologies.

Le Thanh Son, Deputy Director of the Management Board for Hanoi's High-Tech Zones and Industrial Parks, stated that this outcome is the fruit of effective international cooperation between Vietnam and Cuba.

It also stands as clear evidence of Vietnam's capacity to receive, assimilate, master, and develop cutting-edge technology, he added.



President Miguel Díaz-Canel inaugurated this high-tech pharmaceutical manufacturing plant in August 2025. PHOTO: Estudios Revolución.

Timbalaye Builds Cultural Bridges with Panama

Text and photo Mario **GARRIDO**

PANAMA CITY.-Timbalaye, an international promoter of Cuban culture, is strengthening cultural ties with Panama by conducting community dance workshops and classes in this capital and the Caribbean province of Colón.

In statements to The Havana Reporter, Timbalaye Vice President Irma Castillo explained that since its founding in 1999, the organization has consistently worked to promote the island's living heritage internationally, with special emphasis on rumba, Cuban son rhythm, and other forms of popular cultural expression.

She noted that for over two decades, the group has developed a methodology for the active safeguarding of heritage based on community work, neighborhood participation, and the direct involvement of the communities that uphold these traditions.

Since July 9, Timbalaye has been hosting open classes at the Betania Community Board, focusing on two expressions designated by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity: rumba and Cuban son.

More than just venues for artistic instruction, these initiatives aim to raise awareness among children, young people, and adults regarding the historical and social value of these artistic expressions, as well as their capacity to strengthen identity, social cohesion, and intercultural dialogue. People of various generations participated in the Betania sessions and had the opportunity to connect with Cuba's rich culture through dance and music, she explained.

As part of the day's events, Castillo met with Humberto Echeverría, representative of the Betania district, who expressed his satisfaction at hosting projects of this nature, which help create spaces for civic coexistence and community integration through culture.

At the same time, classes from the Timbalaye Afro Rumba program were also held at the Colón City Art and Culture Center, an institution affiliated with Panama's Ministry of Culture.

At the opening ceremony, Castillo highlighted the close ties between Cuban rumba and Panama's Congo culture, both inscribed by UNESCO on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

During the first lesson, special attention was given to Cuban Congo dances as a point of connection with Panama's Congo culture. This exercise of cultural dialogue concluded with a segment led by Panamanian dancer and instructor Aneysi Valencia.

These activities are also part of the OPLA Objective (African Heritage Legacy Objective), a Timbalaye initiative designed

to promote the recognition, appreciation, and visibility of African heritage in Cuba, the Caribbean and Latin America.

According to Castillo, one of the project's founders, these gatherings provide an ideal setting for reflecting on the historical roots the region's peoples share.

"Recognizing the past is essential to understanding the present and shaping the future," she affirmed.



Timbalaye promotes Cuban living heritage, with special emphasis on rumba, son rhythm, and other forms of popular cultural expression. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Center for Martí Studies Celebrates 49th Anniversary

By Adis Marlén **MORERA**

HAVANA.- A ceremony marking the 49th anniversary of the Center for Martí Studies (CEM) paid tribute to those who have dedicated their lives to preserving the work and thought of Cuba's National Hero.

Despite difficult times exacerbated by challenges of all kinds, on July 19, the institution celebrated almost half a century of work, faithful to the principles and culture that identifies us as a people.

Over the years, the center and its staff have upheld the mission for which it was created, an initiative spearheaded by Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro and intellectual Armando Hart Dávalos, Cuba's Minister of Culture at the time.

"Although we lack many things, we cannot forsake culture and spirituality," CEM Director Marlene Vázquez remarked during the gathering, highlighting the importance Fidel, José Martí and Fernando Ortiz placed on these values.

In her address, the PhD of Literary Sciences noted that the center's founding materialized Julio Antonio Mella's aspiration to systematize the study of the work of the "Apostle of Independence" —a task carried out by CEM scholars and researchers in partnership with other institutions.

Violin chords accompanied various moments of the event, which marked the beginning of celebrations for the entity's 50th anniversary, while recognizing the contributions of prominent historian Pedro Pablo Rodríguez and University of Havana Vice-Rector José Antonio Baujín.

"Martí's contributions to the Cuban Revolution and the revolutionary thought of his time are admirable," Vázquez said, urging everyone to revisit the Maestro's legacy.

"For that to happen, work continues to be done at this center," the specialist added, noting the importance of community engagement and inter-institutional collaboration.

"We must forge closer alliances with anyone who can support human betterment; we face great challenges and have much work ahead of us," she emphasized.

Italian professor Luca Bondi, president of the Semilla de Paz Humanitarian Association, highlighted the importance of the center, which Fidel described as a "Bastion of Ideas." The celebration was attended by Minister of Culture Alpidio Alonso and director of the Fidel Castro Ruz Center, René González, among other intellectuals and personalities associated with the institution's work.



The institution celebrated almost half a century of work. PHOTO: Cubadebate.



Brazilian Drinks: A Diversity of Tropical Flavors

By DionySANABIA



Tereré is made with mate leaves, cold water, and sometimes aromatic herbs, medicinal leaves or citrus juices. PHOTO: Internet.

BRASILIA.-Brazil's traditional beverages showcase a blend of history, climate, cultural diversity, and natural richness that surprises even visitors from the Caribbean and other tropical regions.

Beyond coffee, internationally recognized as one of the nation's great symbols, the country boasts a vast culture of infusions, juices, smoothies, and popular blends that vary

according to region, daily habits, and traditions inherited from Indigenous, African, and European peoples.

Across a territory of continental proportions —home to Amazon rainforests, vast savannas, semi-arid zones, and subtropical regions— these drinks reflect local resources as well as unique ways of socializing and viewing everyday life. The most iconic drinks include tereré, consumed primarily in border states like Mato Grosso do Sul and closely associated with the high temperatures that characterize much of Brazil's center-west region.

Made with yerba mate (Mate leaves), cold water, and sometimes aromatic herbs, medicinal leaves or citrus juices, tereré stands out for its refreshing nature and the relief it offers on the hottest days.

Culinary anthropologist Paulo Ribeiro explains that consuming this drink is linked to communal settings and moments of rest. "It is a social drink, closely tied to the warm climate and the rural culture of various regions," he affirms.

In contrast to the refreshing nature of tereré, southern Brazil keeps the tradition of chimarrão alive, also made from yerba mate though prepared with hot water and served in a cuia — usually made with a dried pumpkin— along with a metal straw. For cultural historian Denise Ferreira, chimarrão is one of the greatest symbols of hospitality in southern Brazil. "Offering chimarrão is a gesture of welcome and social bonding," she emphasizes.

Brazil also showcases more festive and tropical expressions, particularly in the Northeast.

Bahia stands out for the capeta, a drink created in Porto Seguro that is highly popular in the region's tourist areas and beach resorts. Its preparation blends vodka or cachaça with condensed milk, cocoa powder, cinnamon, and powdered guaraná, resulting in a creamy, sweet, and energizing drink.

The result is reminiscent of an intense-flavored alcoholic milkshake, where the sweetness of the condensed milk combines with the spicy aroma of cinnamon and the stimulating touch of guaraná.

Mariana Luz, a sommelier specialized in tropical drinks, explains that the mixture emerged in the 1980s and quickly gained popularity. Today, it is sold in bars, restaurants, and seaside stalls.

However, a significant part of Brazilian identity can be found in juices and smoothies made from native fruits.

Markets, restaurants, and street stalls abound with drinks prepared from cajú (cashew fruit), graviola (soursop), acerola, maracujá (passion fruit), cupuaçu, açaí, taperebá, and dozens of other tropical species found across the country.

Passion fruit holds a special place in the national cuisine. Its juice, with its pungent aroma and unmistakable tropical flavor, accompanies family meals, snacks, and social gatherings throughout the nation.



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Farmers Endorse Sector Reforms

By Joel Michel**VARONA**

HAVANA.- The reforms approved for Cuba's agricultural sector have the backing of farmers, who will enjoy greater economic benefits and will see their families improve their quality of life, without giving up their social commitment. At a meeting in the capital with Deputy Prime Minister Jorge Luis Tapia and Minister of Agriculture Ydael Pérez, representatives from various types of farming operations expressed their satisfaction with the implementation of these measures in the country, which respond to demands raised during successive congresses of the farming community.

During the exchange of views last July, participants discussed topics like land allocation, which will now go through a faster process: individuals can apply by simply submitting a project proposal to an enterprise or cooperative, without having to go through other administrative channels.

There will no longer be size limits like in the past, which had a 67.10-hectare cap. Those who already hold land may request additional hectares provided the land is exploited efficiently.

From now on, all economic actors in the country may apply for land to produce food, with no time limits placed on its cultivation.

Permanent physical presence will not be required; the person requesting the land may manage it, while another individual works it.

A landowner may draw up a will, and their heirs would not have to restart the acquisition process.

Farmers agreed that rights to idle or neglected land should be revoked, as these transformations must be leveraged to produce food for the people.

In fact, anyone may acquire adjacent, unexploited plots. In such cases, the current holder relinquishes the land, and the records are updated in the name of the person wishing to cultivate it.

Tapia clarified that the children of citizens who left the country may retain the land, and anyone returning to the island may also apply for a plot.

The Deputy Prime Minister noted that agrotourism and ecotourism can now also be developed, two activities that

will help improve the farming community's quality of life. A novel aspect of these economic transformations is that Cubans living abroad will be able to apply for land and participate in the production value chain.

Foreigners with permanent residency in Cuba may also apply for land and undertake their own projects.

Administrative procedures should now take no longer than 25 days; the primary concern for the enterprise is that the land be cultivated efficiently.

To save time and begin production, an enterprise or cooperative may hand over the requested hectares and complete the necessary paperwork later.

Regarding the chain of unpaid debts and banking matters, farmers will be able to handle their own dealings with the relevant entities and rely on municipal structures, and in the event of a breach of contract, they may take legal action against the party involved.



Farmers expressed satisfaction with measures in response to demands raised during successive congresses of the farming community.. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

New Measures to Boost Use of Digital Payments

By Alfredo**BOADA**

HAVANA.- The Central Bank of Cuba (BCC) has announced a series of new measures to increase the use of digital payments in the country, aiming to address significant socioeconomic challenges.

This situation has led to an inflation requiring larger sums of money to purchase the same goods, as well as rising foreign currency costs for producing and transporting cash and an electrical situation that impacts the stability of digital channels.

Given this context, promoting digital payments in the Caribbean nation is an urgent logistical and financial necessity, BCC specialists point out.

During a press conference at the institution's headquarters in Havana, BCC Minister-President Juana Lidia Delgado noted that a resolution regarding digital payments between various economic actors has already been published in the Gaceta Oficial and entered into force in late July.

In this regard, the BCC has temporarily suspended the application of Articles 4 and 5 of Resolution 111 —"Banking regulations on limits for cash collections and payments in

national currency, as well as their deposit, withdrawal and possession"— issued in August 2023.

That regulation had established a maximum limit of 5,000 Cuban pesos for cash collections and payments arising from contractual relationships between the parties covered by the rule.

Another announced measure involves raising the monthly limit on banking transactions per client from 120,000 to 2.5 million pesos, with the aim of fostering confidence in the use of digital payment channels.

Additionally, efforts are underway to reach agreements with the country's wholesale economic actors regarding cash access, in order to encourage the acceptance of digital payments, she stated.

Other facilities include providing greater access to the national foreign exchange market to the abovementioned wholesale entities, so that they can make payments to overseas suppliers directly from their own foreign currency bank accounts.

The aim is to implement specific measures that consistently convey the message of prioritizing digital payment methods, the official noted.

The complementary measures to be implemented gradually by banks also cover real-time crediting of online payment transactions, a system allowing merchants who accept digital payments to receive funds immediately —a regulation that entered into effect on August 1.

A 0.2 percent fee is being established for cash withdrawals, acknowledging the costs associated with the production, transport, safekeeping, and security of cash.

Likewise, specialized branches, areas, or facilities will be gradually established to meet the needs of economic actors regarding cash management, current or tax accounts, reconciliations, financing, and access to the foreign exchange market.



BCC Minister-President Juana Lidia Delgado announced a series of new measures aiming to address significant socioeconomic challenges. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Tribute to Jorge Sanjinés

By Jorge **PETINAUD**

LA PAZ.- Prominent figures from the international cultural arena expressed their gratitude to Jorge Sanjinés, an icon of Bolivian and Latin American cinema, for the consistency with which he has built his work and, above all, for his ethical leadership.

"Thank you, Jorge Sanjinés," was the common phrase heard at the conclusion of every speech during a panel discussion moderated by David Wood —British critic, researcher, and professor at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)— held to mark the 50th anniversary of the Cinemateca de Bolivia Foundation. The event, held four days prior to the 90th birthday of the founder and leader of the Ukamau group,

featured remarks by filmmaker, critic and president of the Cinemateca Foundation Board, Alfonso Gumucio, and PhD of film theorist by the University of Bergen, Norway, and film director Verónica Córdoba.

Aymara-origin actor Reinaldo Yujra (La Nación Clandestina), and researcher Maricarmen Molina also participated in the event.

In her opening remarks, filmmaker and Cinemateca Executive Director Mela Márquez described Sanjinés as "the man who changed Bolivian cinema forever."

Meanwhile, Gumucio said this tribute, the first organized by the Cinemateca to kick off its half-century anniversary celebrations, "is very important," and announced that all of Sanjinés' films would be screened at the institution's halls.

Córdoba commented that she first saw a Bolivian film in 1990 (Yawar Mallku), and added that that event changed her life.

"None of the 50 Bolivian filmmakers trained at the San Antonio de los Baños International Film and Television School (EICT), in Cuba, would have succeeded had we not been illuminated by the light of Sanjinés and Beatriz Palacio of the Ukamau Group," stated the member of the EICT Governing Council.

Yujra, meanwhile, pointed out that the director behind Ukamau and Yawar Mallku evolved from making social and political cinema to reflecting the soul and identity of the Aymara and Quechua peoples through his engagement with them.

Finally, Sanjinés recounted how during his exile in Peru with his father in the 1950s he discovered the possibility of creating a different kind of cinema after seeing works of Italian neorealism.

"From the Quechua and Aymara peoples, I learned that the 'we' comes before the 'I,'" said the Bolivian director, screenwriter, and film theorist, who over the course of more than six decades built a body of work that transformed cinema into a room for memory, reflection, and social change, giving a voice to indigenous peoples and historically marginalized communities.



Jorge Sanjinés, founder and leader of the Ukamau group, is an icon of Bolivian and Latin American cinema. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Renowned names shine at the upcoming San Sebastián Festival

By Fausto **TRIANA**

MADRID.-Renown names start to light up the upcoming San Sebastian Film Festival next September, led by French actress Marion Cotillard.

Oscar winner (La Vie en Rose) and star of other notable films (Rust and Bone, Allied, A Good Year, Big Fish), Cotillard stars alongside Théodore Pellerin in 7:40 ce matin-là (Milo) by Nicole Garcia.

That is one of the films competing in the Official Selection of the 74th edition of the San Sebastian International Film Festival, scheduled for September 18–26.

In Donostia (San Sebastian), Nicole Garcia will premiere a story about a woman who, upon leaving prison, begins working as a waitress in a café to get closer to a young man who works in the area.

A key figure in both Chilean and world cinema, Pablo Larraín, also arrives in the Basque city betting for the Golden Shell with Mis muertos tristes, a series that will be presented at the festival in feature-film format.

This is another unsettling work from the director of Spencer (2023), Tony Manero (2008), Post Mortem (2010), El Club (2015), No (2012) —an Oscar nominee for Best International Feature Film— Neruda (2016) and Ema (2019).

British filmmaker Mike Leigh draws on his wealth of experience to return to the San Sebastian competition with Tender Loving Care, starring Marion Bailey, Paul Jesson, Kate O'Flynn, and Alice Bailey Johnson.

Japanese writer and scriptwriter Maha Harada makes her debut as a director following the success of several best-selling novels inspired by the world of art, like Canvas of Paradise and Guernica Cover Up. She will do so with Muyou no Hito (In My Father's Room), a script she wrote based on her novel An Unnecessary Man, a story about a museum worker who receives a mysterious key that opens the room once used by her late father.

Other feature films heading to San Sebastián include Markens Grode, by Norwegian director Hans Petter Moland —set in a remote part of Northern Norway where a couple's love is tested by pending challenges— and the Argentinean film Glaxo, by Benjamín Naishtat, who previously won the Silver Shell for Best Director and the award for Best Actor (for Darío Grandinetti) in 2018 with Rojo.

Artakalan is the title of the latest film by Turkish director Yeşim Ustaoğlu, who previously won the Golden Shell for Best Film with Pandora'nin Kutusu.

Other films in competition will include El mal padre, by Roberto Bueso; Sants, by Mikel Gurrea, and 5 minutos más, by Javier Ruiz Caldera.



Everything is ready for the upcoming San Sebastián Festival. PHOTO: Internet.

President Urges Optimistic Approach to Current Situation

By LamiPÉREZ

HAVANA.- First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba and President of the Republic, Miguel Díaz-Canel, urged to continue facing the country's difficult situation with optimism during recent visits to various municipalities in the capital.

The president, who also heads the National Defense Council, toured the municipalities of Old Havana, Arroyo Naranjo and La Lisa accompanied by Roberto Morales Ojeda, member of the Political Bureau and Secretary of Organization of the Central Committee. During the meetings, officials assessed issues such as water supply, power generation, solid waste collection and

other severely affected basic services, which are of great sensitivity to the population.

Díaz-Canel also inquired about the care of the most vulnerable community members and emphasized the need to look after retirees' pension, the Presidency reported on its official website.

The Head of State urged to seek solutions and streamline all mechanisms so that

those who have given everything for the country receive their due on time and without difficulty.

He also inquired about the work of the Community Youth Network, an innovative initiative that has enabled young Cubans to get involved in solving problems within their communities.

Authorities from the three municipalities reported on the sports, cultural and health promotion activities being implemented; the engagement of young people with elderly residents living alone, vulnerable families and youth who are neither studying nor working, as well as the monitoring of the Family Care System's performance.

The President reiterated the importance of addressing public concerns with sensitivity and reflected on the need to maintain civic order in all communities.

These exchanges, which began on June 30 and have already reached nine of the Cuban capital's fifteen municipalities, provide firsthand insight into the actions being carried out by Havana's municipal Defense Councils —bodies activated in early May in response to the country's complex situation driven by the severe impact of the U.S. blockade and the oil siege against the island.



The Cuban president toured the municipalities of Old Havana, Arroyo Naranjo and La Lisa. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Authorities Reject Announcement by Colombia's President-Elect

By The Havana Reporter Staff

HAVANA.- Cuba's Foreign Ministry rejected the statements made by Colombia's president-elect, Abelardo de la Espriella, who announced plans to close his country's embassy in Havana and break bilateral ties.

In an official statement released on July 28, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs described the remarks as "an act of subservience to the United States' aggressive policy."

It warned that, should the decision be carried out, it would expose "Colombia's incoming government's clear subservience

to a policy of division and confrontation between our nations."

The text emphasizes that the measure "lacks the slightest justification and does not serve Colombia's national interests," linking it to "the most infamous and vulgar aspects of anti-Cuban politics" in that country.

"Nothing could be further from the ideals of Latin American and Caribbean unity, championed by the founding fathers of both nations," the statement highlighted.

The Cuban Foreign Ministry also referred to the existence of a "smooth bilateral relationship with Colombia, with significant progress in economic and trade areas, including cooperation and academic exchanges, benefiting both

countries," which Cuba has consistently sought to expand and strengthen.

The Caribbean nation stressed that this hostile move does not reflect the sentiments of the Colombian people, whom the island has supported for decades in the pursuit of peace through a negotiated political solution to their internal armed conflict.

The Ministry reaffirmed Cuba's commitment to the Colombian students studying medicine on the island as part of the Peace Agreements signed in Havana in 2016.

"The brotherhood between our two peoples and nations will prevail over any attempt to undermine it," the statement concluded.



More than 100,000 Cubans are waiting access to surgical procedures. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Cuba's Botanical Gardens

By Roberto F. CAMPOS

HAVANA.- Cuba's botanical gardens not only treasure an excellent scientific collection but also serve as an attraction for nature tourism trips.

Botanical wonders are increasingly taking center stage in Cuba; consequently, many travelers visiting the island seek out tours that focus primarily on nature and the country's botanical gardens.

The list includes the Havana's and Cienfuegos' National Botanical gardens; the Juan Tomás Roig Experimental Station;

the Capaynicu Institute of Fundamental Research in Agriculture, and the Holguín and Las Tunas gardens.

Also included are those in Matanzas, Pinar del Río, Sancti Spíritus and Villa Clara, as well as the Soroa Orchid Garden and the Santiago de Cuba Fern Garden.

As it can be seen, these parks—which are highly valuable for research and are also major tourist attractions—are found throughout the country.

The Cuban archipelago is home to two percent of the world's flora, housed within the 13 aforementioned botanical gardens distributed across the nation.



Colombia: A change of power and fear of a return to the past

By Ivette **FERNÁNDEZ**

BOGOTÁ- Anyone who believes that the fears Colombia's progressive sectors hold for the elected government's announced decisions are exaggerations may well be unfamiliar with the history of a country deeply hit by violence. In this nation, long a victim of internal conflict, paramilitary atrocities, abuses by security forces and the terror unleashed by drug trafficking, many fear the resurgence of old ghosts thought to be laid to rest, and the re-emergence of traumas that remain vivid in collective memory.

This is the perspective behind the warning issued by opposition leader, Senator Iván Cepeda, who called on international and national human rights organizations to monitor the situation in Colombia in the near future, cautioning that the incoming government shows signs of paramilitary tendencies.

The former presidential candidate began by warning about the administration's plan to set up urban search blocs and front-line security forces—units that would be staffed not by civil servants, but by military veterans and reservists

Cepeda noted that Colombians are well aware of the consequences of confounding legitimate authority with civilian armed groups, including the State abdicating its monopoly on the use of force to sponsor the creation of parallel structures.

"The history of paramilitarism in Colombia has never resulted in greater security; instead, it has led to more violence,

arbitrary actions, and impunity," he emphasized.

Added to this is the criminalization of social protest, because "not a day goes by without Mr. Abelardo De la Espriella and his circle, with the complicity of authoritarian mayors like Fico Gutiérrez in Medellín or Alejandro Eder in Cali, emboldened by the despotism of their belligerent new boss, threaten to unleash

brutal repression against those who take to the streets to protest peacefully," he said.

The senator affirmed that the aforementioned politicians maintain that any mobilization will be viewed as an act of vandalism and the blocking of public roads, actions that will be met with zero tolerance.

He added that "the implication of these premises is that the Dialogue and Order Maintenance Unit (Undmo) is set to be disbanded, and the Mobile Anti-Riot Squadron (ESMAD) will be reinstated."

He also highlighted that ESMAD was a force created to unleash aggressive actions, particularly against young people, and that it had "a grim record of human rights violations, extrajudicial killings, acts of torture and sexual violence, and attempted murders, such as the practice of inflicting eye injuries on youths."

He referred to De la Espriella's intention to privatize and "paramilitarize the prison and penitentiary system."

Cepeda finally noted that the aforementioned objectives entail the undermining of all forms of dissent, opposition, and political freedom through state-sponsored terror and criminality, while stressing that the situation he described vindicated his earlier call for peaceful civil disobedience.



Abelardo De la Espriella is the new President of Colombia. PHOTO: Internet.

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Clarifications on the performance of the National Electric Power System

By Juan CarlosDÍAZ and JorgePETINAUD

HAVANA.- Cuban Minister of Energy and Mines Vicente de la O Levy clarified that the country's unstable electricity situation stems fundamentally from an electricity system severely affected by the blockade, particularly the energy siege imposed by President Donald Trump.

In a televised address, De la O ruled out the possibility that the recent disconnection of the National Electricity System (SEN) was caused by operational errors, and highlighted the technical capabilities of the Electricity Union.

The minister also denied that the situation is attributable to an exodus of workers from the sector, while acknowledging that as in any organization, staff turnover occurs. This, however, does not imply a "loss of knowledge," he affirmed.

De la O emphasized that the staff is working tirelessly and with great dedication, and insisted on the negative impact of the executive order issued by U.S. President Donald Trump, aimed at banning oil shipments to Cuba. He also stressed that there is a total lack of fuel in the country and "we have no access to spare parts for our power plants or the Energás facilities."

The minister warned that, following SEN failure, the condition of the Guiteras Power Plant (CTE) boiler is being studied, considering its structural weakness; the extent of the damage is currently being assessed in order to make a decision, which will be communicated to the public in due time.

Meanwhile, at the United Nations, Ambassador Ernesto Soberón denounced the intensification of the U.S. economic, commercial, and financial blockade against Cuba as a negative factor undermining the country's energy security.

In his speech at the High-Level Event on Critical Minerals for Energy Transition, held last month at that global body, Cuba's Permanent Representative reaffirmed his country's right to and commitment with a fair, inclusive and sustainable energy transition.

The diplomat emphasized that energy transition must represent an opportunity to foster sustainable development rather than becoming a new source of inequality.



Ministter Vicente de la O stressed that there is a total lack of fuel in the country. PHOTO: ACN..

He also highlighted that respect for the sovereign right States have over their natural resources is an essential principle for ensuring an equitable energy transition. In this regard, he pointed out that it is up to each country to decide, in accordance with their national priorities and international laws, how to manage and utilize their critical minerals, so that they contribute to the sovereign and sustainable development of their people.

In this context, he denounced that no one can talk of a truly fair energy transition as long as unilateral coercive measures persist; measures that deliberately restrict certain countries' access to fuels, technologies, investments, financing, and equipment essential for ensuring electricity supply and advancing the transformation of their energy systems.

New Laws to Boost Business Sector

By MilagrosPICHARDO

HAVANA.- At an extraordinary session of the Council of State, Cuba approved two new decree-laws aimed at boosting the business sector, in line with the economic and social transformations the country conducts.

Official sources indicated that the meeting, headed by president of the above-mentioned body, Esteban Lazo, approved the decree-laws on the Cuban State Business System and an amendment to

Decree-Law No. 76 regarding Agricultural Cooperatives. These measures respond to the process of updating the regulatory framework governing the Cuban state business system.

The first law seeks to regulate general principles regarding the organization and operation of the state business system, to facilitate its transformation and development under the guidance of the National Institute of State Business Assets. According to the Institute's president, Roberto Ricardo Marrero, this regulation addresses 16 of the 17 transformations falling under the

first Thematic Topic —Transformations of the economic actors management model, regarding the Socialist State Enterprise— while supporting the implementation of 12 transformations from other areas.

Lazo highlighted the importance of this decree, noting that it reaffirms the socialist state enterprise as the primary actor in the national economy. It will also help expand the powers comprising the state enterprise's autonomy, unleash its productive forces, and define corporate social responsibility. Meanwhile, the decree-law on Agricultural Cooperatives regulates the constitution,

organization, integration, and operation of these entities, following the necessary update of this regulation to align with ongoing economic and social transformations.

Both decree-laws shall be published in the Republic's Official Gazette so that the public may be duly informed."

The meeting also addressed specific actions to be carried out by the Council of State, particularly regarding legislation and oversight, to contribute to the economic and social transformations being implemented in the Caribbean island.

Economic Transformations Underway

By Greisi **RODRÍGUEZ**

HAVANA.- Cuban Prime Minister Manuel Marrero provided an update on the progress of the economic and social transformations implemented amidst the intensification of the United States blockade.

Speaking at the recently held Seventh Ordinary Session of Parliament, Marrero referred to the coercive measures

imposed by Washington on the island and their negative impact on sectors such as energy, agri-food, tourism, finance, and public health."

"Foreign trade is another sector heavily impacted; (...) numerous containers holding food, medicines, solar power systems, and other essential goods are currently held up in nearby ports," the head of government stated.

Marrero affirmed that the transformations were enriched following the guidance from leader of the Revolution,

Raúl Castro, who conveyed that "just as important as approving the transformations will be their proper and timely implementation, with clearly defined priorities and the conscious participation of the people."

The Prime Minister emphasized that since the approval of the transformations, on 18 June, 165 of the 171 proposals and assessments made by parliament members have been included.

He highlighted that a legislative schedule has been drawn up, identifying 138 legal measures to support the process, to date.

"The program established the implementation of 121 transformations during June and July. So far, 110 have been presented and approved, representing 90.9 percent of this stage measures," Marrero said.

He also announced that the program aims to complete the design and approval phase for the remaining transformations, which are the most complex, during August and September, with the exception of three scheduled for November.

Regarding the management model for economic actors, 28 out of 31 transformations have been approved, including the legal return to the entrepreneurial system.

The Head of Government stressed that seminars have been held for Party and government structures at the national, provincial, and municipal levels, with the aim of providing officials with the tools to lead the process.

He added that, amidst this complex situation, "we are wrapped up in implementing these economic and social transformations, recognized both nationally and internationally as the most far-reaching process undertaken to modernize the nation's economic and social model."



Cuban Prime Minister referred the negative impact of the coercive measures imposed by Washington. PHOTO: Prensa Latina

Tourist Destination Continues Normal Operations

By Martin **HACTHOUN**

BUENOS AIRES.- Amid press reports regarding the departure of the Meliá hotel chain and others from Cuba, Tourism Counselor for the Southern Cone, José Antonio Aguilera, stated here that "hotels on the island remain open and the destination continues to operate normally." The recent decision by some international hotel chains to end their management operations in Cuban destinations has prompted inquiries from tour operators and travel agencies in the Southern Cone.

However, "hotel operations remain completely normal, and there is no impact on travelers," the executive told The Havana Reporter.

The announcements made in recent weeks reflect business decisions adopted by the companies themselves and are a response to the complex economic landscape resulting, among other factors, from the tightening of

unilateral coercive measures and the economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed on the island by the United States, Aguilera explained.

The long-standing relationships maintained for decades with international groups such as Meliá, Iberostar, Barceló, and others have enabled the country to develop management capabilities and train highly qualified professionals to ensure the continued operation of the facilities, he added.

"Cuba has acquired the necessary 'know-how' to guarantee the service standards and quality that characterize our destination. Hotels remain open and operational under national brands, with no interruption in service delivery," the Counselor affirmed.

Since June, facilities that have started to be managed directly by Cuban companies remain operational and continue to adequately receive national and international visitors, he added.

Our destination's greatest strength continues

to be its people and the comprehensive experience it offers those visiting the island.

"Cuba continues to welcome visitors with the hospitality, warmth and safety that have always distinguished it. That commitment remains intact," Aguilera emphasized.

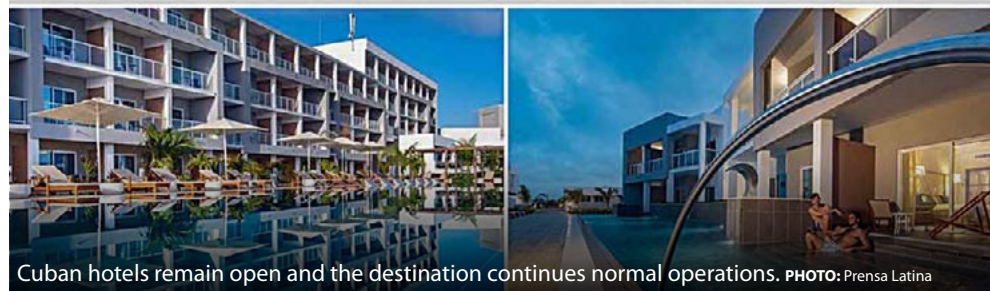
To the Argentinian market, the main source of tourists to Cuba from the Southern Cone, the message is clear: "The destination remains open and operational, committed to continue strengthening commercial ties with agencies, tour operators, and airlines from the region," he highlighted.

The official also noted that the country's ongoing economic updating process is

opening up new prospects for foreign participation in the tourism sector.

Recent measures announced by the Cuban government include opportunities for investment projects, hotel management arrangements, and tourism-related real estate developments, he affirmed.

In fact, the Italian hotel chain Domina — founded in 2000 and operating over 40 properties and holiday complexes across Europe (Italy, Latvia, Estonia, Hungary) and Africa (notably Egypt)— recently signed an agreement with the island's tourism authorities to manage and operate several hotels.



Cuban hotels remain open and the destination continues normal operations. PHOTO: Prensa Latina

The Awakening of the Lions

By Boris Luis **CABRERA**

HAVANA.—The Leones de Industriales team won the 4th Cuban Baseball Elite League after defeating the Leñadores de Las Tunas squad in five games, bringing a title back to Havana that had eluded them since 2010, when they last triumphed in the National Series.

From the outset, the blue squad played like the tournament's best; they dominated the qualifying round and created the impression that, sooner or later, the championship trophy would inevitably end up in their hands.

However, this story was not a bed of roses. Standing in their way was Las Tunas, the most consistent team in the recent history of Cuban baseball, boasting seven consecutive podium finishes in the National Series and three titles that had established them as a benchmark in the domestic game.

For Industriales, Los Leñadores were far more than just a rival; they were a nemesis, the "Eastern Nightmare" that had repeatedly hit them, including the 2023 national final, seemingly condemning them to a prolonged sense of déjà vu.

This time, the script changed hands. Los Leones settled the score, ultimately winning the final three games at the Julio Antonio Mella Stadium —aka the "Enchanted Forest"—a venue where Los Leñadores had become nearly invincible.

There, in that stronghold of axes and mystique, the blue squad roared the loudest,

silencing a crowd accustomed to seeing their team win, and ultimately bringing the forest to its knees before the visitors. None of this would have been possible without a precision work in the team's roster composition.

The Industriales managing staff took on the challenge of filling key vacancies caused by star players leaving to fulfill professional contracts abroad, employing a reinforcement strategy that was as understated as it was effective.

It was not about bringing in big-name stars, but rather selecting specific players to shore up vulnerable areas of their game; ballplayers capable of bolstering the defense, adding versatility to the lineup, or sustaining the pitching rotation during periods of heavy workload.

The result was a remarkably balanced team. Industriales wrapped up the League with a productive and timely offense —capable of making runs when the game demanded it—backed by the championship's best pitchers. Their defense, another critical area, held firm during high-pressure moments; they minimized errors and turned routine plays into the kind of steady performance that secures victories in short tournaments. In essence, the champions were a complete team with few, if any, weaknesses.

Their path to the title included a high-intensity semifinal against the Huracanes de Mayabeque team —a rival that has historically brought opposition to the capital's squad and was the only opponent

to beat them in their head-to-head matchups during the regular season.

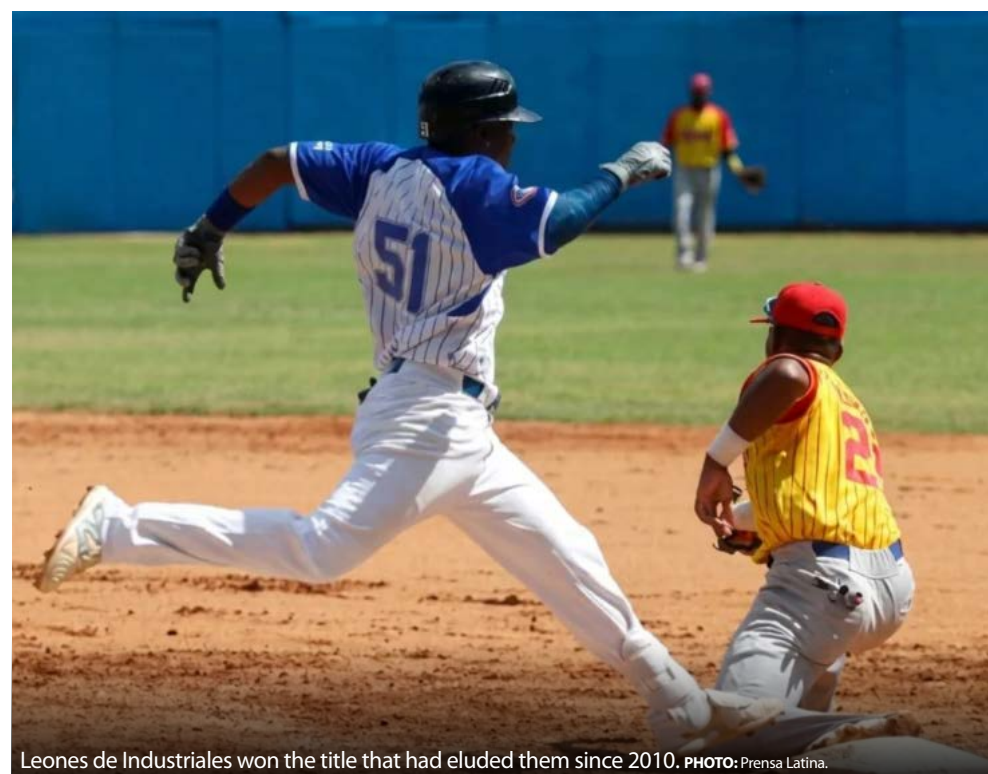
On the other side of the bracket, Las Tunas reached the final after eliminating the Cachorros de Holguín, a team that boasted one of the tournament's most formidable offenses and set a home-run record for the Elite League.

This entire story of victories and adjustments unfolded against a challenging backdrop for Cuban sports. The 4th Elite League

was played under extremely difficult economic conditions, with visible impacts on resources, logistics, and organization.

Officials from the National Institute of Sports, Physical Education, and Recreation (INDER) and the National Baseball Commission made a remarkable effort to maintain the schedule, ensure transportation, uphold basic infrastructure, and ultimately safeguard the country's main sporting show.

For this reason, beyond the final score, the tournament left a sense of collective resilience. Every game served as a statement that baseball remains at the core of Cuban culture, even in the face of material hardships.



Leones de Industriales won the title that had eluded them since 2010. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Leyanis Pérez and the Jump That Broke the Spell

By Boris Luis **CABRERA**

HAVANA.—Cuban triple jumper Leyanis Pérez can smile today after recording a career-best mark of 15.06 meters during the tenth stop of the Diamond League, held in Monaco last month.

The lights at Stade Louis II had already dimmed, but the imprint of a Cuban athlete who had decided to stake everything on her

final attempt remained fresh in the triple jump pit.

Until that moment, the reigning outdoor and indoor world champion had managed only one valid jump of 14.80 meters, alongside four fouls that weighed heavily on her.

She sat in second place; Senegal's Saly Sarr led with 14.99 meters, while Olympic champion Thea Lafond —representing Dominica—loomed as a threat, commanding the field

with the authority of a season leader boasting a 15.25-meter jump.

Then came the sixth jump —that pivotal moment separating what is feared from what is conquered.

The stadium seemed to hold its breath as Leyanis accelerated, attacked the takeoff board, and launched herself into the air as if chasing something far greater than mere centimeters. Perhaps she was also seeking to leave behind the tears of Paris 2024, where she had departed the Stade de France with a fifth-place finish and a longing to one day break the 15-meter barrier.

Her landing in the sand was a sharp, decisive thud; the measurement took half a second to be announced —a number she had spent years pursuing. With that flight over the sand, the athlete from Pinar del Río joined the elite club of triple jumpers capable of surpassing 15 meters, a milestone reserved for the elites. Indoor world champion in Nanjing, outdoor world champion in Tokyo, and holder of a streak of three consecutive global titles that ended Yulimar Rojas's dominance, Leyanis already wore an undisputed crown. Yet she was still missing this symbol, that mark which

yields no medals and yet, forever transforms an athlete's stature.

Another sign of Cuba's power was also evident in the pit: Davisleidy Velazco and Liadagmis Povea finished fourth and fifth, respectively, confirming that the women's triple jump remains a major strength of the island's athletics.

From the 14.98 meters achieved at San Salvador 2023 to the 15.06 meters recorded on that Monaco night in 2026, her journey reveals an athlete who learned to live with error and to compete when the margin for failure seems razor-thin.

Now, as the Principality returns to calm and the Mediterranean echoes with the sound of spikes hitting the track, that 15.06-meter jump already points toward the next major challenge.

On the horizon lie the Central American and Caribbean Games in Santo Domingo. There, having broken a spell in Monaco, she will seek to turn that sense of liberation into a fresh display of dominance, reminding everyone that in the region's triple jump, there is a Cuban athlete determined to leave her mark on every takeoff board.



Leyani Pérez obtained a career-best mark of 15.06 meters during the tenth stop of the Diamond League, held in Monaco. PHOTO: Internet.

The Aral Sea is in urgent need of being refilled

By GermánFERRÁS

MOSCOW.- The Aral Sea, once the fourth-largest lake on the planet, has dried up by 90 percent, and scientists are urging to flood it again to restore it.

The Aral dried up almost completely after the natural courses of its feeder rivers — the Syr Darya and the Amu Darya— were diverted for large-scale irrigation projects in the 1960s.

It was an ambitious plan to transform a desert into fertile land for cotton and other crops, yet it overlooked the fact that cutting off the inflow of water could lead —as it actually happened— to the lake’s disappearance.

Today, a vast salt desert stretches where the sea once laid; its drying up was catastrophic for the local ecosystem, causing the extinction of native wildlife. But it also caused a serious danger scientists have identified: the dry bed of the Aral Sea has now become a significant source of carbon dioxide emissions.

Inland lakes and seas play a vital role in the global carbon cycle by accumulating organic matter in their sediments, thereby preventing environmental harm.



Today the Aral Sea is a vast salt desert stretches where the sea once laid. PHOTO: Internet.

However, when these bodies of water dry up, the sediments become exposed, the organic matter decomposes, and the stored carbon returns to the atmosphere as carbon dioxide.

A study conducted by scientists from the Center for Advanced Studies of Blanes, in collaboration with the Leibniz Institute of Freshwater Ecology and Inland Fisheries, revealed that the Aral’s exposed sediments

have released 748 megatonnes of CO₂ into the atmosphere since 1960.

A significant amount of this remains beneath the ancient lakebed, and restoring the water layer covering it could prevent the release of an additional 605 megatons, roughly equivalent to three years of Spain’s greenhouse gas emissions.

“There is a hidden carbon treasure beneath the Aral Sea,” said the research’s lead author

Rafael Marse. “If these sediments remain exposed, the carbon will continue to enter the atmosphere. If the sea is flooded again, this carbon could be transformed from a source of emissions into part of the solution to climate change.”

The authors of the study calculated that preserving this carbon could have significant economic value in voluntary carbon markets: between \$3.6 billion and \$18 billion in tradable carbon credits.

“Restoration is often analyzed primarily in terms of costs. Our study shows that protecting these vast carbon reserves also has a climate value that could be incorporated into carbon finance mechanisms,” the authors emphasize.

RESTORING THE ARAL SEA IS POSSIBLE

The co-author of the study, Georgy Kirillin, has been studying the Aral Sea for more than 10 years: ‘My research, conducted 20 years after the northern part of the Aral Sea was saved, showed that the lake has recovered to a state similar to what it had before it dried up. Therefore, the remaining part of the Aral Sea also has great restoration potential.’

Scientists emphasize that the Aral Sea’s complete restoration poses an enormous technical, social, and political challenge.



FOREIGN INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR THE CUBAN HEALTH SECTOR