The Havana Reporter ©

YOUR SOURCE OF NEWS & MORE
A Monthly Newspaper of the Prensa Latina News Agency

ISSN 2224-5707
Price: 1.00 USD / 1.20 CAN

YEAR XII
#11
OCT 5, 2026
HAVANA, CUBA

Majority support

Page. 4



Science

Cooperation and Diversify

Page 5



Culture

Lara´s exhibition

Page 9



Economy

New Legislation

Page 13



Sports

Despaigne Honored

Page 15



Cuba's Oldest Hotel

By Benjamín**MICERINOS**

HAVANA.- The Inglaterra Hotel, the oldest in Cuba, celebrates 123 years of existence on December 23 and holds a privileged place among visitors and historians.

What's more, it is one of the best-ranked establishments in a Havana that is highly focused on tourism and stands out for its culture, visual arts work, and exquisite gastronomy.

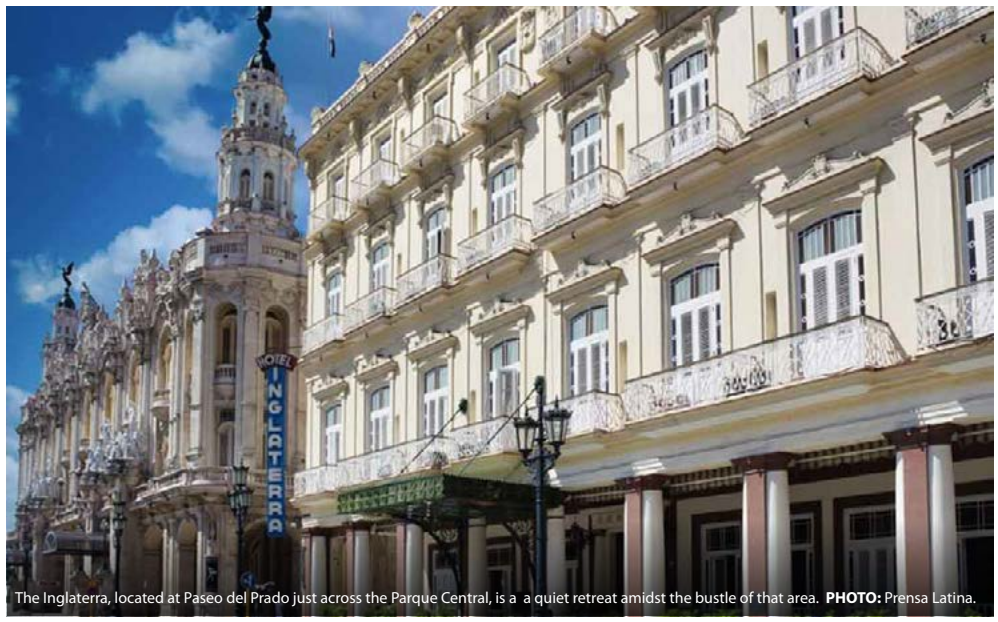
The Inglaterra, which was even mentioned in Elmore Leonard's novel Cuba Libre, is located at Paseo del Prado No.416, in the corner of the San Rafael and San Miguel streets, just across the Parque Central. It is a quiet retreat amidst the bustle of that area.

The hotel's origins date back to December 23, 1844, when "El Escauriza Saloon" — aka "El Café"— was established. In 1863, the saloon was sold to Joaquín Payret, who renamed it "El Louvre." Then, in 1875, Payret sold the Café to build a theater across the street.

Later on, the Café was demolished so as to build the Gran Hotel de Inglaterra, a neoclassical one-story building that opened its doors on December 23, 1875.

General Antonio Maceo, a hero of the wars of independence against Spanish colonialism, stayed at this hotel for six months in 1890.

Winston Churchill, who would later become Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, stayed there in December 1895 while in Cuba as a military correspondent during the Cuban War of Independence.



The Inglaterra, located at Paseo del Prado just across the Parque Central, is a a quiet retreat amidst the bustle of that area. **PHOTO:** Prensa Latina.

The property underwent renovations in 1901, which included the installation of electricity, telephones, private bathrooms in every room, and a telegraph link.

By 1914, the final floor was added, along with a glass canopy. In 1931, the hotel closed its doors due to the impact of the Great Depression, until its reopening in 1939. It underwent further renovations in 1973, 1981, and 1989.

This 83-room hotel, features a unique design: each of its three levels has a distinct decorative theme. The first, which is also the oldest, contains works in sepia tones; the second, added to the building in 1886, pays homage to prominent Cuban painters.

The top floor stands out with color photographs — and views of the hotel and from it toward the surrounding area. Maître José Luis Brito, who worked there for over 30 years, highlights the concept behind the menu: an initiative launched in 1994 that invites the country's leading painters to decorate the dining menus according to the season.

Curiosities and cities

Text and photos: Francisco**MENÉNDEZ**

HAVANA .- Painted walls, iconic spots, vintage cars, and people trying to make a living—there are many interesting sights to capture with a camera in Cuba's cities.

In this country, settlements with more than 20,000 inhabitants are defined as cities. This is a statistical criterion based only on the population within the urban area as defined by the contiguous built-up area, and not on the total population of the administrative district (municipality)..

Out of the 58 cities identified in the 2012 census, only 57 serve as municipal administrative centers. Havana stands as the sole exception. The capital corresponds entirely to the province of the same name—a completely urbanized territory made up of 15 interconnected municipalities

No official definition exists in Cuba for conurbations. The most notable are those of the city of Havana (officially recognized as a single city-province) and that of Santiago de Cuba (which includes the towns of El Caney and Boniato, both already considered within the urban perimeter of the city). that form one continuous urban area.


Exploring Cuba's cities is an adventure that offers unforgettable memories. **PHOTO:** Prensa Latina.

However, closely spaced cities often merge into larger urban regions. This typically happens when they are separated by less than the width of the largest city. These areas maintain tight economic ties, often centering around shared industrial zones, ports, regional hubs, and tourism centers.

Among these, the conurbations of Varadero and Mariel are not classified as cities in official statistics.

Exploring Cuba's cities is an adventure, offering unforgettable memories shaped by their unique character.

TheHavanaReporter©
YOUR SOURCE OF NEWS & MORE

SOCIETY · HEALTH & SCIENCE · POLITICS · CULTURE
ENTERTAINMENT · PHOTO FEATURE · ECONOMY
SPORTS · AND MORE

President: Jorge Legañoa Alonso
Editorial Vicepresident: Moisés Pérez Mok
Editorial Director: Daily Pérez Guillén
Chief Editor: Ilsa Rodríguez Santana
Art Direction: Anathais Rodríguez
English Editor: José Eloy Richards

Translation: Yanely Interián
Graphic Designer: Fernando Fernández Tito
Chief Graphic Editor: Francisco González
Circulation: Commercial Department
Printing: Prensa Latina

Publisher: Agencia Informativa Latinoamericana **Prensa Latina, S.A.**
Calle E, esq. 19 No. 454, Vedado, La Habana-4, Cuba
Telephone: (53)7838-3496 / 7832-3578
Fax: (53)7833-3068 E-mail: thr@prensa-latina.cu

Commemoration of the 68th Anniversary of the Revolution



Key activities in the celebrations of he 68th anniversary of the triumph of the Revolution will include paying tribute to the nation's heroes and martyrs. **PHOTO:** Prensa Latina.

By Milagros**PICHARDO**

HAVANA.- Cuba issued a call for the commemorative event marking the 68th anniversary of the triumph of the Revolution, to be held on January 1, amid the intensification of the United States blockade.

José Ramón Monteagudo, a member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) and head of its Agri-food Department delivered a speech at the ceremony commemorating the 158th anniversary of the start of the wars of independence, on October 10.

He affirmed that the Revolution stands firm as a living force, backed by the strength of a united people and inspired by the legacy of Commander in Chief Fidel Castro and Army General Raúl Castro.

Likewise, Monteagudo stated that the celebrations aim to highlight the continuity of the revolutionary process, and also seek to honor popular resistance through its political, historical, cultural, and social values, based on the premise that unity around the Party is the most valuable strategic weapon.

Key activities in the program include paying tribute to the nation's heroes and martyrs; strengthening defense readiness; fostering socioeconomic priorities, and implementing ongoing transformations.

The official urged political and mass organizations, as well as state institutions, to work intensively —with the participation of the people— to achieve higher results in the lead-up to the anniversary.

He also recalled the courage shown by Carlos Manuel de Céspedes on October 10, 1868, when he set his slaves free and launched the struggle against Spanish colonialism —an example of resistance that is still valid today in the face of attempts at foreign domination.

He recalled that the Father of the Homeland warned early about the expansionist intentions of the United States government toward the island, a warning that is fully current amid the pressures the Caribbean nation is suffering.

Monteagudo added that the "Father of the Nation" had timely warned about the U.S. government's expansionist intentions regarding the island, a warning that remains highly appropriate, given the pressures the Caribbean nation is suffering.

The victory of January 1, 1959, materialized Céspedes's ideals and compels us to take on the daily responsibility of building a more just, sovereign and solidarity country, he noted.

Despite the difficult economic situation resulting from Washington's blockade, the leader reaffirmed the conviction that unity, steadfastness, and faith in victory are invincible.

To overcome these challenges and deepen the process of building socialism, the country approved 176 socioeconomic transformations —organized into 23 thematic areas— aimed at consolidating social justice, generating wealth, and distributing it equitably, he emphasized.

The official highlighted that the implementation of these measures requires the understanding and conscious participation of all sectors of the society.

Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel attended the commemorative event marking the start of the wars of independence, alongside other members of the Political Bureau of Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) and government and state officials.

U.S. Judicial Maneuver against Raúl Castro Condemned

By Melissa**KING**

HAVANA.-President Miguel Díaz-Canel has condemned a new legal action promoted in Miami against the leader of the Cuban Revolution, Raúl Castro, describing it as a political maneuver without any legal merit or practical effect against the island.

In a message posted on the digital platform X, the president stated that the move is part of a "pathetic Miami circus" which has an electoral goal. He also affirmed that any actions directed against the Army General will always be met with the Cuban people's firm determination to defend the Revolution.

Díaz-Canel emphasized that the initiative is a maneuver "dressed up in legal garb," orchestrated by anti-Cuban politicians. He argued that it is part of an ongoing effort to justify the economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed by the United States and the collective punishment inflicted upon the Caribbean nation.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez also condemned the measure, describing it as another maneuver driven by anti-Cuban factions based in South Florida.

The Minister stated that such actions reflect the political exhaustion of groups that have spent decades fueling a machinery of aggression against Cuba through what he described as baseless accusations.

These statements follow the issuance of a new arrest warrant by a Miami judge, linked to the February 1996 downing of two aircrafts belonging to the "Hermanos al Rescate" (Brothers to the Rescue) organization.

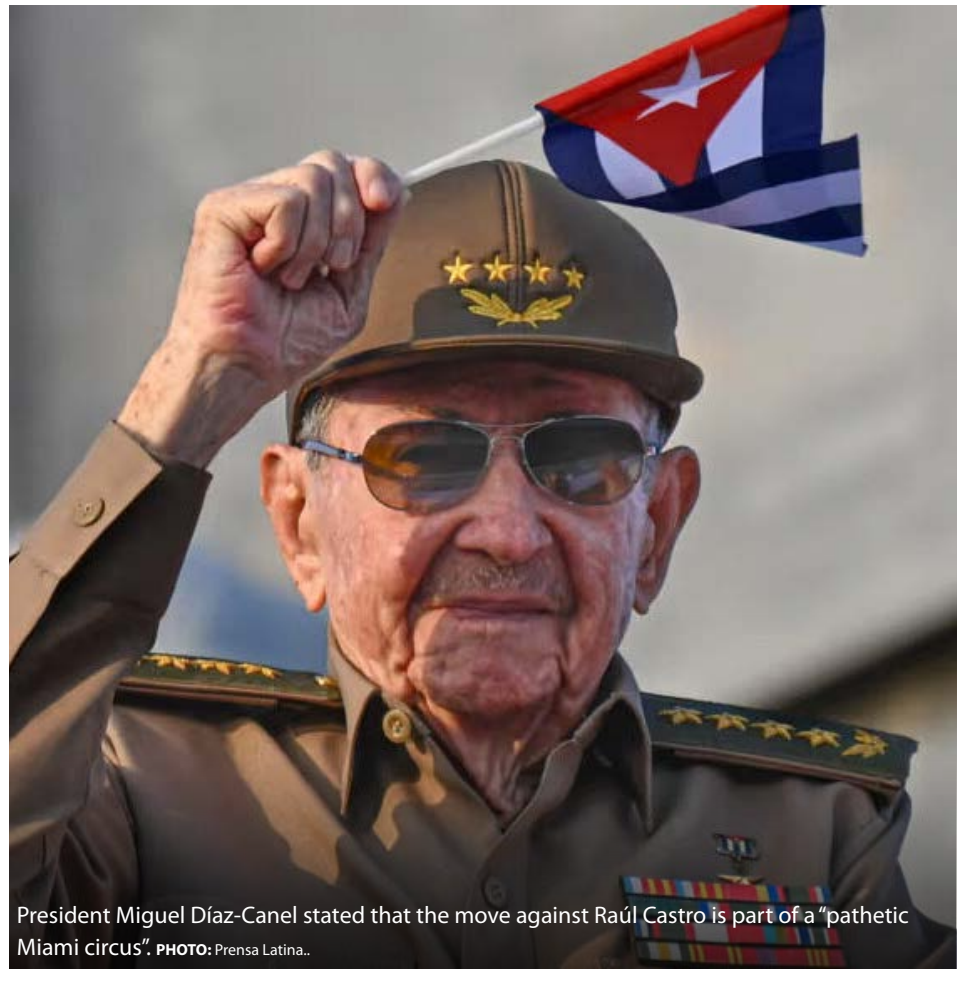
The move, announced by Florida Attorney General James Uthmeier, adds to previous legal proceedings initiated in the United States against the historic Cuban leader and other Cuban citizens in connection with those events.

Last May, Cuba rejected a federal indictment related to the same case, asserting that Washington lacks both the jurisdiction and the legitimacy to prosecute matters concerning the defense of Cuba's national sovereignty.

Havana's official position maintains that the aircrafts involved repeatedly violated Cuban airspace, and recalls that, for years, the country's authorities have lodged complaints regarding these incursions with U.S. entities and the International Civil Aviation Organization.

According to Cuban authorities, the island's actions were justified under the right to self-defense, the protection of its sovereign airspace, and the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the 1944 Chicago Convention.

The Cuban government has denounced that these types of actions are part of Washington's policy of hostility against the Caribbean nation, and attempts to legitimize the maintenance of the economic, commercial, and financial blockade that has been in place for more than six decades.



President Miguel Díaz-Canel stated that the move against Raúl Castro is part of a "pathetic Miami circus". **PHOTO:** Prensa Latina..

UN Said No to the Blockade Against Cuba

By Deisy**FRANCIS**

UNITED NATIONS.- Cuba received overwhelming support from the international community in its struggle against the blockade imposed by the United States, a policy that has intensified to unprecedented levels during the Donald Trump administration.

One hundred and thirty member states voted alongside Cuba in this denunciation, which has been brought forward every year since 1992.

Over the course of two days, dozens of arguments were heard at the organization's headquarters in New York, the majority of them in support of the Caribbean nation's fair right to demand the lifting of this policy of collective punishment.

For the thirty-fourth time, Cuba received majority support from the international community at the UN General Assembly in its call for an end to the blockade —this year, amidst intense, brutal pressure.

Despite pressure campaigns led by Secretary of State Marco Rubio and the U.S. Permanent Representative to the UN, Mike Waltz, 130 countries supported the Cuban resolution, while 17 voted against, and 25 abstained.

Prior to the vote, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla warned that the U.S. government had unleashed "a wave of pressure, intimidation, and blackmail against many member states, with a coercive, illegal, immoral, and unjustified demand that they alter their long-standing positions."

He added that Washington had asked these nations to "adopt a stance contrary to the one they have consistently and reasonably maintained for decades as an exercise of their sovereign State authority."

He affirmed that "no people deserve the suffering and abuse currently imposed upon us," and emphasized that the aggression against his country includes "a fuel blockade, which is equivalent to a naval blockade, which is an act of war, an act of collective punishment and genocide, all of which are prohibited under international law."

Its severe consequences fall upon individuals, restricting their fundamental human rights, affecting third-party nations, and transforming the essential needs of the population into instruments of political coercion, he added.

Its effects are felt at the tables of Cuban families, at the bedsides of the sick, during childbirth or in the operating room, in the nutrition and classrooms of children, in the lack of electricity, drinking water and medicine, and in the prices of goods essential for life, he stressed.

"The General Assembly has addressed this issue since 1992, but it now does so within a new and extraordinary context," he stated.

What Cuba demands is simply to be left alone; to allow the Cuban people to live in peace, to resolve their own problems peacefully and to find solutions to the great challenges of today's world free from political, military, cognitive or economic aggression, he highlighted.

Cuba is not a threat! The blockade is!, the head of the Cuban delegation finally said at this annual review, which took place here on October 27 and 28.



This was the thirty-fourth time that the UN General Assembly gave its majority support for an end to the U.S. blockade againstCuba.



Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez warned that the U.S. government had unleashed "a wave of pressure, intimidation…"



Despite pressure campaigns, Cuba received overwhelming support from the international community. **PHOTOS:** U.N.

We will always do science in Cuba

By Mario**MUÑOZ**

ROME.- Cuba is seeking to expand international cooperation and diversify its funding to channel its scientific capabilities into food production, Minister of Science, Technology and the Environment Armando Rodríguez announced in this capital.

In an exclusive interview with **The Havana Reporter** following his participation in the 2026 World Food Forum, the minister highlighted the importance of strengthening ties between research centers, businesses, and producers as well as seizing opportunities for cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and international scientific institutions of other countries.

When asked about Cuba's cooperation and investment proposals at the World Food Forum, Rodríguez noted that Agriculture Minister Ydael Pérez had introduced two major projects focused on the honey and coffee value chains.

Rodríguez emphasized that these sectors hold significant potential for Cuba. He noted they are highly attractive scientifically due to their reliance on organic farming and environmental conservation.

"We believe the carbon market could open up opportunities to mobilize funding," Rodríguez said. "Cuba has a significant forested area and possesses data on emissions reductions and carbon dioxide absorption—factors that could heavily contribute to developing initiatives in this field."

Another area is agricultural biotechnology, where Cuba has developed its own technologies that contribute to national sovereignty.

The minister also pointed to agricultural biotechnology, a sector where Cuba has developed proprietary technologies to strengthen its national food sovereignty.

In addition we also want to strengthen our participation in mountain related initiatives, given their importance to the country," Rodríguez stated. "Agricultural development in these territories must be carried out through sustainable practices that protect ecosystems while making the most of their productive potential."

The participation of women and rural communities is also an important component of this work and an area in which Cuba can cooperate with the FAO.

As for how international cooperation can contribute to addressing Cuba's scientific and environmental challenges, he emphasized that this makes it possible to exchange knowledge, expand working networks and seek resources for projects that require continuity.

The minister also noted the importance of building a high-tech business ecosystem. He called for expanding science and technology parks, alongside technology transfer and innovation firms that bridge the gap with universities.

In agriculture, he added, this process is particularly complex because it involves numerous economic stakeholders with diverse organizational structures. For instance, introducing a new crop variety requires seamless coordination among farmers, commercial businesses, research centers, and government regulators.



Minister Armando Rodríguez highlighted the importance of strengthening ties between research centers, businesses and producers. **PHOTO:** Prensa Latina.

Russia registers Cuban drug for tumor treatment

By Germán**FERRÁS**

MOSCOW.- The Russian Ministry of Health has registered a Cuban-developed cancer drug, Nimotuzumab, to treat malignant tumors of the esophagus, head, neck, and certain brain cancers.

According to a report by the Russian newspaper Vzglyad, the drug will be marketed in Russia under the name Nimolancim. Its registration expands the scope of targeted therapy in Russian oncology practice.

Nimotuzumab is approved exclusively for adult patients. Its effectiveness is backed by international clinical trials showing that combining the drug with standard antitumor therapy improves patient outcomes.

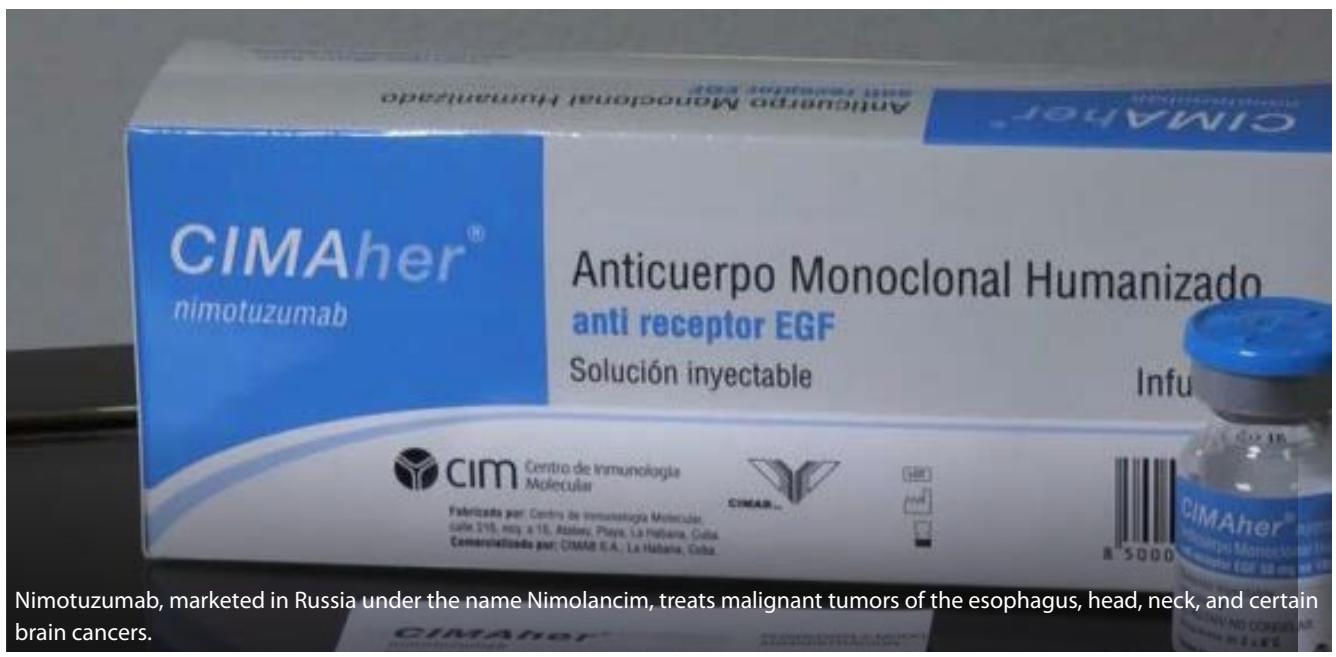
Nimotuzumab is a humanized therapeutic monoclonal antibody designed to target the epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR)—a common strategy in targeted cancer therapies to stop the growth of malignant tumors.

Its production is part of a collaboration between Cuba's Center for Molecular Immunology and a Russian company, which will be responsible for secondary packaging and final quality control.

The report also notes that Cuba announced the development of a new vaccine, HEBERSaVax, in May. Designed to treat various malignant tumors through active immunotherapy, the vaccine aims to extend the life expectancy of cancer patients.

The new vaccine adds to the extensive arsenal of treatments Cuban scientists have developed over the years, which already includes prominent therapies like CIMAvax-EGF and Vaxira.

Developed by Havana's Center for Molecular Immunology, both vaccines have been proven to extend survival among patients with non-small cell lung cancer in clinical trials. Today, they are administered not only in Cuba but also across several countries in Latin America and Europe.



Nimotuzumab, marketed in Russia under the name Nimolancim, treats malignant tumors of the esophagus, head, neck, and certain brain cancers.

Cuban Writer María Elena Llana Nominated for the 2026 Cervantes Prize

By Carol**LASTRES**



María Elena Llana becomes the third known Cuban woman to run for the Cervantes prize.

PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

HAVANA.- Cuban storyteller María Elena Llana was nominated for the 2026 Miguel de Cervantes Prize, an acknowledgement reinforcing the Caribbean island's female presence in the run for the highest Hispanic literature award.

Llana, winner of the 2023 National Literature Prize, thus becomes the third known Cuban woman to run for the Cervantes prize, following Fina García Marruz (1923–2022) and Dulce María Loynaz (1902–1997).

Media outlets confirmed that the nomination was put forward by Alejandra Giovanna Amatto, a professor at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and a member of the prize's jury.

Born in Cienfuegos in 1936, Llana has built a career spanning more than six decades across print media, radio, television, and news agencies.

A graduate of the Manuel Márquez Sterling School of Journalism (1959), her debut work, La reja (1965), set a benchmark for Cuban fantastic fiction.

Some of her most notable works include Casas del Vedado (1984) —winner of the Critics' Prize— Castillos de naipes (1998), Ronda en el Malecón (2004), and Tras la quinta puerta (2014).

In remarks to **The Havana Reporter,** the author said that she was "very happy" and called the nomination "the greatest honor" to which she could aspire.

Her predecessors are two outstanding voices in the nation's literature. Loynaz in particular is the only Cuban woman to win the Cervantes Prize (1992), and the first in Latin America.

Dulce María Loynaz was a poet, novelist, and lawyer. Her work, characterized by refined musicality, includes Versos (1920–1938), Juegos de agua (1947), Poemas sin nombre (1953), and the novel Jardín (1951). She received Cuba's National Literature Prize un 1987 and served as president of the Cuban Academy of Language until her death.

Fina García Marruz, meanwhile, was a pivotal poet and essayist and a member of the group associated with the magazine Orígenes, founded by writer José Lezama Lima.

Her work, marked by deep spirituality, includes Visitaciones (1970), Créditos de Charlot (1990), and Habana del centro (1997).

She was granted Cuba's National Literature Prize (1990), the Pablo Neruda Prize (2007), the Queen Sofía Prize for Ibero-American Poetry (2011), and the Federico García Lorca International Poetry Prize (2011).

Llana's nomination highlights an interesting continuity: Cuban women writers maintaining an almost constant presence among candidates for the Cervantes Prize, an award also received by Cubans Alejo Carpentier (1977) and Guillermo Cabrera Infante (1997).

Neurótica Awnónima in the Running for the Goya Awards

By Adis**MORERA**

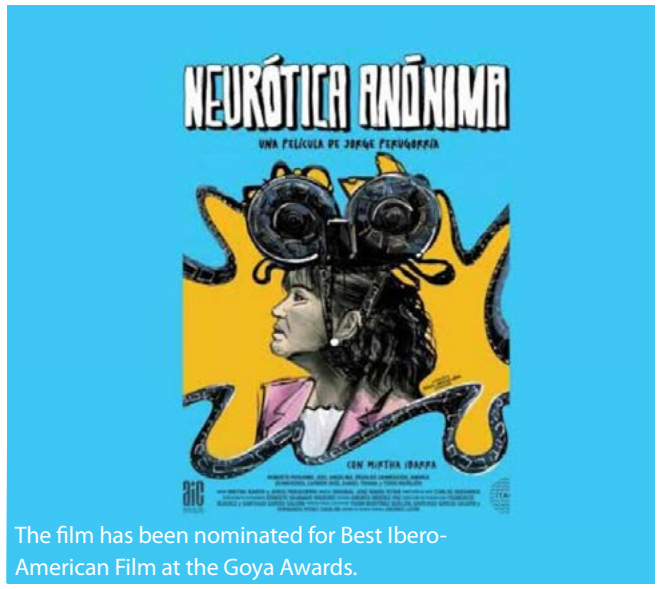
HAVANA.- The Cuban film Neurótica Anónima has been nominated for Best Ibero-American Film at the Goya Awards, a source of pride given its international impact and its selection to compete alongside productions from 19 other countries.

This good news has made headlines in the European press and has been echoed by the Cuban Film Institute (ICAIC), which also announced that the animated short film Raptus, by director Ivette Ávila, won the award for Best Animation Short Film at The Americas Film Festival of New York (TAFFNY).

Directed by Jorge Perugorría, recipient of the 2024 National Film Award, Neurótica Anónima is based on the stage play of the same name written by and starring renowned actress Mirtha Ibarra. The film includes both national and international cinema messages.

In an exclusive interview to **The Havana Reporter**, Ibarra —who boasts an enviable filmography, including titles such as Adorables mentiras (1991) and Fresa y chocolate (1993)— explained that the film explores two core themes: the mistreatment of women and the preservation of the movie theater as a physical space.

"We wanted to pay tribute to Juan Carlos Tabío (1943–2021), the creator of Plaff o Demasiado miedo a la vida (1988); that is why the film is entitled Neurótica Anónima o Sin miedo a la vida," she said.



The film has been nominated for Best Ibero-American Film at the Goya Awards.

According to the actress, her character always views herself as a protagonist, as she lives outside of reality, within the world of cinema.

Iluminada (Mirtha Ibarra) is a young woman from the countryside who leaves home to pursue her dream: becoming an actress. After seeing her ambitions thwarted, she pursues a program for art instructors, but fate ultimately leads her to a job as an usher at an iconic movie theater, according to the synopsis.

The outline adds that her marriage to Osvaldo (Roberto Perdomo) and her daily life trigger a neurosis.

Another lead role is played by Joel Angelino —who shared the stage with her in the aforementioned play and in Fresa y chocolate— portraying the theater's projectionist and a close friend of hers.

One of the film's strengths is its cast, which features well-known Cuban artists, including Fernando Hechavarría as an architect; Osvaldo Doimeadiós as a psychiatrist; Andrea Doimeadiós as young Iluminada; and Néstor Jiménez as the local delegate.

This stellar cast also showcases the masterful performances of Paula Alí, Mireya Chapman, Tahimi Alvariño, Bárbaro Marín, Mario Limonta, Hilario Peña, and Felix Beatón, among others.

The nomination for the 41st Goya Awards complements the film's successful international run and its warm reception from audiences, who appreciate both this recognition and the virtuosity displayed in every scene."

The nomination for the 41st Goya Awards complements the film's successful international tour and its warm reception by audiences, who appreciate such recognition and the virtuosity displayed in every cinematic dream.

Organized by the Spanish Academy of Cinematographic Arts and Sciences, the Goya ceremony is scheduled for February 6, 2027, at the Navarra Arena in Pamplona, the capital of the northern province of Navarra.

Voces del Sur Global
Voices of the Global South

Blue Gold' s Revival in El Salvador

By Teyuné**DÍAZ**

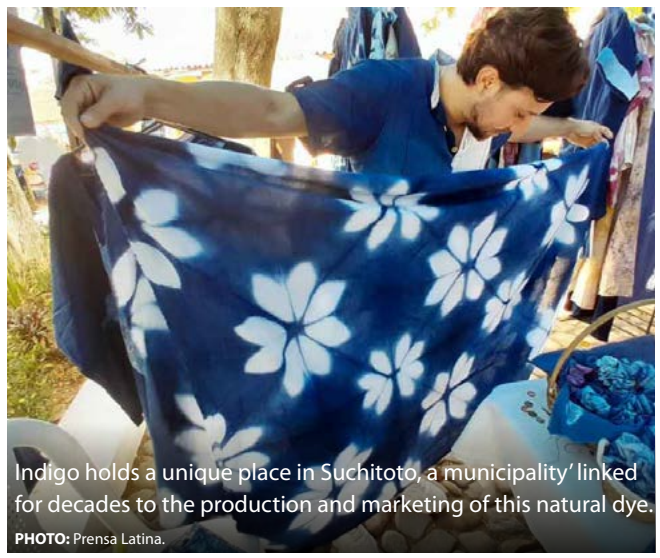
EL SALVADOR.-The Indigo Festival in Suchitoto wove together textiles, crafts and accessories with history, culture and creativity, an identity tradition of this city that endure over the years.

In a statement to **The Havana Reporter**, Miguel Duran, head of the Tourism Unit at the Cuscatlán Norte municipality, explained that indigo holds a unique place in Suchitoto's history, having been linked for decades to the production and marketing of this natural dye.

Thus, when the idea for the festival arose, the decision to revive that history and reintegrate it into the local identity felt almost natural, he affirmed.

The inaugural festival was born of a simple goal: supporting artisans working with indigo, as there were several local initiatives dedicated to this craft. One of these included Arte Añil (Indigo Art), a group created by the Women's Coalition and other ventures related with the production of dyed garments and goods.

The festival emerged in 2017 following a proposal by the Ministry of Tourism under the "Pueblos Vivos" (Living Towns) program; at that time, a tourism circuit comprising seven municipalities was established.



Indigo holds a unique place in Suchitoto, a municipality' linked for decades to the production and marketing of this natural dye.

PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

These were the five districts that now forms the jurisdiction: Suchitoto, San José Guayabal, Oratorio de Concepción, San Bartolomé Perulapía, and San Pedro Perulapán— plus San Martín and Ilopango, he explained.

That proposal was named Colonial Corners Between Lakes, a title intended to highlight two of the area's defining features: its rich history and culture, and the presence of the Suchitlán and Ilopango lakes.

A STORY TO TELL

Indigo is a natural dye derived from the Xiquilite plant. It yields an intense blue pigment used to dye textiles and was considered a valuable export product during the colonial era and the centuries that followed.

The profits generated in the international markets, primarily Europe and North America, were so substantial that they rivaled those of gold and silver, which earned it the nickname "blue gold" —a very distinctive color that was also associated with royalty.

The Indigo Festival represents identity, above all, Durán emphasized, while adding that it is not merely about turning the city blue for a few days; it is important to remember that behind a dyed shirt lies an artisanal process requiring time, knowledge and labor.

Currently, a kilogram of indigo can cost around 400 dollars, a fact that helps explain why an artisanal garment holds significance that is not always immediately apparent, with the added value of featuring unique designs, Durán explained.

He added that Reviving this activity in Suchitoto has strengthened the work of the eight women artisans directly dedicated to the craft, although men and other experienced workers also participate.

The goal now, he believes, is to pass on that knowledge.





New Housing Law Approved

By **The Havana Reporter Staff**

HAVANA.- Cuba has issued a new regulation governing the construction, use, maintenance, and transfer of real estate, alongside a public policy framework aimed at guaranteeing the right to adequate housing.

Published in the Official Gazette as Housing Law No. 187, the measure was approved by the National Assembly of People's Power on July 30. It reaffirms the State's responsibility to develop construction programs aimed at reducing the housing shortage through the active participation of citizens and other economic stakeholders.

Under the new law, individuals can now own up to two houses plus a vacation residence, as long as the summer property is explicitly designated in the title deed.

Foreign nationals may also own up to two properties, even if they do not reside in the country.

Cuba's new housing law integrates real estate firms and housing cooperatives into the National Housing Development Program, expanding a framework previously limited to state entities, private businesses, and community microbrigades.

During a press conference, Marvelis Velazquez, Director of Legal Affairs at the Ministry of Construction, noted that a panel of experts spent nearly two decades drafting the legislation, drawing on international legal frameworks and housing experiences.

Comprising 190 articles and 16 chapters, the new Housing Law regulates property access, construction, maintenance, and transfers, while establishing public policies to guarantee the right to adequate housing.

The law also reaffirms the State's commitment to building programs aimed at reducing the housing deficit, drawing on participation of the population and other economic stakeholders.

The legislation allows homeowners to offer rent-free housing through officially registered contracts, while introducing mediation frameworks to resolve disputes between property owners, in accordance with the applicable legislation.

Furthermore, the law mandates that the State secure the right to adequate housing through construction, renovation, and maintenance programs, while expanding access and financing options.

Law No. 187 took effect seven days after its publication in the Official Gazette (Regular Edition No. 86). The same issue included three key implementing regulations: Decree No. 176 (General Housing Regulations), Decree No. 177 (Condominium Ownership Regulations), and Decree No. 178 (Housing Cooperatives Regulations).

The first Urban Reform Law after the triumph of the 1959 Revolution was passed on October 14, 1960. The historic law granted home ownership to current tenants and abolished urban evictions, a rampant practice prior to the revolution.



The new law integrates real estate firms and housing cooperatives into the National Housing Development Program. **PHOTO:** Prensa Latina.

Teenage Pregnancy: Turning Data into Rights

By Dixie**EDITH**

HAVANA.- Although teenage pregnancy has declined in recent years in Cuba, it continues to require systematic and comprehensive attention, a call that gained particular relevance last October 11, the International Day of the Girl.

The date, established by the United Nations (UN) in 2011, featured this year the official theme "Let's end child marriage and invest in girls' rights!."

"The link between early marriage and adolescent motherhood is very close... often, the former drives the latter by leading to more frequent sexual activity and greater vulnerability," said legal expert and university professor Yamila González.

The expert, who is also the vice president of the National Union of Jurists of Cuba (UNJC), served on the drafting commission for the Family Code —in effect in Cuba since 2022— which set the legal age for marriage at 18 for both sexes.

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) warns that in Latin America and the Caribbean, approximately 1.6 million girls aged 15 to 19 become mothers each year, facing consequences for their health, education and economic opportunities.

THE GREATEST DISRUPTION OF CUBAN FERTILITY PATTERNS.

"Teenage pregnancy represents the greatest disruption to Cuban fertility patterns," psychologist and demographer Matilde de la Caridad Molina, deputy director of the Center for Demographic Studies (CEDEM) at the University of Havana, told **The Havana Reporter** (THR).

"Although figures show a slight decline in recent years, it remains not only a public health issue but a social topic demanding comprehensive attention. Adolescents do not yet fully grasp the roles they must assume as mothers. We must understand that they are still children," the specialist added.

Adolescent fertility in Cuba has declined over the last five years among the 15-to-19 age group, dropping from 48.5 births per 1,000 in 2021 to 43.2 in 2025 —according to data published in August 2026 by the Cuban Observatory on Gender Equality (OCIG).

In 2025, the contribution of adolescent girls to the country's total fertility rate also fell to 17.3 percent —below the 18.3 percent in 2024.

The situation is more complex regarding the 10-to-14 age group, where fertility rates have proven resistant to decline, hovering between 1.3 and 1.4 per 1,000 girls in that age range over the past five years.

This phenomenon "is accompanied by social dysfunctions, territorial disparities, and a loss of educational opportunities for adolescent girls who become mothers," Molina commented.

"All surveys agree that there is an intergenerational echo of adolescent fertility: from grandmothers to mothers and then to daughters who also become mothers at very early ages," affirmed Juan Carlos Alfonso, deputy director of the National Office for Statistics and Information (ONEI) in an interview with THR.



Teenage pregnancy represents the greatest disruption to Cuban fertility patterns. **PHOTO:** Prensa Latina.

Art Needs to Know How to Laugh a Little Bit at Its Own Solemnity

By Verónica**NÚÑEZ**

HAVANA.- Anyone familiar with the written and symbolic work of Jesús Lara knows that a mystical breath emanates from each of his pieces, said Cuban critic Rafael Acosta regarding the artist's solo exhibition currently hosted by the National Library of Cuba.

"Axiomática Lara. Retablos y otras iluminaciones" (Axiomatic Lara. Retablos and Other Illuminations) is the title of the exhibition, and during its opening on September 18 in the institution's "El Reino de este Mundo" Gallery, the electric power went out.

Lara's carved wood, patinas, and gold leaf emerged as what he described as remnants of a civilization that perhaps never existed, as he told The Havana Reporter.

Axiomática Lara... brings together certain obsessions that have infiltrated my work for years: memory, the fragment, the sacred things that remain once their temple is lost, geometry confronting the accidental, and the beauty of that which has survived its own destruction. There is an element of imaginary archaeology in these works, the artist explained.

Meanwhile, reflections on Lara's creative amalgam served as the starting point for Cuban critic Nelson Herrera Ysla's remarks. "How, then, should we evaluate his works, when he draws upon so many constituent elements of both order and creative disorder, from their origins in the silent shadows of ancient caves to the white halls of modern and contemporary art galleries and museums?"

Lara does not adhere to a single discipline. He is self-taught, and his practice has branched out into diverse artistic forms: painting, sculpture, writing, and work with music. Having just turned 54, he stands as a pillar of Cuban art.

"I have never understood the idea of dividing creation into separate departments; for me, they are simply different instruments of the same question," he told THR.

The exhibition included a new piece: the tapestry La memoria devora el olvido (Memory Devours Oblivion), unveiled as part of the celebrations for the Cuban Culture Day (October 20) and the library's 125th anniversary.

Axiomática Lara… brings together painting, sculpture, and pieces crafted from wood, paint, relief elements, fabrics, and other materials.

The works spark curiosity from their very titles: Anatomía del borde (Anatomy of the Edge), Tres lunas para una habitación (Three Moons for a Room), Katmandú: geometría de los umbrales (Kathmandu: Geometry of Thresholds), Equilibrio interior III (Inner Balance III), Eclipse interior (Inner Eclipse), and Tótem Axiomático (Axiomatic Totem).

Regarding the origin of the title and the inspiration behind these works, the author noted that the title itself contains a slight contradiction. An axiom is something we accept as a starting point without the need for proof; art, by contrast, has spent centuries viewing anything that appeared proven with suspicion. I was interested in that tension.

The surname in the title also introduces a touch of irony. After so many centuries spent trying to uncover universal axioms, I modestly arrive with my own. Art, too, needs to be able to laugh a little bit at its own solemnity.

According to critic Herrera Ysla, Lara's works "serve to demonstrate an artistic process open to speculation and a certain polysemy, rooted in his own life experience, as well as ours."



Lara described carved wood, patinas, and gold leaf as remnants of a civilization that perhaps never existed. **PHOTO:** Prensa Latina.

Upcoming workshop to explore cultural heritage and creative industries

By Verónica**NÚÑEZ**

HAVANA.-The 16th Workshop on Historical, Museological, and Archaeological Research will take place, on November 23–24, to rethink cultural heritage as a driver of social and economic change.

According to the Office of the Historian of Havana (OHCH), the event will be held under the theme "Heritage, Innovation, and Sustainability through Cultural and Creative Industries."

The meeting will run as part of the 28th Italian Culture Week in Cuba, according to the OHCH's Heritage Assets Department, which is organizing the event.

The Heritage Assets Department shared on social media that the gathering aims to integrate tourism with cultural and creative industries (CCIs) as agents of transformation,.

The workshop aligns with UNESCO's principles of culture as a global public good, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Law 155/2022, Cuba's General Law on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage.

The management of CCIs is envisioned as a strategic pillar for the sustainable development of historic centers and their communities.

The call for participation is targeted at professionals and students in heritage management, information sciences, museology, architecture, urban planning, design, archaeology, economics, and education.

Key topics include cultural industries as drivers of innovation, employment, and sustainability; heritage, memory, and community focused on social inclusion and gender equity; and the application of information technologies to heritage management.

Other topics include professional training in heritage and cultural tourism; urban landscapes and public spaces; and the integration of national and international standards in heritage management.

The Academic Committee comprises prominent specialists: Grisel Terrón, director of the OHCH's Heritage Assets Department; Surisday Reyes, director of the Museum of Contemporary Ceramics of Cuba; and Rosalía Oliva and Lisette Roura, both researchers from the Archaeology Office.


The gathering aims to integrate tourism with cultural and creative industries. **PHOTO:** Internet.

Prioritizing assistance to the most vulnerable

By Valentina**DONES**

HAVANA.- Cuba is strengthening its social protection programs to support people in vulnerable situations, focusing heavily on the groups most affected by current economic conditions, Labor and Social Security Minister Jesús Otamendiz announced.

Speaking on the radio program Criterio Compartido (Shared Perspective), Otamendiz defined a vulnerable person as someone who lacks the resources or capabilities to independently cope with challenges like extreme weather events, health crises, or adverse economic conditions.

He specified that ministry's studies identified several high-risk groups. These include welfare-dependent households, families with heavy caregiving responsibilities, single mothers with multiple children, and families raising children with chronic illnesses or growth disorders.

Otamendiz noted that the government's strategy aims to channel available resources toward those facing the highest levels of vulnerability while remaining flexible enough to include new cases identified by local communities.

While 876,522 people were initially identified, the figure remains fluid. Fueled by public updates through platforms like Soberanía, the latest figures, recorded at the end of September, show that 883,000 people are now classified as vulnerable.

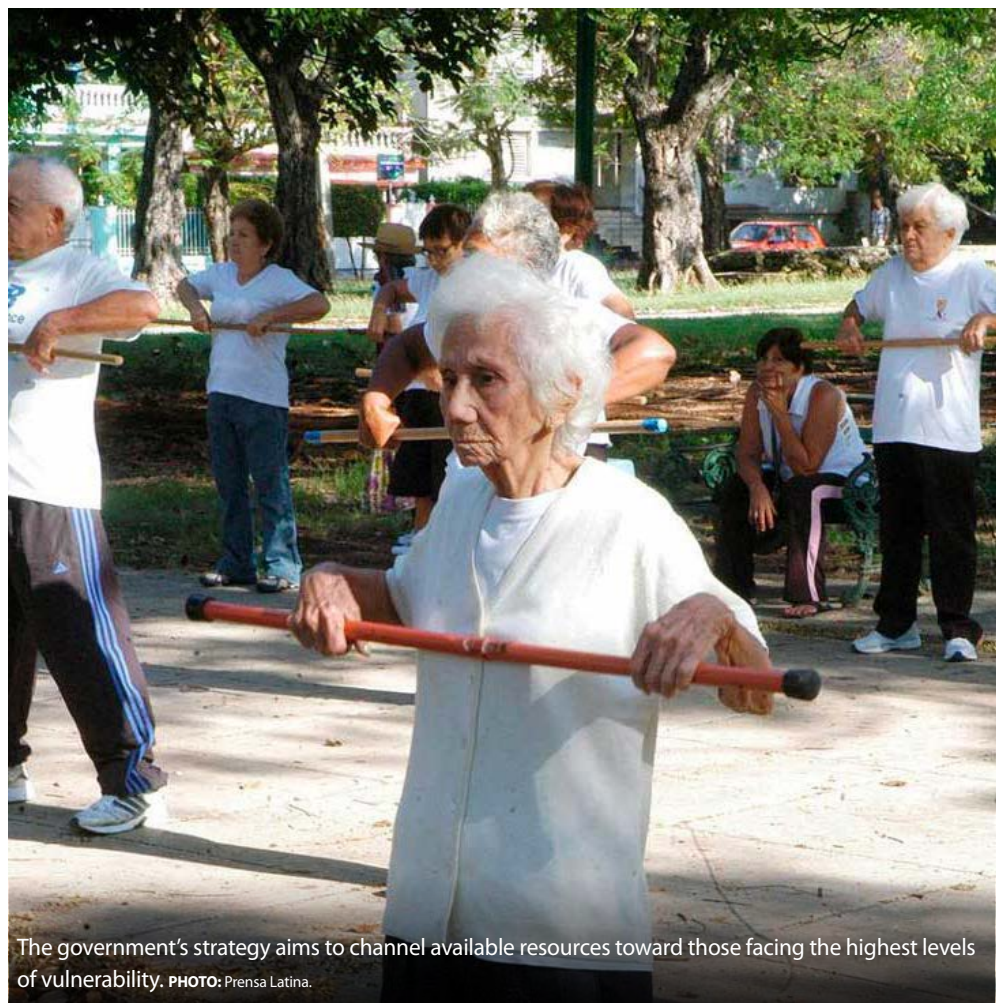
He explained that social workers are responsible for identifying and assessing these situations. The cases are subsequently evaluated by municipal groups overseeing social policy assistance and approved by the administrative councils.

The minister emphasized that the state—backed by international solidarity and donations—allocates resources to this vulnerable segment, including food packages and other forms of assistance for prioritized groups.

He also indicated that ongoing economic and social reforms aim to boost employment and increase household incomes. These efforts are complemented by programs that provide beneficiaries with productive assets to foster greater economic independence.

He further highlighted the specialized assistance provided to older adults amid the country's aging population.

Otamendiz stressed that vulnerability is not necessarily a permanent condition, assuring that the current policies are designed to help individuals overcome their circumstances and fully integrate them into the country's economic and social life.



The government's strategy aims to channel available resources toward those facing the highest levels of vulnerability. **PHOTO:** Prensa Latina.

Public consultation on a new draft education law

By Celeste**SMITH**

HAVANA.- The draft Education Law, whose text is available to the public in Cuba, proposes recognizing and certifying knowledge acquired outside the classroom, in addition to defining compulsory education from preschool through ninth grade.

The proposal will be submitted for consideration by the National Assembly of People's Power in December, as part of the process to update the legal structure governing the Cuban education system.

Among the most relevant changes is the explicit definition of schooling, an aspect that, according to specialists in the sector, required greater precision within current legislation.

Deputy Minister of Education Marlen Triana Mederos told the press that the regulation establishes compulsory education from the sixth year of life, corresponding to the preschool grade, up until the completion of ninth grade

Another novel aspect is the recognition of knowledge acquired through work practice or self-taught learning, which will allow people to demonstrate competencies and access officially recognized certification mechanisms.

The proposed legislation also addresses scientific research, digital transformation, cybersecurity, and the responsible integration of artificial intelligence within educational processes.

Core focus areas center on advancing child and adolescent participation, strengthening violence protection, and cultivating inclusive educational settings.

Education authorities emphasized that the draft law is the product of an extensive collaboration involving more than 25 government bodies, academic institutions, research centers, and training and educational organizations.

Following the adoption of Cuba's 2019 Constitution, the drafting process began updating key national laws across education, healthcare, labor, sports, and social protection.

The Ministry of Education announced that the document will remain open for public feedback, allowing citizens and specialists to submit comments and proposals before the bill's final presentation to the Cuban Parliament.



The most relevant changes is the explicit definition of schooling, with greater precision. **PHOTO:** Prensa Latina.

Glimpses of Cuban tourism

Text and Photos Roberto F.**CAMPOS**

HAVANA.- Cuban tourism offers a wealth of perspectives, with distinctive landscapes and travel routes that photographers eagerly capture as cherished memories.

The country's diversity is undeniable, offering vibrant colors and a touch of fantasy around every corner.

The archipelago offers a captivating, year-round panorama. Along its tourist routes, a vibrant palette of colors brings both the island's natural beauty and its urban charm to life at any time of the year.

These are spaces for poetry and daydreaming, where visitors can be captivated by new discoveries at every turn and carry them home as lasting memories, preserved through photographs or souvenirs or simply in the mind.













The man of the impossible who keeps making history

By Marta**ANDRÉS**

BRASILIA.- Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva once again defied the odds and wrote another unprecedented chapter in Brazilian history by winning his fourth presidential term through an electoral comeback unlike anything the country has ever seen.

This victory is of extraordinary magnitude. No other Brazilian politician has ever won the presidency four times or prevailed in a runoff after finishing second in the first round.

The result against Senator Flávio Bolsonaro marked a deed that, until a few weeks ago, seemed improbable; but if anyone could pull it off, it was Lula, whose story is built precisely on the impossible.

The steelworker who rose from the working class to become president of Latin America's largest economy has once again demonstrated an exceptional ability to interpret the hopes of the people, withstand adversity, and rebuild majorities when the horizon seems closed off.

His trajectory reads like a sequence of historic milestones. From leading unions during Brazil's push for democratization to founding the Workers' Party and winning the 2002 election. He governed the nation for two consecutive terms between 2003 and 2010, achieving a level of international prominence that cemented his status as a titan of the global left.

In 2018, his imprisonment removed him from the presidential running. Following 580 days in prison, he was released, and his convictions were later systematically overturned by the Brazilian judiciary.

When many considered his career over, he returned to the ballot box to defeat Jair Bolsonaro in 2022. Now, as he approaches his 81st birthday today, October 27, he is writing yet another remarkable chapter in his historic legacy.

After trailing Flávio Bolsonaro in the first round on October 4, Lula managed to reverse the outcome and secure his fourth term in an election that once again mobilized a deeply polarized country.



Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is the first Brazilian politician that won the presidency four times. **PHOTO:** Internet.

However, this victory—in which Lula captured 51.79 percent of the valid votes against 48.21 percent his rival—cannot be explained solely by the figure of the president.

It also belongs to the millions of Brazilians who flooded the streets, packed rallies, shared messages, and transformed the campaign into a powerful collective mobilization.

Social media became one of the decisive battlegrounds in the comeback. The so-called Lula Army, organized on WhatsApp by Congressman André Janones, grew to nearly 11 million members.

The initiative demonstrated how an understanding of algorithms, content-sharing dynamics, and organized participation can be harnessed in the service of a political campaign.

Yet, behind the victory stood the everyday activists, social movements, workers, and youth who embraced the struggle for the nation's future as their own.

Lula's victory, therefore, belongs to a leader who has demonstrated an extraordinary capacity for political survival—but equally to a multitude of citizens who chose not to stand on the sidelines of history.



New Petroleum Legislation amidst Energy Crisis

By Benjamín**MICERINOS**



The legislation arrives when the country is facing daily blackouts lasting more than 20 hours. **PHOTO:** Prensa Latina..

HAVANA.- Cuba's new oil law takes effect at a difficult time for the island's economy, but with the prospect of alleviating a series of problems and looking toward the future.

On October 19, Cuba enacted Decree-Law 135 of 2026 "On Oil and Gas," along with its implementing regulations (Decree 184), a law that replaces the legislation from 1938 and 1959 and seeks to reorganize the entire hydrocarbons sector on the island, from exploration to retail sales..

Decree-Law 135 of 2026, "On Petroleum and Gas," and its accompanying regulation (Decree 184) entered into force on October 19, replacing laws dating back to 1938 and 1959. The goal is to reorganize the entire hydrocarbon supply chain on the island —from exploration to retail commercialization.

The legislation, published in the Gaceta Oficial No. 85, arrives at a critical moment: the country is facing daily blackouts lasting more than 20 hours and remains almost entirely dependent on fuel imports, which are being severely constrained by the tightening of the U.S. blockade.

Far from being a step toward privatization, the text reaffirms that underground deposits and the Exclusive Economic Zone are "socialist properties belonging to the entire people," governed by the principles of being "inalienable, imprescriptible, and non-transferable."

However, the regulation introduces, for the first time, a structured framework allowing non-state actors —both domestic and foreign— to participate in the industry through three primary mechanisms: production-sharing agreements, petroleum concessions, and service contracts.

Director of Petroleum and Gas Investments and Business at the Ministry of Energy and Mines, Pedro Abigantus, said at a press conference that the objective is to "create the legal conditions to progressively increase the production of crude oil and natural gas" and to "boost reserves."

He also acknowledged that, given the current context, this is an ambitious goal. The new law allows micro, small and medium-sized companies (MIPYMES), private businesses with more than 100 employees, and non-agricultural cooperatives to obtain concessions —though always subject to approval by the Council of Ministers.

The legal text stipulates that concessions may last for up to 30 years, with the possibility of a 10-year extension, while production-sharing contracts may extend for up to 40 years.

The State, thus, reserves a priority right to acquire whatever volumes of hydrocarbons it deems necessary for "national energy security," under "competitive conditions."

Through this law, the Cuban government aims to signal legal certainty to foreign capital, although macroeconomic conditions and the country risk stemming from the blockade remain the primary obstacles.

As CUPET deputy director Irenaldo Pérez noted, the geopolitical landscape "continues to limit Cuba's ability to attract investment."

The new petroleum law is, ultimately, a pragmatic attempt at energy survival that maintains the state ownership of the resource, while opening controlled avenues for capital —both domestic and foreign— to facilitate the extraction and refining of the crude oil that keeps the island running.

Tourism Sector Investments Boosted in Sancti Spíritus

By Mariluz**BORREGO**

SANCTI SPÍRITUS.- More than 20 business deals were finalized during the first Tourism Investment Forum held for three days in this central Cuban province, an event that concluded with the opening of a supply market serving both state and private economic actors.

The new facility, managed by the ITH tourism trading company, will hold a variety of product offerings in a single location, and is set to expand soon to a second site in the city of Trinidad – with a new wholesale distribution model.



The meeting concluded with the opening of a supply market serving both state and private economic actors. **PHOTO:** Mintur.

Aida Rita Rivas, director of ITH Trinidad, told **The Havana Reporter** that four suppliers are currently participating – the Sancti Spíritus Agro-industrial Company and three Micro, Small and Medium-sized Companies (MIPYMES) – in addition to ITH itself and a foreign company.

The official also commented that no contracts are required to shop at this market: "Any individual business owner can come here, with the minimum purchase requirement of 200 USD or 24,000 Cuban pesos, register as a client and take the products they need."

The facility, which aims to help lower prices, offers several payment options beyond cash: online payments via POS or points-of-sale terminals, QR codes, and bank transfers.

The initiative also allows for the leasing of space to sell goods and has reactivated a warehouse that had remained largely idle due to the recent slump in Cuba's tourism sector.

As part of the business forum, aimed at promoting the portfolio of investment projects for the tourism sector in Trinidad and Sancti Spíritus, a round of negotiations was held, and various presentations were delivered to the participants.

These presentations included "Sancti Spíritus as a tourist destination," "Foreign investment opportunities in the province," and "Islazul's portfolio of opportunities in the region."

Yordanis de la Caridad Fernández, delegate of the Ministry of Tourism in the province, told The Havana Reporter that this initiative would continue next year to foster sustainable business ventures within the Ministry of Tourism.

"We had around 170 participants, including seven who joined online, from various countries. Presentations were given on opportunities for tourism investment and business, and promising results were achieved regarding future deals that are expected to be finalized soon," the executive noted.

Ciegoplast ensures supply of pipes for water infrastructure system

By Neisa**MESA**

CIEGO DE ÁVILA.- Ciegoplast, the company that manufactures high-density polyethylene pipes and fittings, is maintaining production of its different product lines despite the economic and energy limitations Cuba is facing.
Company director Sergio Barrios emphasized that production remains active across pipes, components, and fittings of various diameters, so as to support the country's national water infrastructure program.

He noted that the workforce has adapted to Cuba's challenging economy by forming production partnerships with other state institutions and private-sector stakeholders. These arrangements aim to secure operational sustainability while boosting workers' incomes.
We have also expanded into manufacturing well casings, discharge pipes for pump installations, and smaller-diameter pipes, which are what people need most today," he explained.
Barrios stressed the vital role of the company's technical and maintenance teams, whose efforts keep the modern machinery operating at an availability rate of over 95 percent.
Meanwhile, Production Director Arael Sotero noted that the company operates 19 machines to manufacture wyes, tees, and elbows of various diameters. The plant also produces 800 and 1,600-liter storage tanks to help households secure water amid the ongoing crisis.
Located in the central Cuban province of Ciego de Ávila, Ciegoplast manufactures a wide range of pipes and fittings to support new investment projects and the rehabilitation of Cuba's water infrastructure.



Ciegoplast production has adapted to Cuba's challenging economy. **PHOTO:** Internet.

MIPYMES Join National Internationalization Program

By Daimy**PEÑA**

HOLGUÍN.- Four micro, small, and medium-sized companies (MIPYMES) from this eastern province have joined the national internationalization program, reinforcing the territory's economic prominence and its contribution to Cuba's sustainable development.
The selection of these entities follows the conclusion of the call for applications for the Booster program, an initiative to drive the internationalization of Cuban MIPYMES promoted by the NAE Project, which seeks to diversify the business landscape and boost exports.
After a hard process of evaluation and visits to 54 candidates nationwide, the proposals from Holguín stood out for their operational strength and direct community impact.
In the sectorial section, focused on agrifood, local entities Olines S.R.L., Productos del Valle S.R.L., and Las Reinas de las Soluciones S.U.R.L. outshined.
Additionally, the Salva PC S.U.R.L. MIPYME successfully secured a place within the geographic booster focused on information and communication technologies.
This combined presence confirms the capacity the Holguín province has to integrate food security with digital transformation.
The program is funded by the European Union and implemented jointly by French Cooperation, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Ministry of Economy and Planning, and the National Institute of Economic Research.
With their official inclusion, the region's MIPYMES enter a pivotal stage for strengthening their export management capabilities and adding value to the island's economy.



The program, reinforces the territory´s economic prominence. **PHOTO:** ANC.

Mexican project to boost food production

By Isabel**DELTORO**

CIEGO DE ÁVILA.- Some 1,500 agricultural producers in Cuba's central province of Ciego de Ávila will benefit from Sembrando Vida (Sowing Life), a joint cooperation initiative between Mexico and Cuba.
Sponsored by the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (Amexcid), the program's second phase targets social well-being, food self-sufficiency, and sustainable development. This stage will directly benefit local livestock handlers and crop farmers across the province.
Amexcid Executive Director Alejandra del Moral Vela explained that the initiative aims to provide agricultural supplies, quality seeds, technology, and technical training to strengthen local production capacity.
She noted that the initiative reflects the bonds of solidarity and brotherhood between the two countries and seeks to strengthen food production and improve the quality of life of the Cuban people amid the tightening of the U.S. blockade.
"We are not here to give you anything for free; we are here to strengthen what you have learned over generations," del Moral Vela said.
The second phase of the Sembrando Vida project now covers eight Cuban provinces. Since 2023, the program has been supporting agricultural producers in the western provinces of Artemisa and Mayabeque.

Joel Despaigne: Another Cuban Volleyball Immortal

By Adrián**MENGANA**

HAVANA.-Cuban volleyball has once again made a powerful impact on the global stage as the strength and explosiveness of Joel Despaigne are celebrated with his induction into the International Volleyball Hall of Fame (Class A 2026). He thus becomes the ninth representative from the island to join the pantheon of immortals.

Considered the best in the world during the 1989–1990 season and one of the great attackers of the 1980s and 1990s, Despaigne received this well-deserved recognition, as his name was added to those of his compatriots Regla Torres, Mireya Luis, Eugenio George, Magalys Carvajal, Mirka Francia, Taimarys Agüero, Yumilka Ruiz, and Regla Bell, who were previously inducted.

Born on July 2, 1966, in the city of Santiago de Cuba, the former national team captain played in more than 350 international matches, winning gold at the Japan 1989 World Cup and silver at the Brazil 1990 World Championship.

His athletic career began at age 12, when he enrolled in the sports training school in his hometown, and soon stood out for his immense strength and leaping ability.

"My passion for volleyball was ignited when I watched the 1978 World Championship on television, where Cuba finished third. I saw players like Ernesto Martínez, Raúl Vilches, and Alfredo Figueredo, whom I wanted to emulate," he recalled.

He also drew inspiration from other players, including Americans Karch Kiraly and Steve Timmons, and Italian Andrea Zorzi.

Despaigne expressed his gratitude for the support of his family, coaches, and teammates —including Raúl Diago, Idalberto Valdés, Lázaro Beltrán, and Abel Sarmiento— as well as Orlando Samuels and Nelson Millán, all of whom contributed to his development as a player. He also voiced his hope that other athletes, both from his own generation and those that follow, might one day join the ranks of this institution.

By inducting Despaigne, the International Volleyball Federation has honored his status as a global icon and a representative of the powerful Cuban style of play, as well as his excellence both on and off the court.

The Hall of Fame was established in 1987 with the mission of honoring the sport legends, recognizing those who have made significant contributions to its development and preserving its history.

As of 2025, 185 volleyball players, coaches, referees and officials from 27 countries around the world have been inducted. The United States is the most represented nation, with 69 inductees, followed by Brazil (23), Russia (17) and Japan and Italy —with nine each.

Its members currently include seven former Cuban women players, most of whom were part of the iconic "Morenas del Caribe" team —three-time Olympic champions. Torres was the first to be inducted (in 2001) and is considered the greatest female volleyball player of the 20th century.

Three years later, it was the turn of the equally legendary Mireya Luis, and in 2005, the iconic coach Eugenio George was inducted. They were followed by Carvajal (2011), Francia (2019), Agüero (2021), Ruiz (2023), and Bell (2024) —all with brilliant records on the court.

Despite receiving this outstanding recognition, Despaigne was unable to attend the ceremony in the United States because he was denied the necessary visa.



Joel Despaigne is considered one of the great attackers of the 1980s and 1990s Volleyball season.

PHOTO: Internet.

On the Road to Lima 2027



By Boris Luis**CABRERA**

HAVANA.- Cuba is moving toward the 2027 Pan American Games in Lima with 138 athletes qualified in 16 sports, a figure that marks the first milestone on a journey that is still unfolding, where every spot earned fuels the delegation's aspirations.

The latest update provided by José Antonio Miranda, general director of High Performance at the National Institute of Sports, Physical Education, and Recreation (INDER), identifies team sports as the main contributors of places, with field hockey leading the way, followed by handball, softball, and indoor volleyball.

The list also includes track and field, canoeing, freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling, modern pentathlon, artistic and rhythmic gymnastics, karate, archery, diving, judo, weightlifting,
and taekwondo.

The qualification process is far from closing, as 17 other sports still have chances to qualify, with opportunities extending through 2027. The coming months will feature a series of decisive tournaments that could further expand Cuba's representation.

The XX Pan American Games will take place from July 23 to August 8, 2027, in the Peruvian capital —which is hosting the event for the second time, after the 2019 edition. The Games will feature a program including 38 sports and 58 disciplines, while 41 countries are expected to participate.

In the case of Cuba, this competition represents much more than just another stop on the sports calendar. It will be a test to gauge the renewal of the country's top athletes, strengthen generational transition, and defend the island's standing among the continent's sporting powers at a time when every result could also open the doors toward the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games.

The Cuban delegation finished fifth at Santiago 2023, securing 30 titles and 69 medals in total. While this represented an improvement in ranking compared to Lima 2019, the overall medal count was lower —a contrast that highlights just how significant the distribution of gold medals is in the race for the medal table.

With 938 titles and 2,195 medals throughout the history of the Pan American Games, the Caribbean island carries a legacy that is both a source of pride and a heavy responsibility, which doesn't offer though a guarantee of future triumphs.

In Lima 2027, the challenge will be to turn every qualifying spot earned into an opportunity for victory, and to demonstrate that the legacy of the Cuban sports can still write glorious chapters.

UN majority support welcomed

By **The Havana Reporter Staff**

HAVANA.- President Miguel Díaz-Canel highlighted the broad support received by the island at the United Nations General Assembly, which adopted for the 34th time a resolution calling for an end to the blockade imposed by the United States.

In a statement, the president noted that the international community had once again spoken out overwhelmingly against this policy, despite the pressure that Cuban authorities reported in the days prior to the vote.

"This victory for Cuba at the United Nations General Assembly is a victory for the heroic Cuban people, who refuse to surrender in the face of economic strangulation, threats, and abuses by the U.S. government," the head of state said.

Díaz-Canel considered the outcome as evidence of international support for the island's longstanding demand to end a policy that affects the country's economic and social development.

Esteban Lazo, president of the National Assembly of People's Power, described the outcome as a victory for the Cuban people, truth, and justice within the United Nations.



President Díaz Canel said the victory at the United Nations is for the heroic Cuban people. **PHOTO:** Estudios Revolución.

"The overwhelming majority of the international community called for an end to the blockade," the Cuban parliamentary leader stated in a comment posted on a digital platform.

Prime Minister Manuel Marrero also welcomed the outcome and emphasized that 130 countries had supported the resolution presented by Cuba.

"Once again, Cuba emerges victorious at the UN, with 130 countries voting in favor of ending the blockade," he declared.

Over two days, representatives from dozens of nations took the floor at the United Nations headquarters to outline their positions on a draft resolution that Cuba has submitted annually to the organization's main deliberative body since 1992.

No people deserve the suffering imposed on us

Speaking at the General Assembly session shortly before the vote, Cuba's Foreign Minister, Bruno Rodríguez, stressed that no people deserved the suffering and abuse being inflicted on his country.

Rodríguez denounced the policy of collective punishment amid an intensified unilateral siege that, he said, had reached unprecedented levels.

"A great power is attacking a Member State of this Organization through economic warfare—a small, independent, peaceful, and solidarity-oriented nation—with the aim of domination and 'regime change.'"

The foreign minister also acknowledged the president of the General Assembly for maintaining procedural order on the floor while condemning what he denounced as a disrespectful behavior by the United States delegation.

He specifically referred to the harassment and unauthorized filming carried out by one of the U.S. officials, which led to the intervention of United Nations security personnel.

