



Tribute to the Heroes

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Beaches at the Center of the Tourism Fair

By Francisco **MENÉNDEZ**

HAVANA.- The 44th International Tourism Fair (FITCuba 2026), to be held in the Varadero resort in the coming month of May, will focus on the Sun and Beach tourism modality.

The event, taking place in this renowned location in the western province of Matanzas (May 6-10), is a major highlight for the travel industry in this Caribbean nation.

FitCuba 2026 will feature Canada as its flagship market, one of the countries with the largest number of tourists who regularly travel to destinations throughout the country. Its venue will showcase the theme chosen for this edition.

Cuban beaches are always at the forefront of the island's tourism due to their pristine condition, beauty and variety, with golden sands, turquoise waters and a history that many would like to experience more than once.

These advantages are highlighted by both tourist guides and the Cuban Ministry of Tourism, to the point that despite the



The pristine condition of the beaches, their beauty and variety attract visitors from all over the world. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

diversification of offers, such proposals are always preferred by foreign and local visitors. With 5,746 kilometers of coastline and an archipelago of over four thousand keys and islands, Cuba is a paradise for those seeking the perfect combination of sun, sand and sea.

The country boasts approximately 430 natural beaches, according to the Institute of Oceanology, and about 50 of them have the

development and infrastructure needed for international tourism.

The combination of warm waters, fine sand, coral reefs and a privileged geographical location turn the island into a world-class sun destination.

In addition, Cuban beaches stand out for their geographical diversity. In the north, from Havana to Holguín, extensive beaches of fine white sand predominate, with calm waters

in shades ranging from turquoise to emerald green, protected by the insular shelf and coral reefs.

On the southern coast, beaches tend to be narrower, with darker sand (golden or even black in some volcanic-origin areas), and a sea with stronger waves and a deep blue color.

Most Cuban beaches have a gentle slope, ideal for family enjoyment.

Saurian Tourism: A Natural Travel Option

By Benjamín **MICERINOS**

HAVANA.- Crocodiles have become a major attraction for travelers coming to Cuba, judging by the increase in demand for nature, adventure and rural-based tourism packages.

Species preservation in this country has a significant impact, not only on experts but also on families and people who enjoy vacationing and taking home interesting knowledge and photographs.

This is the case of the Cuban crocodile, which experts consider an endangered endemic saurian, while others describe it as a living fossil.

This reptile, which has undergone millions of years of evolution to become a symbol of the autochthonous fauna and a challenge for conservation, is native to Cuban wetland and swamp habitats.

This is the Cuban crocodile (*Crocodylus rhombifer*). More than just an animal; it is an ecological and historical symbol whose fate is intertwined with scientific efforts and, more recently, with sustainable tourism.

That is the opinion provided by tourist guides and documents from the Cuban Ministry of Tourism (MINTUR),



The Cuban crocodile is more than just an animal; it is an ecological and historical symbol. PHOTO: Roberto Campos.

which highlight the potential and attractions related to nature, replicated every year in this nation, especially due to its wetlands.

Two species of crocodile coexist in Cuba, with very different fates: the Cuban crocodile and the American crocodile.

The first is the jewel of Cuban herpetology, as it is a totally endemic species that naturally inhabits only the Zapata Swamp (in the western province of Matanzas) and the Lanier Swamp (in the Isla de la Juventud special municipality).

The Cuban crocodile is distinguished by its olive-green coloration with black and yellow spots, a relatively short and

wide snout and a remarkably terrestrial behavior, capable of leaping and reaching surprising speeds.

It is one of the most threatened species on the planet, considered Critically Endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), an environmental network created in 1948.

IUCN's classification refers to the American Crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*) as a species that is more widespread in the Caribbean and Central America, while in Cuba it is found on keys and southern coasts, mostly in the province of Camagüey (Cayo Sabinal, Guayabal Bay) and also in the Zapata Swamp.

This crocodile is larger, has a more elongated snout, a more uniform coloration and is at a lower level of crisis than the Cuban crocodile.

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Eternal Tribute to the Heroes



Despite the rain, the population expressed their respect at the headquarters of the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces. PHOTO: Tribuna.

By Jorge **QUEVEDO**

HAVANA.- Cuba and the progressive world continue paying tribute to the 32 Cuban soldiers who fell on January 3 during the U.S. military attack on Venezuela to kidnap President Nicolás Maduro.

Venezuela declared them Heroes and Martyrs, and Cuba transferred their remains to the homeland on Thursday, January 15, in a trip accompanied by Minister of Foreign Affairs Bruno Rodríguez.

At José Martí International Airport in Havana, the first posthumous tribute was paid during a military ceremony headed by Army General Raúl Castro, leader of the Cuban Revolution and by the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party and President of the Republic, Miguel Díaz-Canel.

The ceremony speech was given by Minister of the Interior, Lázaro Alberto Álvarez, who stated that the combatants "fell far from their home, but not from their duty". He emphasized that by receiving their mortal remains, Cuba renews in front of them its loyalty to the Homeland and the Latin America unity.

"They brought with them the example of dedication, courage and fidelity," he said, recalling the difficult hours of the early morning of January 3, when they were there, faithful to the legacy of internationalism that has characterized every stage of the Revolution.

The minister's speech was followed by the accompaniment and tribute of a representation of the people lined on both sides of the Rancho Boyeros avenue, in Havana, along which the remains were transported in caskets. Several generations of Cubans honored those who died fulfilling their duty, in a dignified and heroic manner.

Then, that day, at 10:00 a.m. local time, the population expressed their respect at the headquarters of the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (MINFAR).

In the lobby, three white floral wreaths were placed on behalf of Army General Raúl Castro and Díaz-Canel, as well as from the ministers of the Armed Forces and the Interior.

In a short time, more than 40,000 Havana residents paid tribute to the heroes, which continued until dusk.

On Friday 16, from dawn, thousands of Cubans gathered at the Havana's José Martí Anti-Imperialist Tribune for the posthumous homage to the martyrs who fell in Venezuela. This was the prelude to a combatant march that covered several kilometers and hours along the Malecón (seawall) of the Cuban capital, under the slogans and oath of the Cubans and their 'Revolution of Homeland or Death, We will prevail, and Until Victory Forever.'

At the event, President Díaz-Canel reaffirmed the unity of the Cuban people, who are determined to triumph, and stated that if they were to be attacked "They would have to kidnap millions or wipe us off the map."

Later, the president addressed his words to the nearby U.S. embassy in Cuba, "No, imperialist gentlemen, we are not

afraid of you at all and we do not like, as Fidel said, to be threatened."

On the same day, the remains of the 32 combatants were buried in their respective towns. In every municipality, all over the country, tributes were held and the people proclaimed them Eternal Glory and Honor.

"And 32 turned into thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands in every city in Cuba where they were born. That is what our sacred Anthem refers to when it declares that 'the Homeland looks upon you proudly,'" Díaz-Canel reaffirmed.

After intense days, messages of solidarity and respect for Cuba and its heroes continue arrive at the Presidency of the Republic and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



More than 40,000 Havana residents paid tribute to the heroes at the José Martí Anti-Imperialist Tribune. PHOTO: Vladimir Molina.

Trump's Clampdown

By DeisyFRANCIS

WASHINGTON.- The President of United States, Donald Trump, has escalated his maximum pressure policy against Cuba by attempting to cut off oil supplies, using arbitrary and abusive tariffs as a coercive weapon against countries that sell fuel to the island.

An executive order issued by the White House on January 29, signed by the Republican president, declares a "national emergency" regarding Cuba, and announces the imposition of tariffs on those who defy and supply oil to the Caribbean island.

According to activist Mark Friedman, Trump's order is a serious violation of Cuba's sovereignty and a clear extraterritorial act.

Friedman, a member of the 'Hands Off Cuba Committee' from Los Angeles, told **The Havana Reporter** (THR) that this action further reinforces the long-standing blockade imposed on the Caribbean nation. "It is not just about oil; Cuba has been banned from trading with the world for more than 60 years because of the longest siege against a nation."

The activist, also a member of the International Association of Machinists Local 1484, stated that this aggression from Washington "comes after the violation of Venezuela's sovereignty and the kidnapping of President Nicolás Maduro and his wife Cilia Flores on January 3."

Víctor Coronado, of the Anticonquista group, endorsed Friedman's opinion that Trump's executive order is the latest attempt to destroy the Cuban

Revolution and undermine its sovereignty. "The Trump administration openly ignores international law and norms," he told THR.

The presidential instruction "continues a long history of economic terrorism against the Cuban people," Coronado said, adding that "Cuba has repeatedly expressed its willingness to resolve disputes with the United States, provided that the talks are conducted on equal terms with mutual respect."

The international community must do more to hold the United States responsible, because dialogue, peace and diplomacy are the only tools that can resolve differences between nations, he emphasized.

Havana has repeatedly stated that Cuba is not a threat to U.S. national security.

However, the executive order states that "the policies, practices and actions of the Government of Cuba are designed to harm the United States and support hostile countries, transnational terrorist groups and evil agents seeking to destroy the United States."

Based on these fabricated narratives, the order asserts that "the situation with respect to Cuba represents an unusual and extraordinary threat" to this country's national security and foreign policy and in that context, President Trump raised his pen: "I am declaring a national emergency concerning that threat."

To address the matter, Trump considered it "necessary and appropriate" to establish a system of tariffs on products from countries that "directly or indirectly" supply any type of oil to Cuba.



The executive order signed by President Trump violates Cuban sovereignty and is the latest attempt to destroy its Revolution. PHOTO: Internet.

US slanders rejected at the United Nations

By DeisyFRANCIS

UNITED NATIONS.- Cuba raised its voice at the UN during an emergency Security Council meeting on Venezuela, in response to unfounded accusations made by the United States delegation.

Cuba's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Ernesto Soberón, said his delegation was forced to speak because it is outrageous that those who have perpetrated unilateral aggressions and systematic violations of international law presume to judge other sovereign states, he emphasized.

"We categorically reject the slanderous claims that Cuba has an intelligence presence in Venezuela. Such accusations lack any factual basis and are a clear attempt to divert attention from the United States' aggressive and criminal conduct in the region," the diplomat added.

Cuba strictly respects the sovereignty, independence and inalienable right the Venezuelan people has to determine their own destiny, as established by the United Nations Charter, he said.

Soberón recalled that cooperation between Cuba and Venezuela in multiple spheres, including the military, has legitimate foundations and is based on bilateral agreements sovereignly signed by both sides. The diplomat reiterated that, as stated by the Revolutionary Government, the 32 fallen



combatants, victims of a criminal act of aggression and state terrorism perpetrated by the United States, were carrying out missions representing the Revolutionary Armed Forces and the Ministry of the Interior at the request of their Venezuelan counterparts.

"These patriots, through their heroic actions, represented the solidarity of millions of Cubans," Soberón highlighted, while stressing that "this (United States) delegation is disrespectfully attempting to

label Cuba as a country that interferes in Venezuela, which we categorically reject," he affirmed.

In the early hours of January 3, the world watched with astonishment and outrage the large-scale attack ordered by U.S. President Donald Trump against Venezuela and the kidnapping of the constitutional leader, Nicolás Maduro, along with his wife, deputy Cilia Flores.

The event, which has since drawn international condemnation, highlighted the interventionist and dangerously expansionist profile of the current Trump administration, which is now threatening other countries with the use of force, including Cuba.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio insists that the land where his parents were born "is in trouble" and says Maduro's kidnapping has brought about a shift in the geopolitical landscape that could lead to the island's collapse.

For more than six decades, Cuba has been the target of an economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by successive U.S. administrations. Following the same script, they have attempted to stifle the Cuban people by using a secret memorandum whose objective is to create a social implosion fueled by dissatisfaction as a result of worsened hardships and economic crisis.

Authorities Launch Device for Post-Chikungunya Treatment

By Ana Laura **ARBEZÚ**

HAVANA.- A medical device designed to prevent and accelerate the healing of skin ulcers has proven to be effective as a complementary therapeutic alternative for joint inflammation and as an analgesic component in the management of chronic post-chikungunya arthralgia.

According to reports, the device in question is the Stimul-W low-frequency and two-channel electrical stimulator, developed by Combiomed, an entity affiliated with BioCubaFarma, which has sanitary registration in Cuba, Mexico and Venezuela.

Introduced in 1998, Stimul-W has been primarily used in secondary and tertiary institutions for research purposes, including the treatment of venous ulcers, diabetic foot ulcers, sickle cell disease, dehiscent wounds and chronic osteomyelitis, sources indicated.

In May 2024, the device was introduced in 188 psycho-pedagogical centers and nursing homes, and in August 2025, in 451 polyclinics.

In January, during Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel's regular meeting with experts and scientists to discuss health issues, an evaluation of the device's effectiveness and implementation protocol was provided.

As part of the discussion, researcher at the Institute of Endocrinology, Dr Yamilé



The device developed by Combiomed is the Stimul-W low-frequency and two-channel electrical stimulator. PHOTO: Internet.

Valdés, presented the findings of an effectiveness study for expanding the use of Stimul-W, specifically in adults with joint symptoms following the acute phase of chikungunya.

She explained that the primary objective of the study is to demonstrate the effectiveness of this medical device in treating adults with joint symptoms,

using electrical stimulation combined with conventional care, as opposed to the conventional standard of care for chikungunya.

The specialist pointed out that the project envisions establishing a standardized procedure for the application of electrical stimulation to alleviate joint symptoms following the acute phase of the disease,

primarily inflammation and pain in the shoulders, hands, knees, and ankles.

It also initially envisions a health intervention and data collection protocol, including the evaluation of the protocol's results among healthcare workers in the provinces of Havana and Matanzas, taking into account the principle that caregivers also need support.

Cuba Highlights Growth and Diversification of Scientific Entities

By Dai Liem **LAFÁ**

HAVANA.- Cuban Minister of Science, Technology and Environment (CITMA), Dr Armando Rodríguez, highlighted the growth and diversification of science, technology and innovation entities.

Summarizing the sector's performance last year, Rodríguez emphasized that 282 entities are currently registered, including 50 universities.

In statements to the national press, the minister pointed out that 2025 was characterized by the rapid transformation of the Science, Technology and Innovation System (SCTI), focused on fostering its increasing role in finding solutions to the complex problems of the economy and society

He mentioned the implementation of new organizational instruments created by science and government policy, which underline the necessary interconnections aimed at achieving the stated objective, and the updating and completion of SCTI's regulatory and legal framework and the approval of the General Law on Science, Technology and Innovation.

The head of the Science ministry noted that in high-tech companies, 28.8 percent of net sales were generated

from exports of high added-value goods or services and intangible income.

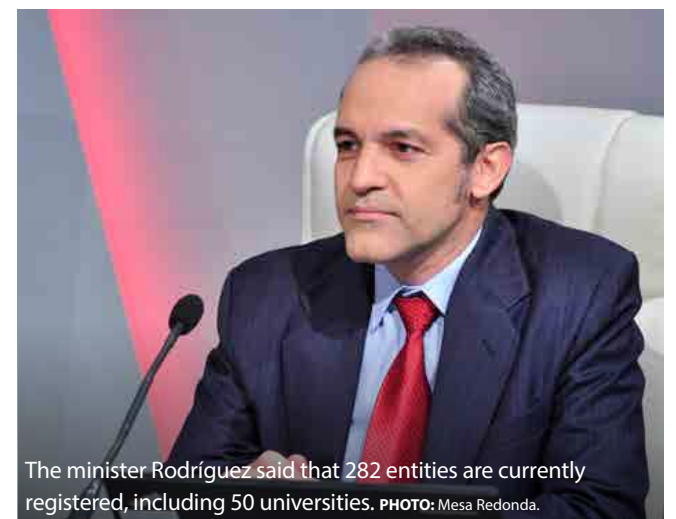
He stated that for every peso of imported good, 2.50 pesos were exported, and 14.8 percent of financial resources were dedicated to research, development and innovation.

Rodríguez also referred to the accreditation of four new intellectual property registrations and the introduction of 13 innovative goods and services products, along with technological improvements which reduce costs and increase productivity and quality standards.

Overall, these innovation-promoting entities carried out 113 research and development projects, 16 of them abroad, and also produced seven products and 12 high added-value scientific and technological services, he added.

He further noted that work is underway to identify and manage state-owned, technology-based micro, small and medium-sized companies (MIPYME) with export capacities, and affirmed that 2025 ended with a portfolio of 5,978 science, technology and innovation projects.

The minister spoke about the increased cooperation with several nations on issues related to food production, energy transition, nanoscience and nanotechnology, digital transformation, climate change, circular economy, medical sciences and biotechnology.



The minister Rodríguez said that 282 entities are currently registered, including 50 universities. PHOTO: Mesa Redonda.

This cooperation includes ties with China, Russia, Belarus and Vietnam.

He recalled the launch of the Third Joint Call with China for new science, technology and innovation projects, which, in addition to marking the beginning of a new phase of intergovernmental cooperation, strengthened ties between universities, research centers and companies from both countries

Art, Musicality and Cuban Identity

By Adis**MORERA**

HAVANA.- The 41st edition of the Jazz Plaza International Festival was characterized by art, musicality, and Cuban identity—an event overflowing with energy and passion for music that made magic possible in Cuba.

More than 1,500 national and international artists shared the stage from January 25 to February 1 in the cities of Havana, Santiago de Cuba, Santa Clara and Holguín.

The festival, which each year emphasizes the diversity of expressions and artistic excellence, was honored with the participation of prominent Cuban artists, including some living abroad, and others from over 20 countries.

Concerts, masterclasses, visits to educational institutions, and tributes to major figures in Cuban music, among other initiatives, made this edition a unique experience, in keeping with the vision of

its artistic director, virtuoso Cuban pianist Roberto Fonseca.

For several days, numerous institutions hosted the event in the provincial venues and in this capital, such as the National Theater, the Cuban Union of Writers and Artists, the Fábrica de Arte Cubano cultural center and the Pabellón Cuba.

In the territorial venues, the occasion was felt as their own, and its successful and high-quality celebration was greatly appreciated, even amidst complex circumstances.

Younger generations and artistic education played an important role this year, as was demonstrated in the Maestro de Juventudes concert, led by distinguished Cuban pianist and composer Frank Fernández, National Music awardee.

There were great joys in this new edition, such as the start of the celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the Síntesis band; the Cuba Vive opening gala, and the initiative to show the festival's atmosphere through an image book.

Another attraction was its visual presentation, by Cuban artist Alfredo Sosabravo, National Visual Arts Award winner in 1997.

Also notable were the performances of musician Bobby Carcassés, Honorary President of this 41st edition, and Cuban artists such as Ignacio "Nachito" Herrera and Dayramir González, as well as the XXI Leonardo Acosta in Memoriam International Symposium, in Havana and debates in the rest of the host provinces.

A luxury show was the section Selección de Maestros, offered at the closing gala by Roberto Fonseca and other prominent performers like Pedrito Calvo, Alexander Abreu, Haila María Mompíe and Yasek Manzano.

The festival's artistic director emphasized that the aim of the event was to reach every region of the country, in an effort to captivate new audiences and showcase one of the most important jazz celebrations in Cuba and Latin America.



Virtuoso Cuban pianist Roberto Fonseca is the Jazz Festival's artistic director. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Baracoa, A Reunion with the Roots

By Verónica**NUÑEZ**

HAVANA.- The director of the film *Baracoa*, Luis Ernesto Doñas, told **The Havana Reporter** that the movie is a journey, a return to the source, to the first village founded in Cuba.

Awarded at the 46th Havana Film Festival, held last December, Doñas's first work is a road movie, a drama with comedy situations, because, as the director says, the Cuban reality is so diverse and unpredictable that humor is inevitable.

After seven years away from filmmaking, Doñas returns to what he called "my initial passion with a great cast, in

Cuba, with a picture that allowed me to travel all over the country; it's more than I expected."

The death of Felipe, an Italian revolutionary who became a naturalized Cuban citizen, sets in motion an unexpected journey that takes his son Pepe and doctor Jimmy to the island's secret heart, according to the website of the Ibermedia Program, which supported the film's production. Amidst beautiful landscapes, eloquent silence and surprising encounters, the journey to remote Baracoa becomes a profoundly transformative experience, somewhere between the surreal and the tender, where opposite worlds ultimately reconcile.

Baracoa marks the return to the Cuban screen of actor Yadier Fernández (Jimmy), accompanied by figures such

as Italians Giancarlo Giannini and Giovanni Giusto, and co-starring Cuban actor Carlos Luis González (Pepe).

"Being a road movie, there are many episodic characters, but I wanted them to be played by outstanding Cuban actors like Paula Alí, Yordanka Ariosa, and Carlos Pérez Peña," the director told THR.

"I feel it's a film where actors create subtle nuances and a very clear arc of transformation, which is truly a great achievement for them," he added.

Carlos Luis González, one of the film's stars, does not have expectations for what he does; he prefers to enjoy the process and not think about the film's reach or awards. *Baracoa* was hard work and, at the same time, a blessing.

We often underestimate the possibility of making films at present, and it has been a gift to be able to do it with this team, these actors, and to share the leading role with a great friend and brother of many years (Yadier Fernández), he said.

Baracoa won the Súmate Award and a Special Mention from the Agrarian University of Havana at the recent 46th Latin American New Film Festival of Havana. For its director, this Almodóvar-style drama embraces time and patience to understand Cuban identity.

"People said it was a vintage film because it's nostalgic and speaks of our values, which we forget in the fast pace of daily life," he emphasized.



Baracoa is a return to the first village founded in Cuba, said the film director Luis Ernesto Doñas. PHOTO: Panchito González.



Voces del Sur Global
Voices of the Global South



University of Havana: 298 Years

By PedroRIOSECO

HAVANA.—The emblematic University of Havana, one of the first founded in Latin America and a Cuban National Monument that has received several national and international recognitions, celebrated the 298th anniversary of its foundation by the Dominican Fathers of the Order of Preachers on January 5, 1728.

The Real y Pontificia Universidad de San Gerónimo de La Habana (Royal and Pontifical University of St. Jerome of Havana) was founded that day at the Convento de San Juan de Letrán (St. John Lateran Convent) Its first rector was Friar Tomás Linares del Castillo, who directed the first faculties: Arts and Philosophy, Theology, Canons, Laws and Medicine.

The University's first statutes, presented on January 2, 1733 and in force since August 1735, established that the institution should be composed of a rector, a vice-rector, four counselors, a master of ceremonies and a secretary.

Each year, the Main Faculty would hold elections for those posts, and in that first phase, a prominent academican stood out: Tomás Romay, author of important research in the fields of medicine and biology.

Years later, after a process of reforms, the Universidad de San Gerónimo became a laic institution and in 1850,

it changed its name to Real y Literaria Universidad de La Habana (Royal and Literary University of Havana.)

In this second phase, the University increased its scientific development and included the faculties of Law, Medicine, Surgery and Pharmacy. These developments helped to forge an indigenous national thought that became a revolutionary commitment for younger generations, with figures like Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, Antonio Bachiller y Morales, Felipe Poey, and Francisco de Arango y Parreño, who passed through the University's halls.



On May 1, 1902, the University started to be relocated to the Aróstegui Hill, in the Vedado neighborhood, where it has remained. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

The institution was marked by the murder of eight medical students in 1871, accused by false evidence and testimony. Another benchmark was the graduation of the first woman, Mercedes Riba, on September 23, 1885.

On January 3, 1899, the colonial authorities delegated broad powers to the rector to resolve all the problems left by the Spanish administration, thus setting the start of its third phase, as the University of Havana.

Following the principles of the Varona Plan, the most modern teaching methods of the time were implemented.

On May 1, 1902, the University started to be relocated to the Aróstegui Hill, also known as the Pyrotechnics Hill, in the Vedado neighborhood.

In January 1928, President Gerardo Machado inaugurated several projects, including the long-awaited stairway of the University of Havana, which begins at the esplanade in front of the Rector's building and ends on the San Lázaro Street. A sculpture that became a symbol of the institution was placed at its head: the Alma Mater.

The statue was created in 1919 by Czech artist Mario Karbel, who drew inspiration from two Cuban women: Felicia Villalón, a 16-year-old girl (for the head, face and neck), and a mixed-race woman from Havana (for the rest of the body).

On October 6, 1933, the Gobierno de los Cien Días (Hundred Days Government), presided over by the then university professor Ramón Grau San Martín, granted autonomy to the campus, fulfilling a students' demand dating back to the time of the university reform, which Julio Antonio Mella started in 1923.



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A Quarter of Cubans are over 60 years

By Caridad **GÓMEZ**

HAVANA.- Currently, 25.7 percent of Cuba's 9,748,007 inhabitants are over 60 years old, making it the most aged nation in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Data provided by the National Office of Statistics and Information (ONEI) indicates that this figure surpasses that

of many European countries, such as Italy (24.1%), Bulgaria (23.8%), Finland (23.4%), Greece (23.3%) and Croatia (23.0%). By province, Villa Clara, in the central region, has the highest percentage (29.1), followed by Havana (28.1). Guantánamo, in the east, has the highest percentage of elderly people (22.5%), while the Havana municipality of Plaza de la Revolución reaches 36.8%. Yateras, also in Guantánamo, is considered the youngest, with a 17.1 percent rate.



Cuba has become an aging society in a short time. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

In its recent report, "Population Aging, Cuba and its Territories 2024," ONEI highlighted that the data was calculated using the effective population figure.

In other words, "the entire population born in the country within a calendar year, plus those with permanent residence who stayed 180 days or more in the country during the last 365 days and who have not died."

Another significant indicator is the ratio of the population aged 60 and over to those under 15. By the end of 2024, this ratio had risen to 1,625 seniors for every 1,000 young people (aged 0-14)—an increase of 247 seniors per 1,000 young people compared to the previous year.

Thus showing 1,625 seniors for every 1,000 children and young people aged 0 to 14.

The study conducted by this entity also shows that eight provinces have aging indexes above the national average, with Villa Clara, Havana, and Sancti Spíritus having the highest values.

In the case of Guantánamo, Santiago de Cuba and Artemisa, although they represent the lowest figures among the country's provinces, data indicate that the population aged 60 and over exceeds the population under 15.

The report indicates that global population aging has gained importance in recent decades and that this demographic phenomenon has implications for multiple aspects of society, posing numerous challenges for countries facing this situation.

Cuba has become an aging society in a short time. The percentage of the population aged 60 and over in relation to the total population between 2015 (19.4%) and 2024 (25.7%) reveals an increase of 6.3 percentage points, demonstrating an accelerated aging process in this decade, according to the report.

Possibility of Boosting Economic Ties

By Waldo **MENDILUZA**

PARIS.- Cuban Deputy Prime Minister, Oscar Pérez-Oliva and General Director of the French Treasury, Bertrand Dumont, discussed in this capital the possibilities of boosting bilateral economic ties and explored ways to achieve this.

The meeting was part of an extensive program developed by a Cuban delegation in France, headed by Pérez-Oliva, and which included a follow-up exchange with the Paris Club, a group of creditors chaired by Dumont. The Deputy Prime Minister updated the host leader on the situation faced by the Caribbean nation, which has been targeted by a renewed intensification of the economic, commercial, and financial blockade under the Donald Trump's Administration, a policy

with extraterritorial reach that also affects French companies, banks, and citizens.

Pérez-Oliva and Dumont talked about a mechanism of cooperation to strengthen relations between the two countries, which have had diplomatic ties for more than 120 years.

The Cuban side also conveyed to the General Director of the French Treasury Havana's willingness to maintain dialogue at top level and to continue working together to increase relations.

The Cuban delegation was also composed of minister of Finances and Prices, Vladimir Regueiro; Cuban Ambassador to France, Otto Vaillant, and representatives from the Central Bank of Cuba, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Office of Statistics and Information, and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment.



Deputy Prime Minister, Oscar Pérez-Oliva and General Director of the French Treasury, Bertrand Dumont. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Virgilio López Lemus, 2025 National Literature Award

By Verónica **NÚÑEZ**

HAVANA.- The Cuban Book Institute awarded poet and essayist Virgilio López Lemus the 2025 National Literature Award, in recognition of his work and contributions to the country's cultural legacy.

The unanimous decision was taken by a jury chaired by renowned writer and ethnologist Miguel Barnet and composed of poets Nancy Morejón, Waldo Leyva, Alberto Marrero, and narrator José Manuel Espino.

Virgilio López Lemus (79), born in the central province of Sancti Spiritus, is a recognized Cuban intellectual, Doctor of Philological Sciences, translator, university professor, and literary and art critic.

His figure was exalted at the 33rd Havana International Book Fair (FILH), which was also dedicated to researcher Francisca López Civeira, 2008 National History awardee.

He will be officially presented with the award at the 34th FILH, to be held from February 12 to 22 this year.

Virgilio López Lemus is the author of the poetry collections *Hacia la luz y hacia la vida* (1981), *Los cinco sentidos*

(1983), *Cuerpo del día* (2000), *Un leve golpe de aldaba* (2006), *El Peldaño* (2010), *Veinte veces el amor* (2019), and *Doce poemas* (2024), among other titles.

Naming just a few of his works, he also published the essay books *García Márquez: una vocación incontenible* (1982), *La décima. Panorámica breve de la décima en Cuba* (1995), *Samuel o la abeja. Estudio de la poética de Samuel Feijóo* (1994), *Oro de la crítica* (2013), and *Las aguas y el espejo* (2019).

He has served as a jury member in some of the most important international award-granting events in this artistic expression, such as the Atlántida Poetry Prize, the Las Palmas de Gran Canaria Poetry Festival, and the Pablo Neruda Prize.

For his contributions to national literature, he has been awarded the Carlo Milares International Prize for Research Essay in Humanities (2003), the Rafael Alberti Poetry Prize at the International Festival of this genre in Havana, and the Maestro de Juventudes Award (2019), granted by the Hermanos Saiz Association.

Silvio Rodríguez Exalted Trova Festival

By José Antonio **FULGUEIRAS**

HAVANA.- The presence of singer and songwriter Silvio Rodríguez exalted the 30th edition of the Longina canta a Corona troubadours festival, at the central Cuban city of Santa Clara. The founder of Cuba's nueva trova (new trova music) movement and author of iconic songs such as La gota de

rocío, Unicornio azul, Óleo de una mujer con sombrero, El necio, among others, also opened a photographic exhibition featuring images he took during his recent tour in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Peru, and Colombia. In the first show, held at the Camilo Cienfuegos movie theater with other invited troubadours, Silvio participated in the television program Entre manos, hosted by Marta Campos and Rey Montalvo.



The participation of the renowned singer-songwriter Silvio Rodríguez enhanced this troubadour festival. PHOTO: Internet.

Silvio's songs were performed by Alejandro Valdés; Anabel López, Irina González; Roly Berrío; tres (instrument) virtuoso Maikel Elizalde; Leonardo García; the Trío Palabras, and El Kikere de Cisneros. Maestro Rachid López sent his greetings from Mexico.

In this show, Silvio Rodríguez, who was accompanied by his daughter Malva – on vocals or the piano – and his wife Niurka González on the flute, recalled the lyrics of beloved troubadours such as Noel Nicola and Pablito Milanés.

Earlier, at the Caturla hall of the José Martí Provincial Library and in front of an audience, the singer and songwriter granted an interview to journalist, researcher and music critic Joaquín Borges Triana.

"The bewilderment one sometimes feels when creating, whether you are doing it well or not; that anxiety, accompanies every song I have made. It is that dissatisfaction, not wanting to make mistakes, which is human," Silvio affirmed.

He revealed that he has always been very home-oriented, but every day he has something pending at the Ojalá studio; the part of his work that he enjoys is not showing what he does, but doing it. And if there was anything unfinished, he said, it would be becoming a better orchestrator.

The Longina canta a Corona festival, a tribute to legendary guitarist and composer Manuel Corona Raimundo (Caibarién, 17 June 1880 – Havana, 9 January 1950), was also attended by 2025 National Music awardee Amaury Pérez, who performed at the El Mejunje cultural center accompanied by guitarist Abel Acosta.

Organized by the Hermanos Saíz Association of the Villa Clara province and held from January 7 to 11, the festival featured prominent foreign troubadours such as Venezuelans Ernesto Luis and Rodolfo Castelbondo; Mexicans Xóchitl Ramos and Darío Parga; Ella Trova, from Colombia; Anita Tripodi Paz, from Argentina, and Tobías Thiele from Germany.

As every year, the traditional pilgrimage to the tomb of the bard Manuel Corona and his muse Longina O' Farrill took place at the Caibarién cemetery, over fifty kilometers from this city.

Fernando Hechavarría, 2026 Cuban Theater Award

By Dylan **LASTRE**

HAVANA.- Cuban actor Fernando Hechavarría was honored with the 2026 National Theater Award, in recognition for his over 50 years of work, as announced by the Cuban National Performing Arts Council.

In the statement released in this capital, the entity acknowledged Hechavarría for his contribution to the theater and his commitment to Cuban culture.

Born in the province of Holguín, the actor began studying visual arts before graduating in 1976 from the National Performing Arts School, in Havana.

His career includes the Teatro Escambray group, in which he worked until 1995, and then the Teatro El Público, a referent in contemporary theater scenes.

Hechavarría has acted in more than 30 films, 36 plays and 44 television programs, including international festivals.

Critics also recognized his versatility and praise him for showcasing Cuban talent in international co-productions.

At present, the outstanding Cuban artist works as a professor at the University of the Arts and the Corina Mestre School, training new generations, the publication also amplified.

It was also informed that the Hermanos Saíz Association (AHS) announced the winners of the musical creation scholarships, an initiative to encourage the work of Cuba's young artistic avant-garde.

This support is granted in collaboration with the Musical Recording and Editing Company (EGREM) and the Bis Music record label.

From the central province of Las Tunas, Jesús Pérez Sicilia was awarded the Lázaro García scholarship, while Víctor Manuel Marín Castillo, from Villa Clara, received the Elena Burke scholarship. In addition, the Dúo Clima members, Diana López and Pedro Acosta, were granted the Ignacio Villa scholarship, which recognizes projects of high creative value.

The AHS has a wide platform of contests and opportunities, serving also as driving force for new Cuban music talents, in partnership with the country's record labels and cultural institutions.



Fernando Hechavarría received the 2026 National Theater Award, a recognition of his long career and his commitment to Cuban culture. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Government Program Updated

By Melissa **KING**

HAVANA.—Prime Minister Manuel Marrero presented a report to the Cuban Council of State on the results of the popular consultation regarding the Government Program, whose contributions will serve to correct distortions and revitalize the national economy.

During the ordinary session held in mid-January at the Capitolio Nacional building, with the participation of president Miguel Díaz-Canel, the head of Government explained that the work system was

improved, MPs' proposals were analyzed, and the Program's study was constantly monitored nationwide.

At the meeting, an updated Government Program was announced, enriched by the results of the popular consultation, the agreements of the 11th Plenary Session of the Communist Party Central Committee, the conclusions of the Parliament's sixth ordinary period of sessions, and the opinions stated at the Economic Affairs Commission.

Priorities for the first quarter include the publication of the updated document, the consolidation of approved measures, and

the identification of territorial potentials to strengthen the Economic Plan and increase budget revenues.

Marrero highlighted the importance of the extraordinary sessions of the Provincial People's Power Councils, which allow evaluating "how much more we can do" regarding the implementation of the Program's objectives, with an emphasis on local areas.

The Council of State evaluated compliance with Law No. 158 of the General Comptroller Office of the Republic and the recommendations derived from its accountability report to the National Assembly in December 2022.

Comptroller Mirian Marbán informed about the actions taken to promote economic and social development programs upon de basis of control.

Chairman of the Economic Affairs Commission, Félix Martínez, pointed out that more than seven thousand prevention and control actions have given priority to the execution of the State Budget, tax administration and the banking process.

Council members recommended intensifying control in key areas such as reduction of the budget deficit, external revenues, food production and strengthening of the state-owned socialist companies.

The session, the first the Council of State conducts in 2026, also approved the annual agenda and reviewed compliance with previous agreements.



The Government Program was debated in labor collectives throughout the country. PHOTO: Trabajadores.

Advancing on Food Sovereignty with Scientific Projects

By Fidel Alejandro **MANZANARES**

CAMAGÜEY- The Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment is advancing on key projects for sustainable food production in this eastern province, with initiatives that prioritize efficiency, resource-saving actions and reduced environmental impact, in line with the national food sovereignty strategy.

According to sources from this ministry, shrimp farming with "Probiotic Biofloc" technology showed one of the most notable results.

This system, applied to increase the quality of post-larvae, achieved a 50 percent reduction in the use of commercial feed, generating significant economic and environmental advantages.

Economic savings are important not only in terms of electricity but also in avoiding the costly and constant treatment of water required in traditional systems.

The ecological benefit is equally relevant. The implementation of Biofloc allowed reducing the Carbon Footprint by 132 tons of CO2 annually emitted, an energy saving comparable to 300 barrels of oil.

In the agricultural sector, integrated fertilization management of rice cultivation in Camagüey has shown promising results.

The foliar application of liquid organic-mineral fertilizers has increased agricultural yields by an average of 3 tons per hectare.

This project has boosted the local production and marketing of biofertilizers, with more than 29,500 liters of Fertomil distributed to date, strengthening the production chain and reducing imports.

At the same time, the so-called participatory phyto-improvement promotes the diversification of crops such as roots, tubers, vegetables and tropical grains. This initiative has expanded the clonal options available to farmers, going from 2 to 5 promising clones.

This strategy has significantly improved seed multiplication rates, from 1:5 to 1:8, and has increased agricultural yields, strengthening local genetic base and resilience to climate change.

These projects, presented during the Cuban Science Day (January 15), demonstrate how national research focuses on practical solutions to the country's economic and productive challenges.

With a comprehensive approach that combines innovation, sustainability and local participation, Cuba continues developing its model of science for the benefit of food security and national sovereignty, offering valuable lessons for nations of the Global South



These projects, demonstrate how national research focuses on practical solutions to the economic and productive challenges.

PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

Among Pirates and Natural Beauties

Text and Photos Roberto **CAMPOS**

HAVANA.- There is a very unique hotel in Cuba that powerfully captures the attention of visitors due to its intimate atmosphere and setting: the Hotel Colony, located on the Isla de la Juventud municipality, formerly known as the Treasure Island.

This cozy spot mainly attracts travelers seeking isolated and peaceful places, where they can also take pictures of amazing

dawns that will accompany them for the rest of their lives.

Considered a refuge full of history, the Colony is erected in the heart of Los Canarreos archipelago and stands out not only as a hotel facility but mostly as a silent witness of Cuba's convulsed and fascinating history in the 20th century.

More than a lodging, it is a door to a time of glamour, intrigue and social transformation, in a natural environment with an exceptional biodiversity.



Venezuela, Latin America and Trump's Attacks on the World Order

By Lianet **ARIAS**

MEXICO CITY.- Violation of international law and a blow to the United Nations Charter were among the expressions used in Mexico to describe the United States' aggression against Venezuela on January 3. Politicians, intellectuals, artists and representatives of different sectors of the society, including some distant from political left ideals, denounced the dangerous course imposed on the planet, in what some are calling a new global "disorder."

In an interview with **The Havana Reporter**, PhD in Latin American Studies from the National Autonomous University of Mexico, José Antonio Hernández, stated that Washington's military attacks mark a new paradigm in international relations.

"We have a clear violation of the United Nations Charter, especially the article that prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of any State. There is violation of Venezuela's sovereignty and the principle of non-interference," he affirmed. In this regard, Hernández referred to the kidnapping of a sitting head of State, President Nicolás Maduro, as another

serious violation, which in his view sets an alarming precedent for any other country in Latin America or the Global South in general.

The expert talked about the impact on multilateralism, especially given the rhetoric of U.S. President, Donald Trump, regarding the withdrawal from various international organizations, which "undoubtedly affects this global architecture created after the Second World War (1939-1945)."

In his opinion, through what the Republican calls the "Donroe Doctrine" (in reference to the Monroe Doctrine conceived by Washington to impose its interests in the region), there is a significant weakening of the UN and multilateralism in Latin America. The researcher pointed out that in Trump's speech, hours after the attack on Venezuela – which left some 100 dead, including 32 Cubans – the magnate did not even bother to conceal his true objective: the South American country's oil.

Following these attacks on Venezuela, Hernández predicted a reconfiguration of the regional arena, with greater hemispheric polarization between countries supporting Washington and those opposing its tutelage or interference.

He mentioned the United States' threats against Colombia, Mexico and Cuba, and said the danger of Washington launching a military aggression or attempting to interfere through other means, such as elections, is increasingly evident, as recently seen in Honduras.

Regarding how to limit Trump, the researcher commented that those actions would have to come from within the United States.

"I see a rather weak response, both regionally and from other world powers, in the case of Venezuela; therefore, I do not see any kind of limits for the Trump administration from the outside, even less from international organizations," he emphasized.

However, the expert does see strong limitations that could arise from the domestic policy implemented in U.S.'s territory, where important protests have taken place, while the Republican's approval rating has declined.



The United States attack against Venezuela is a clear violation of the United Nations Charter.

PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

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Energy Efficiency, an Essential Step

By Teyuné **DÍAZ**

HAVANA.- Energy efficiency in Cuba seeks to optimize the use of energy resources and reduce dependence on fossil fuels, especially in the current context and given restrictions on access to technology.

In an interview with **The Havana Reporter**, Director of Standardization and Energy Efficiency at the National Office for Energy Control and Efficient Use, Joel Trincado, explained that the entity's functions include promoting the development of energy efficiency (EE) programs and the use of renewable energy sources in Cuba.

To this end, the institution has a legal framework whose regulations allow

evaluating EE, from generation to consumption, in energy equipment imported into the country by state and non-state entities, including residential areas, whether for commercialization, manufacturing or assembly.

Trincado emphasized that regulating the import of these equipment has a strategic importance for the island, as it ensures that household appliances intended for sale meet established requirements, in light of the significant energy impact they have.

In this regard, he commented that approximately 2.2 million units of equipment were imported in 2024, a figure that, as of October 2025, had risen to around 2.5 million – with cooking appliances accounting for the majority (34%).

Of this total, 77 percent of foreign purchases were made by legal entities – 69 percent of which were non-state-run, while 30 percent were state entities that made such imports for foreign-currency shops, he affirmed.

The legislative genesis, he said, begins with Resolution 136 of 2009, which was responsible for regulating matters related to Electrical Equipment (EE), electrical safety, and tropicalization. This resolution was repealed following an update to align with international standards adopted by the country. Subsequently, two resolutions emerged: Resolutions 235 and 236 of 2021.

Trincado explained that although non-state run entities are authorized to make imports, regulations do not foresee household

appliances for commercialization, except those linked to the electrical sector in general.

Purchases of household appliances from abroad can be made through any of the 49 authorized importing entities.

Over the years, the country has implemented various policies and programs to improve energy efficiency in different sectors, including industry, transportation and households, but despite these efforts, Cuba faces significant challenges.

However, awareness of the importance of energy efficiency is increasing, and more initiatives are expected to be taken to optimize energy consumption and promote sustainable development, he concluded.



Cuba has implemented various policies and programs to improve energy efficiency in different sectors. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

New Law Modernizes Customs System

By Caridad **SMITH**

HAVANA.- Cuba announced a new legislation updating the customs legal framework after 30 years, and also reported that benefits for non-commercial imports remain in effect.

The Customs Decree-Law 108 appeared on January 21st. in the Gaceta Oficial, and after, details were explained at a press conference.

First Deputy Chief of the General Customs of the Republic of Cuba, William Pérez, highlighted that this instrument is the result of a 10-year process, involving the evaluation of nearly 600 proposals.

"We took into consideration the country's current economic transformations, so the new law strengthens our role as guarantor of national security and trade facilitator, Pérez affirmed. Deputy Chief of the institution, Yamila Martínez, pointed out that Decree-Law 108, in addition to Regulation 134 and nine complementary resolutions "give greater flexibility and transparency to customs operations without compromising control," and legally support modernization processes underway since 1996. She added that procedures are being simplified, bureaucratic obstacles removed and deadlines shortened, in accordance with changes in international trade and technological development.

New aspects include the formal incorporation of the electronic single window, digital exchange of information with other agencies, and the figure of the Authorized Economic Operator, a program of the World Customs Organization that already has two certificates in Cuba and three in process, Martínez highlighted. Customs legal specialists emphasized that "there are no changes to the current regulations for non-commercial operations."

They confirmed the validity of Decree-Law 22 of 2020, which sets limits of one thousand dollars for luggage and 200 for shipments, except recent exemptions raising the latter amount to 500 dollars.

They also ratified the exemptions approved by the Ministry of Finances and Prices for food, hygiene items, medicines and medical supplies in accompanied luggage, as well as the exceptional authorization of up to 500 dollars for these products in unaccompanied luggage.



The new law took into consideration the country's current economic transformations. PHOTO: Endrys Correa.

FAO's Challenges 80 Years After Its Foundation

By Oscar **REDONDO**

ROME.- The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) recently celebrated its 80th anniversary and assessed its achievements and challenges in the fight against hunger, which still affects 673 million people.

This figure shows some progress, as it is 22 million lower than the number recorded in 2022. However, according to expert estimates, some 512 million people worldwide will still face this scourge in 2030, with Africa being the most affected continent – accounting for 60 percent of the total.

This reality threatens the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2) of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda, which aims for Zero Hunger, better nutrition, and all the goals of that plan, thereby impacting people's health and livelihoods, as well as the stability of global agro-food systems.

FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu emphasized that "for eight decades, FAO has worked side by side with nations, farmers, youth, women, indigenous peoples, scientists and entrepreneurs" in the fight against hunger.

However, despite those efforts, 8.2 percent of the world's population still suffers from hunger, lamented Qu, who

acknowledged that food insecurity currently affects more than two billion people, making it necessary to raise collective awareness and promote changes in agriculture.

The senior official stated that, although the world produces enough food, availability and affordability "are not equal for everyone," while stressing that "hunger knows no borders" and "the challenge of food security demands unity among nations and people."

Throughout 2025, FAO's main activities focused on transforming agro-food systems, promoting financial innovation, sustainable land management, and climate resilience, to advance toward the eradication of famine.

In this period, collaboration between this UN body and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) grew stronger in relation to the design of the Agricultural Outlook 2025-2034, as well as in plans for technological modernization, the development of family farming, and biodiversity protection.

With initiatives such as 'FAO Transforma,' innovative financial solutions were sought to drive changes in agro-food systems and promote sustainable investment.

The FAO's 2025 State of Food and Agriculture report focused on addressing land degradation and sustainable soil management, as well as the necessary implementation of projects for climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation.

FAO continued to promote integrated land-use planning and water management, and provided support for national policies.

Also important are FAO's efforts to explore the possibilities of applying Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital technologies to improve agro-food systems.

FAO Director-General affirmed that "the fight against starvation is not just about food, but about dignity and our shared humanity."



Recognition of best practices and innovative approaches
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Cuba Thanks China for the Donation of 30,000 Tons of Rice

By Alfredo **BOADA**

HAVANA.- Cuba received the first batch of a 30,000-ton donation of rice from China, sent as an emergency measure to complement national efforts to meet the population's food demands.

In a gesture of gratitude, Cuban Vice Prime Minister Óscar Pérez-Oliva stated that this donation is a concrete expression of the exemplary, unconditional, and selfless cooperation of the People's Republic of China with the Caribbean nation.

The official emphasized that China, not only cooperates with Cuba in sending food and in the energy sector and other areas, but is also effectively involved in increasing national rice production and achieving food self-sufficiency.

"We deeply acknowledge and appreciate this aid at a complex time when levels of aggression are rising and the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States on the Cuban people is intensifying in an unprecedented way," Pérez-Oliva stated.

The deputy prime minister stressed that this gesture is a concrete expression of

building a community with a shared future between the peoples of both countries.

Meanwhile, Chinese ambassador to Cuba, Hua Xin, said that these are the first supplies the government of his country sends to Cuba as part of the food assistance emergency project.

"This assistance not only represents the deep and special bonds of friendship between our two nations, but also our unwavering commitment to remain united even in difficult times," the diplomat added.



The 30,000-ton donation of rice is a concrete expression of the exemplary, unconditional, and selfless cooperation of China with Cuba. PHOTO: Abel Rosales.

Pérez-Oliva noted that two shipments totaling 2,400 tons of rice have already arrived at the Mariel container terminal and the Santiago de Cuba port, which will be distributed immediately and free of charge to the Cuban population.

During the first half of this year, two additional shipments will continue to arrive in Cuba, until completing the total amount donated by the Chinese people and authorities, the official affirmed.

The Chinese government is promoting this aid project, and a third shipment of 15,600 tons is ready for dispatch, while a fourth (9,600 tons) will be dispatched by mid-February, to benefit all the population of the island, Ambassador Hua commented.

The diplomat said that his country's assistance to the areas affected by Hurricane Melissa is also progressing, and recalled that in November 2025, six shipments of food were urgently sent to Cuba by air, in addition to essential supplies such as solar lamps, roofing materials and mattresses.

Two shipments were also received by sea in January at Santiago de Cuba's port, which will ensure reconstruction and recovery after the disaster caused by the storm in the eastern provinces.

"We deeply understand that true friendship is revealed in times of greatest need," the ambassador emphasized.

Cuba Qualifies 226 Athletes for Santo Domingo 2026

By Yodeni**MASÓ**

HAVANA.- The high-performance general director of the Cuban Institute of Sports, Jose Antonio Miranda, confirmed 226 athletes qualified for the Santo Domingo Central American and Caribbean Games, scheduled from July 24 to August 8. According to the CEO, that is the number validated so far by the organizing committee, an essential step to consider it official with respect to Cuba's goal of finishing in the top three in the medal standings.

The official commented that 118 quotas were secured by men and 108 by women, distributed across 17 disciplines, with field hockey (32), baseball (24) and volleyball (24) contributing the highest numbers.

Miranda acknowledged the demanding nature of the competition, marked by the challenge of competing against nations with greater economic and logistical resources.

In this regard, he emphasized that Mexico, Colombia and the Dominican Republic are expected to pose the greatest challenge at this regional multiple-sport event, the oldest in the world.

In 2025, Cuba secured other spots in shooting (20), fencing (18), wrestling (17), softball (16), canoeing (12), weightlifting (12) and rowing (12), he added.

The remaining quotas were in diving (8), archery (8), rhythmic gymnastics (7), artistic gymnastics (6), cycling (4), trampoline (4) and sailing (2).

The high performance director also recalled that the qualification process would continue

in the coming months, allowing the country to determine the estimated number of athletes needed to compete in this type of event, the third to be held in the Dominican Republic.

Three years ago, in San Salvador, Cuba participated with a delegation of 499 athletes (267 men and 232 women) and won 74 gold, 59 silver, and 63 bronze medals – only surpassed by Mexico (145-108-100) and Colombia (87-92-65).

In 24 appearances, the Caribbean nation has accumulated 1,925 gold medals, 1,022 silver and 802 bronze, with a streak of first places from 1970 to 2018, excluding absences from the San Salvador (2002) and Mayagüez (2010) editions.



Leyanis Pérez's Golden Rematch

By Boris**CABRERA**

HAVANA.- Cuban triple jumper Leyanis Pérez climbed high again after receiving the Best Latin American Female Athlete award at the 61st Prensa Latina Sports Survey.

The Vedado Hall of the Hotel Nacional breathed history. The lamps seemed suspended like ancient judges and the murmur took the shape of anticipation. Then she appeared: dressed in red, tall like a presage, effortlessly beautiful, and she moved with the serenity of someone who has already learned to conquer the inner silence.

She was unrivaled in the voting, just as she was in the high jump pool throughout 2025. She swept with everything.

Her coach, the unseen support of every jump, stood by her side. She was also surrounded by Liván Moinelo, winner of the men's award and a symbol of Cuban baseball in Japan; Javier Sotomayor, a living legend of world high jump, and Enrique Figuerola, founder of this survey.

But she was the center of attention. Everything revolved around her, as if the entire room had been designed to tell her story of setbacks and her rise to the top of the sport.

Because Leyanis's story does not begin with glory, but pain. Paris 2024 was a harsh blow, a "very strong" psychological setback, as she herself confessed. Against all the odds, she missed the Olympic podium, and right there, where many break down, she told herself: "You can do it. This can happen to any athlete." And she decided that that pain would not be the end of the story.

"Since January 1, 2025, I decided that this would be a crucial year to me," she told **The Havana Reporter** with a firm voice but overcome with emotion.

It was not a promise thrown into the air: it was an oath she met. World indoor champion, world outdoor champion, queen of the Diamond League.

Tokyo is a key part of her story. "That outdoor world championship was something I set out to attain," she recalled. She knew it was going to be a huge

challenge; the competition was going to be fierce, but she found fuel in that risk. "Nothing will stop me," she told herself. And nothing did.

The award made her fully aware of what she had experienced, she confessed. "Until today, I had not believed what I had achieved." She does now.

The recognition restored the complete image of her own jump: that of an athlete who fell and rebuilt herself stronger.

There is no pause on her horizon. "Leyanis is not going to stop," she stated without raising her voice. She wants to improve her personal best, keep winning medals, keep accumulating world titles.

February will welcome her in France; then, Poland, with the challenge of defending her indoor crown, even after overcoming a virus that forced her to slow down when her body was urging her to hurry. It is all a process, a step, a preparation for what will come next, she affirms.



Leyanis Pérez was elected the Best Latin American Female Athlete at the 61st Prensa Latina Sports Survey. PHOTOS: José Tito Meriño.

Challenges for Latin America in the Face of “Three Mountains”

By Isaura **DIEZ**

BEIJING.- Chinese academic Wang Yiwei emphasized that the main reason behind the U.S. aggression against Latin America lies in the global inability to dismantle what he called the “three mountains:” imperialism, colonialism and hegemony.

Yiwei, a professor at the Chinese University of Renmin, described military actions like the one carried out against Venezuela as an open violation of national sovereignty and an event that, in the 21st century, “has become a joke for the world.”

In an interview with **The Havana Reporter**, the expert commented that those practices are not isolated, and stressed that they are linked to a long history of U.S. interventions in Latin America, including invasions and coups d’état, under various political and security pretexts.

The academic highlighted that the United Nations Charter proclaims the sovereign equality of all States, but warned that this principle is ineffective when countries lack the real capacity to defend their sovereignty.

Wang pointed out that China has managed to avoid colonial subordination through its independent development and reduced



The professor at the Chinese University of Renmin, described the military action against Venezuela as an open violation of national sovereignty. PHOTO: Prensa Latina.

technological dependence, although he acknowledged that they still deal with external interference from the United States, for example, regarding arms sales to Taiwan.

He affirmed that many nations face a paradox marked by “economic dependence on China”

and “security dependence on the United States,” which limits their decision-making power.

In relation to Latin America, he stated that Washington seeks to reaffirm its historical influence in the region and curb Chinese

presence in strategic sectors such as energy, critical minerals and infrastructure.

According to Wang, these actions are part of Washington’s strategic competition with Caracas.

“Unlike what is typical in civilizations, these (Latin American) nations have not managed to chart a path of development suited to their national conditions. They have not overcome the ‘three great mountains;’ they have not achieved true independence and autonomy, nor have they completed the revolutionary tasks of the modern era,” he affirmed.

The analyst considered that the situation in Venezuela shows that for the United States, Latin America remains its “backyard,” and that the Trump version of the Monroe Doctrine (1823) has arrived.

According to Wang, this prevents Latin America from defining a path of development suited to its own national conditions.

“The United States is no longer pretending: it is openly pursuing hegemony in the Western Hemisphere, a century-old tradition.

“This very pursuit has the inherent objective of countering China’s influence, reshaping supply chains for critical minerals and energy resources, and serving its so-called strategic competition with this country,” he emphasized.



FOREIGN INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR THE CUBAN HEALTH SECTOR

