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**Cuba closes schools, adopts more measures due to COVID-19**

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By: RHC  
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Cuba announced additional measures on Monday as part of its national plan for the confrontation of the novel coronavirus on its territory.

They include the closing of all educational centers for a month, except daycare centers for children younger than five years of age.

The actions also include the banning of the departure of citizens from the national territory, and confining to isolation centers for 14 days every resident in the country who arrives from abroad, starting at midnight.

Some 32,574 foreign tourists were still on the island. According to the newly announced measures, they are ordered to stay at the hotels and private houses until they leave the country. Excursions are being suspended nationwide, as well as car rentals.

Prime Minister Manuel Marrero announced these new measures in a second Round Table TV and Radio program broadcast from the Palace of the Revolution.

Prior to the announcement, the Prime Minister acknowledged the feedback received from all over the country on the first measures that were announced last Friday.

He said that the main concern collected from the comments was related to the low perception of risk that still prevails among some sectors of the population, with gatherings in public spaces.

The National Plan to confront conceived three phases. Marrero said that the country is still in Phase-1, which is the pre-epidemic phase. Phase-2 would be declared in the presence of limited autochthonous transmission and Phase-3, would entail the peak of the circulation of the virus on the island.

Cuban health authorities informed that as of March 23, there were 40 confirmed of novel coronavirus in the country. As part of the new set of measures, elective surgeries were suspended, as well as visits to hospitals.

Other actions announced during the program referred to domestic trade, treatment of taxes for the self-employed aimed at the discouragement of lines and large concentration of people.

Prime Minister Marrero said that the implementation of these measures seeks to preserve the lives and the health of all Cubans.

"On the government relies the responsibility of establishing these measures, and the government will do its best to enforce every one of them strictly," he said.

Edited by Jorge Ruiz Miyares

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