

Ministers join the president in reassuring the population



Havana, September 12 (RHC)—Ministers of the sectors in Cuba responsible for mitigating the effects of the fuel shortage joined President Miguel Diaz Canel Wednesday on national TV Round Table program in reassuring the population that there is no need to panic.

Energy and Mines Minister Raul Garcia Barreiro, said liquefied gas is guaranteed as the basis for cooking food.

He explained that the fuel whose shortage is more severely felt -- diesel -- currently participates only in 10% of electricity production and that photovoltaic parks contribution to the national grid is of over 2%.

He added that the residential sector currently consumes sixty percent of all the energy produced and called for measures to be taken to save electricity during peak time.

There will be blackouts, but they will not be as long nor as intense of those of the Special Period, he said.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Economy and Planning, Alejandro Gil, said that production demand should not coincide with peak load time, and priority will be given to diesel supplies aimed at guaranteeing food delivery to the population.

Gil Fernandez ratified that authorities anticipate that the expected Gross Domestic Product growth will be met and he assured that there are enough products to supply the population, so the issue now is about guaranteeing those products reach the population

"There is no fear, we can guarantee and we are working so that the economy reaches its goals in 2019," he said.

Ensuring the transportation of fuels and food and enhancing rail transport, in addition to ensuring airport operations, are the measures that the Minister of Transportation Eduardo Rodriguez Davila described during the program.

He spoke of the impact on public transport in recent weeks and the need to move in time rail transport, with the least amount of impact on passengers. He mentioned that at least one daily departure will be maintained between Havana and the provinces, starting from the high consumption of this modality.

The minister urged drivers, especially those of state-owned vehicles to practice carpooling, as a measure to alleviate public transportation.

On his special TV appearance on Wednesday, the president announced that while the fuel situation persists, the levels of economic activity will be adjusted, a greater efficiency will be sought in the transporting of products out of ports, there will be greater planning on the use of means of transport, the peaks of energy demand will be displaced and some effective actions that were used in the Special Period will be implemented.

He added that the measures include changing work hours, the implementation of modalities of remote work, some investments will be temporarily stopped and guaranteeing the programs of food, housing, computerization, exports, renewable energy sources, tourism, transportation and national production.

This Thursday, September 12, President Miguel Diaz-Canel and the ministers will continue providing information to the Cuban population on the fuel situation deriving from stepped up U.S. hostility against Cuba. Radio Havana Cuba will be broadcasting live, and our English service will bring you details of their statements.

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