

Sensible cultural and economic impulse in Guantánamo

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By Roberto Morejón

Cuba's eastern province of Guantánamo exhibits among its economic and cultural successes the creation of the so-called Chocolate with Coffee Festival, in allusion to two of its main productions, whose fifth version has gained space in the capital of the territory.

Thanks to an improvement in the epidemiological situation, Cuba's easternmost province was able to hold the festival, although the activities were subject to the observance of unavoidable hygienic-sanitary measures.

The initiative is praiseworthy because in the same meeting the organizers give prominence to the inextinguishable music of Guantanamo and the whole archipelago, along with cardinal lines of the economy.

With local and national artists in a year when Guantanameros suffered confinements due to Covid-19, the Chocolate with Coffee Festival offers a giant umbrella to the knowledge and possible businesses on essential resources of the region's economy.

Guantanamo relies mainly on its contributions of coffee, cocoa and coconut, which have not been exempt from losses caused by hurricanes, the country's material difficulties due to the U.S. blockade and the effects of the pandemic.

But in this complex context, Guantánamo hosted the first meeting of coffee exporting poles, as part of the essentially cultural Festival.

The coffee growers, both representatives of the farmers and businessmen, do not only have the aromatic bean in their exportable portfolio, but also other agricultural products such as aloe vera, vegetable charcoal and ginger.

The meeting of the exporting pole also set as a way to disclose the results of the cocoa and coconut branches, the latter a real supplier of raw materials because they take advantage of the pulp, water, fibers and shells.

Although farmers, cooperative members and land users have learned to intersperse other crops among the traditional ones to reduce losses in the event of cyclones, Guantánamo is still the land par excellence of coffee, cocoa and coconut.

Hence the wise idea of linking them with cultural traditions and expectations, to offer the rest of the archipelago and the world an image of a hard-working people, determined to overcome adversities, but willing to guarantee recreation to the beat of the Cuban son.

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