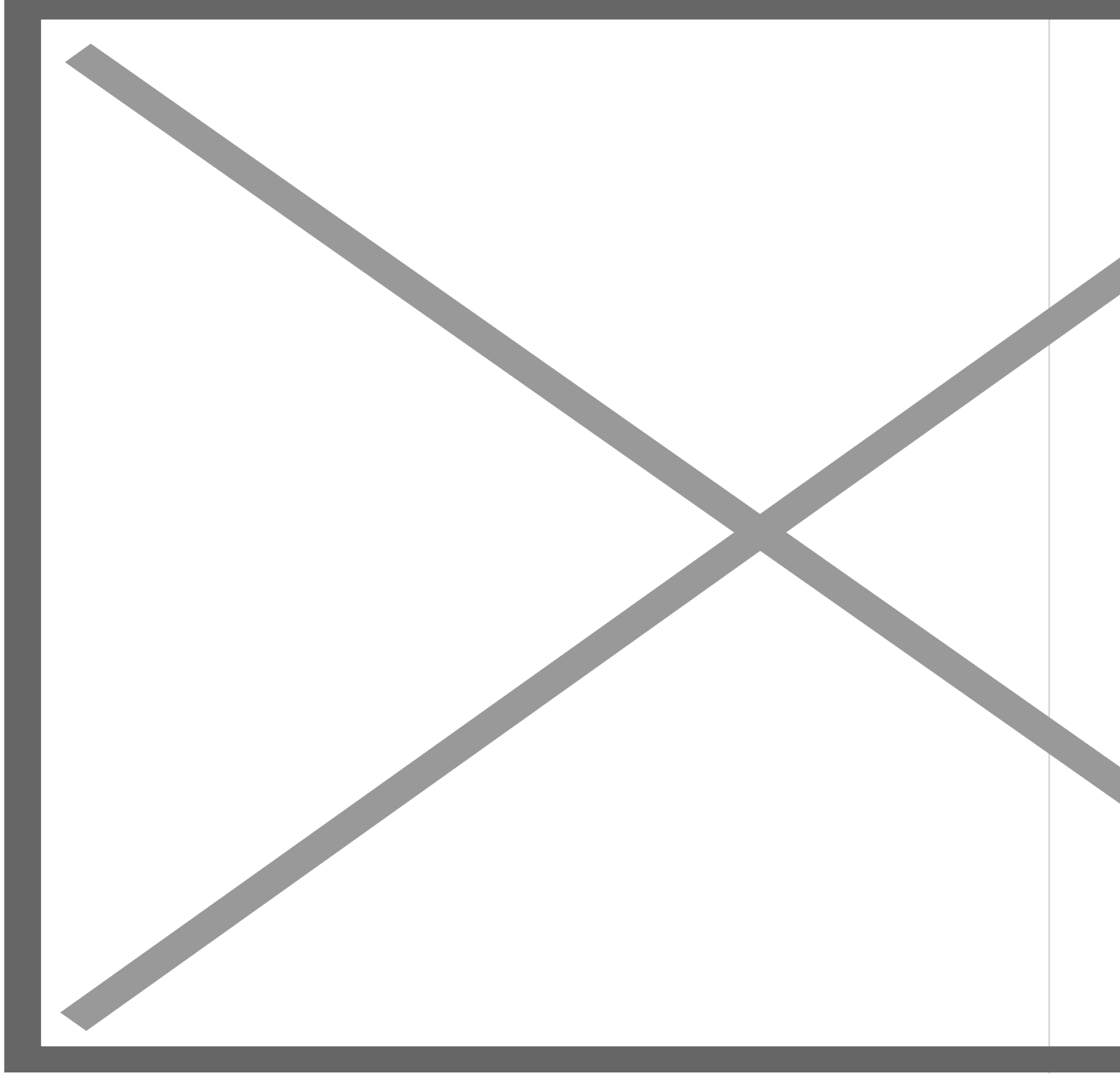


*Cuban president receives  
Minister of State of India*

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**Photo: Estudios Revolución**

Havana, January 14 (RHC)-- Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez received the Minister of State for Foreign and Cultural Affairs of India, Her Excellency Ms. Meenakashi-Lekhi, who began an official visit to our country on January 12, coinciding with the 63rd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two nations.

In a fraternal atmosphere, both parties expressed their willingness to continue strengthening ties of solidarity and cooperation.

Díaz-Canel referred to the significance of the visit of the Minister of State and Foreign and Cultural Affairs of India in the current scenario, and also considered it a tribute to the way in which the historic relations between the two nations were shaped, which he described as uninterrupted, exemplary and respectful.

The Head of State highlighted the impact of India as part of our National Economic and Social Development Program until 2030. Because there are very important businesses and programs in which India participates in the areas of food, pharmaceutical industry and renewable energy sources.

The President also ratified the country's willingness to continue expanding trade, economic and cooperation relations between both nations.

During the exchange held by the Cuban President with the Minister of State and Foreign and Cultural Affairs of India, held at the Palace of the Revolution, the President of our country also thanked the upcoming arrival to the island of the first shipment of rice purchased with a credit line granted by the Indian government, an expression of the high priority given by Cuba to its historic ties of friendship and bilateral cooperation.

In this regard, the President of our country also thanked the Government and people of India for their support in Cuba's struggle against the blockade, and considered that both countries could work together to promote exchanges on current challenges and global problems as part of the Group of 77 plus China in which our nation has recently become the Pro Tempore President.

For her part, the Minister of State for Foreign and Cultural Affairs of India, Her Excellency Ms. Meenakashi-Lekhi, exchanged on issues of mutual interest such as food security and the care and conservation of the environment, which are points of convergence between the two countries.

The Indian Minister of State, who is also a member of the Lower House of Parliament, is making her first visit to our country, a period in which she has developed an intense agenda of activities.

The Minister of State of India was accompanied by the Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Indian Foreign Ministry, His Excellency Hifzur Rahman Mohammad, and the Ambassador of India to Cuba.

Representing the Cuban side were Gerardo Peñalver Portal, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs; Ángel Villa Hernández, Deputy Director General of Bilateral Affairs of MINREX; and Alberto Blanco, Director of Asia and Oceania of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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