



**Southwest
District
Mission
Program,
Inc.**

**CUBA
SO
CLOSE.
..
BUT, A
WORLD
AWAY!**

Cuba, no food, no medicine and now this.....

News from **HAVANA-Live** article this morning January 27.

Cuba's death toll from the coronavirus reached 200 on Tuesday, with authorities reporting nearly as many deaths so far in January as in the six previous months combined, due to an unprecedented acceleration in infections. While Cuba had just a tenth of the world average of daily infections per capita for much of last year, cases have surged since the government reopened borders in November and loosened restrictions on daily life.

The situation in Cuba is now much worse than at any other point during the pandemic and edging closer to that world average. The health ministry has reported 54 deaths in January so far compared with 60 in the previous six months, with daily infection numbers hitting new records on a regular basis – 786 on Tuesday – and cases spread throughout the Caribbean island nation.

Like many countries, Cuba suffered the rebound in cases after opening borders without requiring inbound travelers to provide negative coronavirus test results. That coincided with a diminished sense of risk as its outbreak appeared successfully contained, not helped by authorities holding rallies celebrating Cuba's socialist values, analysts say.

Many Cubans who live in hard-hit countries like the United States and Mexico flew over to celebrate Christmas and New Year with their relatives on the island, failing to quarantine properly and infecting locals.

The government has since brought down infections from abroad by requiring travelers to present negative coronavirus test results. And it has imposed a new lockdown with schools and restaurants closed throughout much of the island and cultural and sporting activities once more suspended. The government has also promised to vaccinate the entire population this year with one of its four vaccine candidates that are currently undergoing early and mid-phase trials.

Some Cubans, though, worry whether and when any of those candidates will prove successful. And many complain how hard it is to practice social distancing when they must queue up for hours to shop for scarce goods due to the economic crisis.

I ask for your prayers for our brothers and sisters in Cuba.

In Christ,

Dan Christopherson

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