

“COVID-19 Has Not Disappeared” Alerts the Ministry of Public Health as Cases Rise

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MADRID, Spain. - In light of the rise in confirmed COVID-19 cases in the island, José Ángel Portal Miranda, Cuba’s Minister of Public Health (MINSAP, by its Spanish acronym), called on the public to act responsibly: “heighten sanitary conditions and comply with distancing and protection requirements wherever there are crowds.”

“COVID-19 has not disappeared,” stated Portal Miranda, and asked that people “prioritize the use of face masks, especially by those who are vulnerable.”

Quoted by the *National News Agency (ACN, by its Spanish acronym)*, the minister indicated that new vaccine boosters had recently been ordered for pregnant and lactating women, individuals 70 years of age and older, and those who are vulnerable due to existing pathologies or because of their places of employment.

According to the most recent report of the Ministry of Public Health, at the close of business January 11th, 2023, 143 patients were hospitalized with coronavirus: 52 of them suspect of having the disease, and 91 are confirmed. Of the latter, one case is in critical condition.

Throughout last year, the incidence of COVID-19 had dropped to zero in the

country. However, since late 2022 and the start of 2023, health authorities warned Cubans that contagion was on the rise.

José Ángel Portal Miranda informed recently that between November and December, the average number of coronavirus cases increased from 3.7 to 19.1.

According to MINSAP, the island is going through an increase in the XBB1 Omicron variant, which is entering Cuba through tourism.

This new Omicron variant, now circulating in 29 countries, has similar characteristics to previous variants, and shows the same behavior.

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