

Cubans can now buy a car more easily

22nd December, 2013



Cuba's government is making it easier for Cubans to buy foreign made, new and used cars. The Havana Times

reports that: "The Council of Ministers of Cuba decided at its current meeting to open up the retail sale of new and used motorcycles, cars, vans and minibuses." It added that the government would also "prioritize bicycle sales on the retail market" and offer them at very affordable prices. New laws mean the government is further relaxing regulations on car ownership. Until 2011, people were not permitted to sell cars that were made after the 1959 Cuban revolution. This made Havana look like it was in a time warp as every car on the road was a vintage model from yesteryear.

The Cuban government will set and control the price of all imported and new vehicles. It will also be the only entity that can import foreign cars into the country. Cubans will need to buy an imported car from the government. According to the Communist Party newspaper, all profits from sales will go towards improving Cuba's roads and transportation system. Car dealers are not anticipating a huge influx of sales. Most people in Cuba cannot afford to buy even a used car, let alone a new one. Havana resident Jorge Canso commented on this, saying: "Yeah, I can buy one, but with what? Unfortunately our economy doesn't allow us to save money to be able to buy one."

Sources: BBC / Miami Herald / Havana Times

Writing

What are the advantages of a world with and without cars? Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

foreign cars / meeting / prioritize / government / regulations / revolution / yesteryear / control prices / new vehicles / profits / transportation / car dealers / save money

True / False

- Cuba is still making it difficult for people to buy but foreign cars. T / F
- The government is giving priority to the sale of bicycles. T / F
- In 2010, people couldn't sell cars that were newer than 50 years old. T / F
- The Cuban revolution happened over 60 years ago. T / F
- There will be no price controls on cars sold in Cuba from now. T / F
- Only Cuba's government will be able to import foreign cars. T / F
- All profits from car sales help improve Cuba's transport infrastructure. T / F
- A man called Jorge is very happy that he can now buy a car. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|---------------|------------------------|
| 1. current | a. rush |
| 2. affordable | b. the past |
| 3. further | c. fix |
| 4. permitted | d. latest |
| 5. yesteryear | e. organization |
| 6. set | f. bettering |
| 7. entity | g. to a greater extent |
| 8. improving | h. inexpensive |
| 9. influx | i. let |
| 10. allow | j. allowed |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- Why did Cuba make it difficult for people to buy cars?
- How important is a car to you?
- How will the new decision change people's lives in Cuba?
- Would you like to see Havana when it was full of pre-1959 cars?
- What's your favourite car (and why)?
- What are the bad things about cars?
- Do you prefer the look of today's cars or of vintage cars?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. Cuba's government is making | a. to be able to buy one |
| 2. offer them at very affordable | b. model from yesteryear |
| 3. relaxing regulations | c. improving Cuba's roads |
| 4. it was in a time | d. control the price |
| 5. every car on the road was a vintage | e. of sales |
| 6. set and | f. on car ownership |
| 7. the only entity that can | g. it easier for Cubans |
| 8. go towards | h. import foreign cars |
| 9. anticipating a huge influx | i. warp |
| 10. save money | j. prices |

Discussion – Student B

- Do you think cars are good value for money?
- Are imported cars best?
- Which country makes the best cars?
- What are the roads like in your country?
- What will cars be like in the future?
- What would your city be like if it were a no-car city?
- Do you think Cuba will have more problems now because of more cars?
- What questions would you like to ask Cuba's president?

Spelling

- The nulciCo of Ministers
- offer them at very afordleabf prices
- relaxing uorantieslg on car ownership
- people were not itmeerptd to sell cars
- the 1959 Cuban nolirvuteo
- a gteivna model from yesteryear
- all imported and new lsvichee
- import rfeogni cars
- go towards imgnvpori Cuba's roads
- iaaigtncpt a huge influx of sales
- cannot dofafr to buy even a used car
- aetnryfntluoU our economy doesn't allow us

Answers – Synonym Match

1. d	2. h	3. g	4. j	5. b
6. c	7. e	8. f	9. a	10. i

Role Play

Role A – Cars

You think cars from yesteryear are better than they are today. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ideas. Also, tell the others which of these are better today than in the past (and why): people's manners, city life or television.

Role B – People's manners

You think people's manners from yesteryear are better than they are today. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ideas. Also, tell the others which of these are better today than in the past (and why): cars, cities or television.

Role C – Cities

You think city life from yesteryear is better than it is today. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ideas. Also, tell the others which of these are better today than in the past (and why): people's manners, city life or television.

Role D – Television

You think television from yesteryear is better than it is today. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ideas. Also, tell the others which of these are better today than in the past (and why): people's manners, city life or cars.

Speaking – Price controls

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put things governments should control the price of at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- healthcare
- electricity
- bread
- education fees
- phone calls
- cars
- houses
- cigarettes

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.