

## Cuba bars international airlines from refueling amid deepening fuel crisis

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**Dhaka: Cuba has informed international airlines they can no longer refuel at the country's airports due to an acute shortage of aviation fuel, a move expected to disrupt flight operations over the coming weeks.**

According to the EFE news agency, citing two sources, Cuba's leadership said on Sunday that the island would effectively run out of aviation kerosene from Monday. The shortage is expected to last for at least a month and affect all international airports across the country.

The development follows renewed pressure from U.S. President Donald Trump, who has warned of tariffs against any country supplying oil to Cuba. In an executive order issued in late January, Trump declared Cuba an "unusual and extraordinary threat," triggering a national emergency declaration.

The Trump administration cited Havana's ties with China, Russia, and Iran, alleged human rights violations, and its communist leadership as factors destabilizing the region through "migration and violence." As part of the measures, Washington said tariffs could target countries providing oil to Cuba, either directly or indirectly.

The fuel crunch comes as the country grapples with a wider energy crisis. On Friday, Cuban authorities announced emergency measures to protect essential services and ration fuel for priority sectors.

These measures reportedly include restrictions on fuel sales, the temporary closure of some tourist facilities, shorter school days, and a reduction of the workweek at state-owned enterprises to four days, from Monday to Thursday.

Russia, a longtime ally of Cuba, described the situation as severe. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said on Monday that Cuba's fuel situation was "truly critical," adding that intensified U.S. pressure was creating "numerous difficulties" for the country.

Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla has condemned Washington's actions, accusing the U.S. of "blackmail and coercion" aimed at enforcing its long-standing blockade policy.

Last week, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said Mexico plans to send humanitarian aid to Cuba starting Monday and is seeking a diplomatic solution to resume oil shipments, which were recently paused amid U.S. pressure.

Meanwhile, Air Canada has suspended all flights to Cuba from February 9 due to this ongoing fuel crisis. However, the airline will operate empty outbound flights to repatriate around 3,000 stranded passengers, carrying extra fuel and planning refueling stops.

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