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**Cuba allows people to own private businesses – 10th August, 2021**

## Level 4

People in Cuba can now legally own businesses. Most companies in Cuba have been state-owned since the 1959 revolution that brought Fidel Castro to power. He nationalised industries and put them into state hands. Now business people can operate businesses with 100 workers. The government's change of heart came after street protests against worsening economic conditions. People also protested about food shortages and the coronavirus pandemic.

Cuba's president will do more to help the economy. Cuba gets revenues and foreign currency from tourism and the production of sugar. The coronavirus pandemic and poor harvests have reduced revenues. This means it has become difficult for Cuba to import food and medicine. An expert on Cuba said many entrepreneurs have spent years working and trying hard to contribute to Cuba's economic well-being.

## Level 5

Cuba is legalising the ownership of small and medium-sized businesses. This is a huge shift in policy from the communist-ruled country. State-owned companies have been normal in Cuba since the 1959 revolution that brought Fidel Castro to power. He nationalised Cuba's industries and put them into state hands. Now entrepreneurs can operate businesses with up to 100 employees. The government's change of heart came after a month of street protests against worsening economic conditions. People also protested about a lack of food and the coronavirus pandemic.

Cuba's president said he would do more to improve the economy. Cuba relies on tourism to get foreign currency reserves. The coronavirus pandemic has greatly impacted this sector. Another key industry in Cuba is sugar. Bad weather and poor harvests have reduced revenues. Falling reserves of foreign currency means it has become difficult for Cuba to import food and medicine. An expert on Cuba said "many entrepreneurs from the private sector have spent years striving, working and trying to contribute" to Cuba's economic well-being.

## Level 6

The government in Cuba is legalising the ownership of small and medium-sized businesses. This represents a monumental shift in policy from the communist-ruled country. State-owned companies have traditionally been the norm in Cuba, following the revolution in 1959 that brought Fidel Castro to power. He nationalised Cuba's industries to put them into state hands. The new policy allows entrepreneurs to operate businesses that have up to 100 employees. The change of heart from the government came after a month of street protests. Thousands of Cubans demonstrated against dire economic conditions. People also protested about a lack of food and the handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel said he would introduce new initiatives to revitalise his country's economy. Cuba relies on tourism for much of its foreign currency reserves. Global restrictions on travel during the pandemic have severely impacted this sector. Another key industry in Cuba is the production of sugar. Bad weather has resulted in poor harvests and reduced revenues. These events have depleted the government's reserves of foreign currency, which means it has become difficult for the country to import food and medicine. Cuba expert O'Neill Diaz said "many entrepreneurs from the private sector have spent years striving, working and trying to contribute" to Cuba's economic well-being.