
Cuba to Expand Internet Connectivity, Lower Prices

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The telecommunication company said it is opening 35 internet centers across the country and halving the prices of an hour of internet.

Cuba said that it was expanding internet coverage in the country and dropping the price of the hourly usage of internet, the local Cuban daily *Juventud Rebelde* newspaper reported Thursday.

The newspaper said that the telecommunication authority in the country has plans to open 35 internet centers around the country. According to the Communications Director of at the Cuban Telecommunication Company Luis Manuel Díaz Naranjo, the centers are expected to be ready by July 1 as his organization is finishing up “final settings to ensure the quality of the service.”

The centers would allow people who own WiFi-enabled devices, such as phones or laptops or tablets, to connect freely to the internet.

Diaz Naranjo also said that as of the July 1, the price of one hour of internet will be reduced to US\$2 from US\$4.50. He said he was hoping that the new measure would increase the population's connectivity to the internet.

“The internet space is opening up here and I think this is a significant step,” Norges Rodríguez, a blogger and telecommunications engineer in Havana told the *Guardian*. “A year or two ago, we didn’t have anything like this.”

The news comes days after executives from the social media site Twitter visited Cuba and held talks with Cuban officials about expanding into the country. Twitter officials proposed that they would set up the infrastructure that let users tweet via texts. Officials from Google have also made similar approaches.

The latest development in the internet services in Cuba comes few weeks after the United States formally removed Havana from its list of terrorist countries, following decades of embargo and sanctions against the Latin American

country. The removal from the list and the subsequent lifting of sanctions would allow Cuba and international companies, including ones in the U.S. to form trade deals and agreements.
