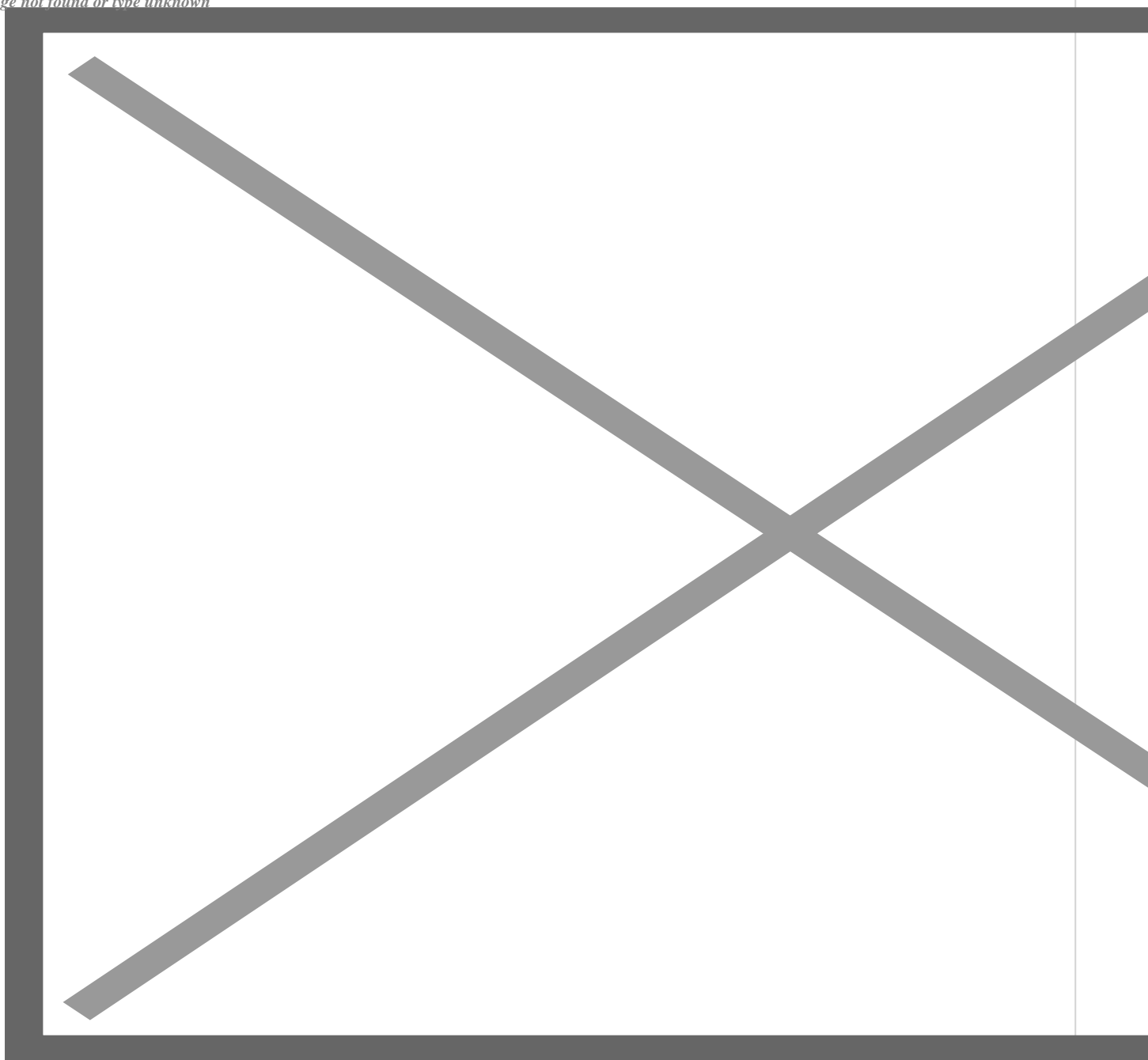


Peruvians protest by blocking roads in Cusco and Puno

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Lima, January 5 (RHC)-- After a few days of truce due to the holiday festivities, Peruvian farmers, workers, merchants, transporters, and other citizens of the Cusco and Puno regions resumed massive protests to demand the resignation of President Dina Boluarte, the call for early general elections, and the release of former President Pedro Castillo.

Crowds of protesters chanted for the removal of Dina Boluarte, who took over on December 7th after the country's opposition-held Congress voted to remove Pedro Castillo.

Castillo, a former rural school teacher and union leader who took office in July 2021, was impeached after he tried to dissolve the legislature and rule by decree. He was arrested shortly after the impeachment vote and has been ordered to remain in pretrial detention for 18 months on charges of rebellion and conspiracy, which Castillo has denied.

Roadblocks to the south and north of the country have managed to restrict vehicular traffic on the main Peruvian highways, which has relatively paralyzed normal economic activities. One of the main interconnection roads between Peru and Bolivia, the road from Puno to the city of Desaguadero, is completely blocked by social organizations that joined the strike called for Wednesday.

"The traffic obstruction is located on the Llave bridge and the Acora, Pomata and Zepita sectors, in the provinces of Puno, El Collao, and Yunguyo," local outlet Willax reported.

In the province of Lampa, a group of "ronderos," the union to which Castillo belonged, complied with the strike. In the cities of Puno and Juliaca, there is no urban transportation or commercial activities.

"Teachers cannot be outside the struggles of the people. We call on all sectors to join this strike and to act consciously about what is happening in the country," said Reynaldo Villahermosa, the secretary of the Puno Teachers' Union.

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