

# *Peruvian lawmakers cut back on departures, increase privileges*

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**Scandal over legislators' generous per diem. Image: Infobae**

By Roberto Morejón

In Peru's impasse, the right-wing-dominated Congress stands out for its divorce with political and social reality, accused of wanting to maintain its privileges.

For a legislative body with a mere 7% approval rating and which did not allow former president Pedro Castillo to govern, everything in Peru is to stop or delay the call for new elections, as demanded by the majority sectors of society.

But while the country was astonished by the repression of the demonstrations protesting the overthrow of Castillo and demanding the resignation of his successor, the designated president Dina Boluarte, the parliamentarians were splashed with dispensations.

A journalistic revelation denounced how they have access to expensive meals since December 2022, by decision of the board of directors, thanks to which the State would spend daily the equivalent of almost 50 dollars.

Expenditures for this concept increased fivefold since an earlier date, February 2022, since, judging by the journalistic investigation, those favored consider their exquisite menus to be fair.

Sectors of deep Peru, as they call the most dispossessed in the south, among other critics, lashed out against the legislators.

The Lima Common Pot Network rejected what it considered a luxury, paid for, it said, by millions of Peruvians, while social activist Fortunata Palomino described the appetites of the congressmen as a "slap in the face of poverty".

The protean aspirations of those mentioned contrast with the plight of many Peruvians, as poverty would have reached 30% of the population by 2022.

Peru is the fourth most unequal country in the world, with 1% of the population concentrating between 25 and 30% of total income.

It is no coincidence that the demonstrators who in recent weeks demanded the closure of Congress and the convening of a Constituent Assembly highlighted the neglect of their situation by the economic elites.

Both President Boluarte and the reactionary Parliament have justified the police and army response to the marchers, an operation which resulted in more than 60 deaths and dozens of wounded and arrested.

The scandal over the generous per diem of the legislators thanks to state funding will increase their discredit in the eyes of ordinary Peruvians.

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