

Peruvian Officials Suspected of Embezzlement



Lima, May 19 (RHC-AGENCIES)-- Several officials are under investigation for diverting more than 1 million soles (\$300,000) from anti-poverty programs in the northern region of *Cajamarca*, Peruvian media reported.

Prosecutors in Cajamarca suspect program administrators and officials of state-owned *Banco de la Nacion* began diverting money in 2011, according to the report by the “*Cuarto Poder*” (Fourth Estate) television newscast, published on Monday by *La Republica* newspaper.

Juntos (Together) and Pension 65, two flagship social programs of President Ollanta Humala’s government, are focused mainly on elderly people living in extreme poverty.

The administrators implicated in the corruption case, whose whereabouts are unknown, were diverting payments that were supposed to be deposited in beneficiaries’ accounts at Banco de la Nacion.

Recipients receive 300 soles (\$100) every two months.

Reports mentioned the case of an elderly woman who missed collecting several payments due to illness and discovered after her recovery that the stipends had been withdrawn from her account.

One of the administrators under investigation was found to have made several trips abroad, notably to

Argentina, Cuba and Panama, despite having a monthly salary of only 2,000 soles (\$666). The embezzlement came to light after one of the conspirators decided to cooperate with authorities.

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