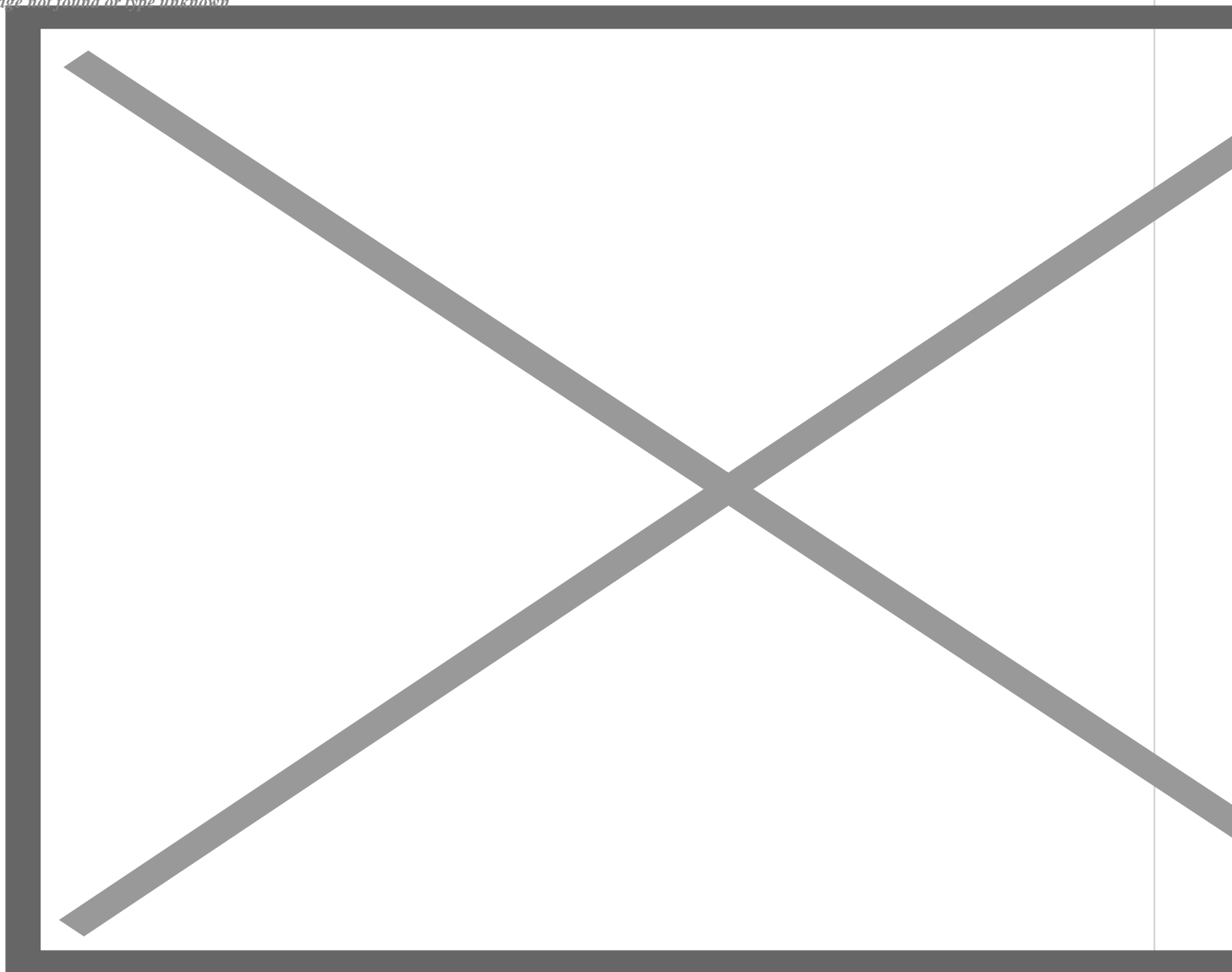


Rival protests in Peru as tensions rise over presidential vote

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**Supporters of Peru's presidential candidate Pedro Castillo in Lima, Peru June 19, 2021
[Sebastian Castaneda/ Reuters]**

Lima, June 20 (RHC)-- Supporters of socialist Pedro Castillo and right-wing Keiko Fujimori took to the streets by the thousands in Peru on Saturday, as tensions rose over the result of the June 6th presidential election.

Castillo, who received 50.125 percent of the vote with a difference of 44,058 ballots, has declared himself the winner. Fujimori got 49.875 percent of the votes and has made claims of large-scale election fraud.

In Peru's capital, Lima, supporters of Castillo gathered at the "2 de Mayo Plaza," calling for the left-wing candidate to be formally announced as president-elect. Fujimori's supporters also held a rival demonstration in a different part of the city demanding the annulment of the run-off election.

The National Elections Jury says it is still reviewing votes and is yet to declare a winner.

"We are not going to allow them to ignore the popular will, to ignore the electoral result. We are going to defend democracy," said Veronika Mendoza, a former leftist presidential candidate who attended the rally for Castillo.

"Unfortunately, Mrs. "K" [Keiko Fujimori] is a corrupt woman who should not be president and should accept her defeat because what won here is the democracy, the fair vote of the people," said Ruben, another pro-Castillo demonstrator.

International observers have said there is no evidence of fraud and that the election was clean. Pollster Ipsos Peru also said it had done a statistical analysis of the ballots and found no evidence of abnormal voting patterns that would have benefited one candidate over the other.

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