

New attempt to free former Peruvian dictator fails

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By María Josefina Arce

The Fujimori family, which in recent decades has marked Peru's political life, continues to generate headlines. The news now is that the possible release of former dictator Alberto Fujimori, who is serving a 25-year prison sentence for crimes against humanity, has been halted for the time being.

A judge of the First Court of Ica declared inadmissible a decision of the Constitutional Court that asked to reinstate to the former president the controversial pardon granted to him in December 2017 by the then president Pedro Pablo Kuczynski and that provoked numerous protests in the country.

Various Peruvian sectors pointed out at the time that Kuczynski had granted Fujimori the pardon in exchange for receiving the votes of the now former legislator Kenji Fujimori, son of the former dictator, to overcome a vacancy process he was facing in Congress.

However, the following year the Peruvian Supreme Court annulled the measure in favor of Fujimori, who was responsible for the Barrios Altos massacres in 1991 and La Cantuta in 1992.

Fifteen people were killed in Barrios Altos and 10 in La Cantuta by members of the so-called Colina Group, agents of the Army Intelligence Service in charge of extrajudicial executions.

In April 2022, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, a mechanism to which Peru belongs, also ruled against Fujimori's release from prison.

This has been a new attempt to get the former ruler out of prison, since at the beginning of November last year the Third Constitutional Chamber of Lima had already declared the appeal requesting the restitution of the pardon inadmissible.

But Fujimori is not the only member of the family in the news these days. His daughter Keiko, leader of the right-wing Popular Force, is being prosecuted for money laundering to the detriment of the State.

Already in 2021, the Public Prosecutor's Office had requested 30 years in prison for the third time presidential candidate, who ran in the 2021 elections and was finally defeated in the second round by Pedro Castillo, who was the subject of a coup d'état in December of the following year.

Keiko is accused of receiving illicit contributions from the controversial Brazilian construction company Odebrecht for her 2011 presidential campaign and also for the same purpose from Peruvian businessmen in 2011 and 2016.

Serious human rights violations, authoritarianism, bribery and blackmail have surrounded the family of the former Peruvian dictator since his appearance on the country's political scene in the 90s of the last century.

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