

# *Peruvian Judge Denounces Persecution by Concentrated Media*

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Lima, February 27 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Lima Court Judge Lizy Béjar Monge said on Thursday that Editorial El Comercio is using its considerable media power to influence appeal results in a process against her.

Béjar Monge accepted a legal case to block the El Comercio from expanding its media holdings. The media company responded by filing two cases, civil and criminal, against Béjar. These charges were not upheld against the judge, but now they are being appealed.

El Comercio owns eight newspapers that add up to 80 percent of the national daily print circulation, websites that account for 50 percent of total national Internet hits, three TV channels, and a dozen magazines.

According to political analyst and university professor Sinesio Lopez, they are using their media power to interfere with democratic institutions. He states that the concentrated media "create the agenda for state powers and institutions. They create the agendas for prosecutors and judges who don't act with a clear plan to deal, for example, with corruption but they are strongly influenced by the media to investigate, show, or hide what they are told to."

Lopez also argues that El Comercio and most mass media companies are owned by right wing interests in Peru, leaving few outlets for the center and the Left. El Comercio, Frecuencia Latina, and ATV group concentrated TV channels and RPP group concentrates over 50 per cent of radio stations. Lopez further states that such media concentration allows the right wing to place favorable political candidates in office and undermine those who oppose their interests.

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