



By: TA | AP Brief

Peru's Congress removes interim President Jerí



Peru's Congress voted to remove interim President **José Jerí** from office as he faces corruption allegations, triggering a fresh wave of political instability just weeks before the nation's April presidential and congressional elections.

Jerí is under a preliminary investigation into corruption and influence peddling, stemming from a series of undisclosed meetings with two Chinese executives.

With 75 votes in favor, 24 against and three abstentions, Peru's legislature voted to remove Jerí from the position he had assumed on Oct. 10 when predecessor **Dina Boluarte was dismissed** as a crime wave gripped the country.

Jerí's removal from office is the latest chapter in a prolonged political crisis in a country that has seen seven presidents since 2016, and is about to hold a general election amid widespread public outcry over the surge in violent crime.

Lawmakers will choose a new president from among their members to govern until July 28, when the interim leader will hand over the office to the winner of the April 12 presidential election.

Jerí will return to his position as a legislator until July 28, when the new Congress also takes office.

A vote on the interim leader will take place Wednesday, after lawmakers register their candidates.

The accusations against Jerí stemmed from a leaked report regarding a clandestine December meeting with two Chinese executives.

One attendee holds active government contracts, while the other is currently under investigation for alleged involvement in an illegal logging operation.

Jerí has denied wrongdoing. He said he met the executives to organize a Peruvian-Chinese

festivity, but his opponents have accused him of corruption.

Peru's economy has remained stable

Despite a revolving door of presidents, Peru's economy has remained stable.

The Andean nation had a public debt to gross domestic product ratio of 32% in 2024, one of the lowest in Latin America, and the government has welcomed foreign investment in areas like mining and infrastructure.

As Peru heads into this year's general election, Rafael Lopez Aliaga, a conservative businessman and former mayor of Lima is leading a crowded field that also includes Keiko Fujimori, a well known former legislator whose father was Peru's president in the 1990s.

If none of the candidates gets 50% of the vote there will be a runoff in June between the top two contenders.

Lawmakers in Peru have gained increasing leverage over the nation's executive branch over the past decade

Lawmakers in Peru have gained increasing leverage over the nation's executive branch over the past decade, using corruption investigations to remove presidents who have struggled to build congressional majorities.

A clause in Peru's constitution that allows presidents to be removed if they are found "morally incapable" of leading the country has been broadly interpreted by legislators and has been used several times to vote presidents out of office.

Boluarte, Jerí's predecessor, lasted almost three years in office and survived violent protests in which police killed dozens of protesters.

But she eventually was removed on moral incapacity grounds, with lawmakers citing the high crime rate and corruption scandals.

Pedro Castillo, a leftist union leaders who won the 2021 presidential election, was voted out of office by legislators in late 2022 after he tried to dissolve congress in order to skirt anti-corruption proceedings.

Last year Castillo was sentenced to 11 years in prison for trying to overthrow the nation's institutions.