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Peru: The new scandal for which Pedro Castillo is accused of favoring a businessman

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The anti-corruption prosecutor, Norah Córdova, says that the president of Peru could have committed alleged crimes of collusion and negotiation



The alleged interference in favor of a contractor, who won a million-dollar tender from the State oil company, puts the president of Peru, Pedro Castillo, in the eye of the hurricane. The case was disclosed by local media and prompted the action of

the anti corruption prosecutor's office, which in record time ordered the review of the State oil company offices and tried, unsuccessfully, to enter the office of the government secretary.

Although the Public Ministry officials assured that the president had prevented them from accessing that office, the Castillo administration issued a statement to deny that he had obstructed the investigation, reports *RT*.

For now, the anti corruption prosecutor, Norah Córdova, has decided to send a report to the Attorney General so that «it can act according to its powers», indicates a document that *El Comercio* had access to.

What sparked the scandal in Peru?

An investigative report carried out by the program *Panorama* disclosed information about Castillo's alleged presence at a meeting attended by the general manager of Petroperú, Hugo Chávez, and businessman Samir George Abudayeh Giha, who days later won a tender for the acquisition of 280,000 barrels of biodiesel to supply the Talara, Mollendo and Conchán refineries, for 74 million dollars.

Karelim López, a businesswoman who is currently under investigation for the tender for the Puente Tarata work in San Martín, seems to have also attended that meeting. The *Panorama* report maintains that they were all in the same meeting due to the entry and exit times of those people, who went to the Government Palace on the same day: October 18 of this year.

Castillo's alleged presence at the meeting – according to the conclusions of the journalistic program – was to guarantee that Abudayeh Giha's company, Heaven Petroleum Operators, would win the bid with Petroperú. The contract between the provider and the State company was signed 18 days after that alleged meeting.

The publication of the report caused the Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic to initiate a control action at the Petroperú headquarters, since alleged irregular practices were also detected, such as the change of rules for bidding and the cancellation of the international open call process. Meanwhile, the prosecutor Córdova considers that there are indications of alleged crimes of collusion and incompatible negotiation.

What will happen now in Peru?

In addition to the president, those investigated by prosecutor Córdova are Abudayeh, Chávez and López Arredondo, as well as Petroperú officials Gunther Docut Celis, Muslaim Abusada Sumar, Roger Daniel Liy Lion and businessman Gregorio Sáenz Moya.

Both Abudayeh and López Arredondo and Chávez deny that they knew each other or that they were all together that day in a meeting with Castillo. In a statement released by local media, Heaven Petroleum Operators confirmed that its manager had met with the Peruvian president, but assured that he was alone.

«Our company expresses its total willingness to provide all the information that is required, in the inquiries that the Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic or any State institution deems appropriate», said the company, which claims to have complied with all legal procedures so as to win the bid.

Meanwhile, Castillo decided to go personally to the headquarters of the Public Ministry on Tuesday to meet with the head, Zoraida Ávalos, and request that his appearance before that body be advanced in the case of his alleged interference in promotions in the Army. Minutes before that meeting, the presidential office denied that it had obstructed the work of the prosecution in its office, due to the Petroperú case.

The text highlights that Castillo has given instructions to facilitate the work of the Public Ministry «with total openness» and denies that the president issued an order so that «proceedings are not carried out in some rooms of the Governmental Palace».

Lift bank secrecy

Added to that, this Tuesday, Castillo, through his lawyers, ordered before the Prosecutor's Office that his banking, tax and telephone secrecy be lifted in the framework of this investigation of the Petroperú case.

«The undersigned authorizes the lifting of banking and tax secrecy and the secrecy of communications, for which he shows his agreement to it and acquiesces in said request», says the document sent to the prosecutor Córdova, cited by *La República*.

In the text, he also requests that the date and time be specified to provide his statement at the Governmental Palace.

Fuente: [El Ciudadano](#)