# Peru: 72-hour truckers strike blocks major highways across the country

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The 72-hour national strike by freight transport workers on November 16, 17 and 18, called by the Coordinadora Gremial de Transportistas de Carga del Perú (CGTCP, Coordinating Body of Peruvian Freight Transport Associations) against soaring fuel prices, blocked the main arteries of Peru's road network and demonstrated the enormous economic and political power of this sector.

In less than six months, the wholesale price of a gallon of diesel rose by 90 percent, from 12.14 soles in February to 23.09 soles in August. Truck drivers pay between 26 and 30 soles per gallon at the pump, depending on the region. The associations are demanding adequate subsidies (CGTCP spokesman Martín Ojeda called the subsidy announced by the government insufficient), freight rates that cover rising operating costs, action against informal operators, implementation of the Land Transportation Observatory Law, greater highway security and negotiations with the government.

Blockades and traffic restrictions were reported in Huánuco, Áncash, Pasco, Junín, Huancavelica and Ucayali, as well as in Lambayeque on the northern coast. The protests cut the Central Highway, the Pan-American Highway North and the Federico Basadre Highway, which link the coast, the Andes and the Amazon rainforest. The corridor joining Lima with Huánuco, Tingo María and Pucallpa is especially vital. Fruit, coffee, cocoa, rice and timber travel along it toward the capital, while trucks carry fuel, processed food, medicine, machinery, fertilizers and construction materials in the opposite direction.

The strike, which drew in merchants and residents angered by the rising cost of the family food basket, is the latest in a wave of transport stoppages against soaring fuel prices and the criminal violence engulfing the sector. Truckers in the US, Mexico and Central America have also launched actions.

The government has answered every social demand by strengthening the repressive apparatus. Less than four months after taking office, President Keiko Fujimori has created a joint military-police command and toured Nayib Bukele's mega-prison in El Salvador.

Transport workers have shown that they can paralyze the economy. What they lack is a political strategy oriented to the working class across Peru and internationally and independent of the trade associations, whose horizon does not extend beyond pressuring the Ministry of Transportation and Congress.

**Burning tires from Lambayeque to Pasco**

Videos recorded by local reporters and residents and reviewed by the *World Socialist Web Site* show the scale of the blockades. On the Pan-American Highway North in Lambayeque, more than 750 kilometers from Lima, a row of burning tires stretched across the road while police formed two lines on either side to reopen it. Behind the flames, young people and workers marched in two columns, some with their faces partially covered.

One sign read: "Keiko, resign. Join the powerful strike against rising fuel prices." Protesters chanted for Fujimori's resignation and for lower fuel prices. "Prices keep going up every single day," one man told the camera. "The minimum wage, the one they raised, I think it's 1,320, and that ain't enough for anything."

In Casma, one of the main agricultural cities on the coast of Áncash, 370 kilometers from Lima, truckers blocked the highway with burning tires. Flames stretched from one side of the road to the other, leaving queues of buses and other vehicles more than a kilometer long on both sides.

Near Santa María del Valle, between Tingo María and Huánuco, protesters armed with shovels piled dirt and rocks across the road. "You can't get through," a driver can be heard saying. "The young guys are piling up rocks half a meter high." Young people stood in front of trucks to stop them from passing, while a line of vehicles about a kilometer long remained at a standstill and drivers at the back turned around to avoid being trapped.

On the Central Highway between Huánuco and Pasco, a local reporter filmed a line of burning tires across a bridge, the flames rising about two meters. "Those trucks are really stopped. The police can't handle it," he said. A resident appealed to the population: "Fuel has gone up way too much ... The people support the strike." In Huánuco, Huancavelica and

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Pasco, the blockades left hundreds of passengers stranded, many forced to walk long distances to reach their destinations.

Those stranded on the coast waited out an unseasonal heat wave. In Lima, the National Meteorology and Hydrology Service (Senamhi) reported temperatures above 30 °C in the middle of spring, with 32.1 °C at Campo de Marte, 33 °C in La Molina and a heat index of 35 °C. A Senamhi meteorologist said on November 17 that temperatures of 35 to 36 °C had already been recorded on the northern coast.

**Lima bus drivers against extortion and murder**

The truckers' strike was preceded on November 10 by a stoppage of passenger transport in Lima and Callao against extortion and the murder of drivers. According to local reporters covering the protest, more than 50 companies suspended service during the mobilization called by the National Association for the Integration of Transport Workers, whose president, Martín Valeriano, warned that other operators might join.

Marchers carried empty coffins topped with white crosses and a banner reading: "No to extortion, enough deaths, down with the pro-crime laws." From Plaza de Acho in the Rímac district, they marched to Congress to demand action against crime.

Since the beginning of 2025, at least nine public transport strikes have been called in Lima and Callao, in addition to freight stoppages and regional protests. In 2025, 101 drivers of shared taxis, minibuses and buses were murdered nationwide, according to the Observatory of Crime and Violence. *La República* reported that more than 80 drivers were killed in Lima and Callao in 2026 through October 4.

Both mobilizations demonstrate the strategic position of transport in the national economy.

**For an indefinite nationwide general strike**

The associations' limited protests cannot defeat a government and a Congress whose so-called "pro-crime laws" protect powerful criminal organizations and their political allies. Fujimori's Fuerza Popular, alongside the far-right Renovación Popular of Rafael López Aliaga, has opposed repealing these laws. The mafias recruit hitmen from a generation of young people abandoned by capitalist society, the *ninis* who neither work nor study.

While criminal gangs terrorize transport workers, the state is arming itself against the population. Legislative Decree No. 1095 regulates military intervention in internal order, Law No. 32291 expands police use of firearms, and reforms to the Military and Police Penal Code widen military jurisdiction.

On October 7, Fujimori announced a Unified Command of 1,350 troops and police directed from army headquarters. Combined with Article 137 of the Constitution, which empowers the president to declare states of emergency, suspend constitutional rights and deploy the Armed Forces, it is an instrument ready to be turned against striking workers under the pretext of restoring public order.

Peru is caught between its historic subordination to US imperialism and its growing economic dependence on China, its largest trading partner. Defending the interests of both powers and of the Peruvian bourgeoisie, Fujimori is preparing riot police backed by the military against workers confronting an annual inflation rate of 5.25 percent in Lima in October, the highest in more than three years, driven by fuel and food prices and aggravated by Trump's war against Iran.

The trade union leadership offers no way forward. During several public transport demonstrations, union officials reportedly collaborated with police in crowd control. Their policy of confining protests to marches on Congress subordinates workers to the very institutions responsible for their oppression.

A complete break with the organizations that tie workers to the bourgeois state is essential. What is required is an indefinite political general strike, organized through rank-and-file committees independent of the unions and associations, aimed at bringing down Fujimori's government and establishing a planned economy that serves workers, peasants and youth.

This requires building a revolutionary leadership as a section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, based on Leon Trotsky's struggle against Stalinism, class collaboration and the bourgeois-left politics of organizations such as Juntos por el Perú, led by former presidential candidate Roberto Sánchez.




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