

Udupi: Indefinite strike by buses, taxis, trucks from March 30

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Protesting against hike in insurance premia, regional transport office fee, and in pursuance of demand for toll-free India and other issues, Southern Zone Motor Transport Welfare Association has decided to go off the roads with effect from march 30. This was announced by president of Karnataka Lorry Owners Association president, G R Shanmugappa, at a press conference held at the auditorium of a private hotel here on Sunday March 19.

The press conference was held jointly by Karnataka Lorry Owners Association, Taxi and Maxicab Owners Association, Karnataka State Bus Owners Union etc. Those present at the press conference came down heavily on the state and central government for their anti-people policies. They stated that in support of various demands, drivers and owners of commercial vehicles in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala and Pondicherry will hold indefinite strike.

Shamugappa accused the government of permitting steep hike in insurance premium with the aim of benefiting private companies. He said that the associations will approach the central government with demands to bring down third party insurance premium, and to waive off toll charges. He also demanded for free passage for Udupi registration vehicles in the two tollgates in the district. He also said that the vehicle owners are opposing the decision to scrap commercial vehicles that are 15 years old.

He claimed that there has been an increase in the problem of private vehicles run as taxies in this and Dakshina Kannada district. "We also protest against this problem. We demand from the government to run government buses only to places where their need is badly felt. We also demand for uniform registration fees and taxes for all tourist vehicles in the states of south India," he stated. President of Karnataka State Bus Owners Union, Rajavarma Ballal, said that vehicular movement will be brought to standstill on March 30 to condemn policies of the government that are detrimental to the interests of vehicle operators. He demanded that the government should initiate dialogue process with the concerned immediately.

Karnataka State Taxi and Maxicab Union president, K G Raveendra, Canara Bus Owners Association general secretary, Kuyilady Suresh Nayak, district Lorry Owners Association president, Rajesh Kaveri and Mangaluru Lorry Owners Association representative, Kiran Shetty, were present.