

Truck drivers carry out strike in Colombia



Truck drivers carry out strike in Colombia. (Photo: teleSUR)

Bogota, February 15 (RHC)-- The president of the Colombian Confederation of Cargo Transporters (CCTC), Jorge Ignacio García González, told reporters that they have begun a truckers' strike to reject the increase in the price of tolls and the number of toll booths throughout that nation.

The union leader said that peaceful sit-ins will be held in 12 municipalities in eight departments. They will be carried out by "associations, unions and unions that have to do with cargo transportation," as well as road users who wish to join, he said.

Protests of this type are expected to take place in Bogota, Medellin, Cartagena, Barranquilla, Villavicencio and other cities, according to the call disseminated through local media and social networks.

García González argued that there have been increases of up to 300 percent in the price of circulation on some roads. He gave as examples the tolls of La Pintada (Antioquia) and Guachetá (Cundinamarca).

The former used to pay 19,600 Colombian pesos (5.6 U.S. dollars) and now it will be 66,900 (a little more than 19 dollars).

In Guachetá, until last December, 20,200 pesos (US\$ 5.78) were paid and now 42,200 pesos (US\$ 12) are to be paid. "We consider this an outrage," said the president of the CCTC. He added that in some cases they are charged quite high tolls when the roads are not in good condition.

This is the case "on the alternate road between Bogotá and Villavicencio" (head of the department of Meta), whose condition he described as terrible and where there is frequent danger of collapse, he added.

In the opinion of the President of the CCTC, the other side of the problem is the high number of toll booths on very short stretches, as is the case on the road to La Apartada (a town in the south of the northern department of Córdoba). There "there are three toll booths (...) where there are only 85 kilometers, and each driver has to pay almost 200,000 pesos (57 dollars)", he lamented.

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