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LANDIKOTAL: Transporters held a protest over what they dubbed corruption by khasadar force, political administration and the liabilities of logistics companies on Monday. The protest was led by Khyber Transport Union (KTU) President and Transporters Association member Israr Shinwari in front of Landi Kotal Press Club.

Shakir said that when the Nato supplies were halted, they had an agreement with the international supplier companies that they would compensate them. However, he said that for six months, the drivers, cleaners, and other workers were still jobless. He added that six meetings were held between the transporters and the supplier companies regarding the compensation but to no avail.

Shakir said that the administration promised them of working under the companies and compensating them through them. However, Rs65 million was still stopped by the Al-Faisal Company and they were refused compensation. After we threatened to halt the supply completely, they agreed to pay us Rs40million which we rejected, Shakir said.

Shinwari said that Water Link and Razzaq International companies compensated them while the other two companies are applying delaying tactics. He added that the administration officials promised them that they would confiscate the company vehicles if they were not compensated, however not a single vehicle was stopped at any check-point in the agency during the last six months.

While accusing the companies of bribing the officials, he said that each employer has to be paid Rs4,000 per day for the halted supplies. Around Rs90 million were paid to the employers by other companies except the two companies, he said, adding that according to the agreement, the administration is liable to take the money from these companies.

They threatened hunger strike if their demands were not meet within a week. The protestors also demanded the Khyber Rifles Commandant to look into the matter. They said that on all the nine check-points from Karkhano to Torkham Border they were forced to give bribes, otherwise their vehicles were not allowed clearance.

A political administration official, Shakeel Barki said that their grievances will be addressed but would take time.

Shakeel said that though he cannot give a deadline to the tribesmen but the officials are in contact with the companies and soon a jirga of the tribesmen, officials and the companies officials would be convened.

Last year, the KTU launched a similar strike, threatening to disallow any vehicle on the route to supply goods for the foreign troops in Afghanistan after which the companies started compensating the workers. Out of Rs150 million, Rs65 million are still to be paid while the rest of the companies had compensated the tribesmen associated to the transport business.

Courtesy: Tribune