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San Salvador: Private Bus Owners Threaten Strike

by Deborah Tyroler

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On June 9, Hector Bonilla, vice president of the Salvadoran Bus Owner Association (AEAS), said that effective June 10, owners would shut down city bus services until the government authorized a fare increase or a gasoline subsidy. According to Bonilla, government economic policies such as price deregulation and currency devaluation have caused unsustainable increases in operations costs. Bonilla said that for the last nine months, the AEAS has been requesting that the government find a solution to the problem. He denied accusations that the bus owners are associated with the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). Next, Bonilla told reporters that the AEAS controls 80% of ground transportation, and the strike may be extended to all of the nation's major cities. The governmental Ground Transport Administration announced that it will not release the June allotment of subsidized gasoline. Bus owners who participate in the strike, said administration spokespersons, may lose their route permits. (Basic data from AFP, ACAN-EFE, 06/09/91, 06/10/91)

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