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Protest by truck operators hits Aavin milk supply in Trichy

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Trichy: A flash protest by truck operators disrupted supply of Aavin milk in Trichy city on Wednesday. The truck operators are demanding that Tamil Nadu Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation Limited (Aavin Trichy) pay their outstanding dues.

The state-run Aavin dairy unit at Kottapattu near Trichy airport sells around 1.5 lakh litre of milk in different variants in the city. Milk sachets packed and loaded into mini trucks are usually delivered to consumers before 7.30 am. There are 45 delivery routes with a mini truck assigned for each route. The mini truck operators claimed that Aavin Trichy had not paid their dues since April. The dairy unit pays the truck operators in two instalments a

month.

R Kannan, a mini truck owner-cum-driver, said many truck operators are awaiting dues exceeding ` 50,000 per vehicle. He added that they are unable to bear the mounting fuel and maintenance expenses. Due to the protest, some residents could not get milk till 9 am. Some of the 550 Aavin milk vendors in the city visited the dairy unit directly to procure milk in their individual vehicles. Still, shops in Srirangam, Karumandapam, Kattur and Cantonment did not receive milk sachets till 10 am.

“Mismanagement is continuing in Aavin, and consumers are forced to approach private vendors,” S Pushpavanam, a consumer rights activist, said.

Truck operators claimed that they have resolved not to operate their trucks until the management pays their dues once and for all.

“Milk was supplied to consumers despite the protest. Misunderstanding by truck operators led to the flash protest. We will clear dues in two days,” a senior official with Aavin Trichy said.