

Protesters break into car factory



ENVIRONMENT PLEA: Greenpeace protesters at Land Rover's Solihull plant today, and, below, chained on to the assembly line

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PROTESTERS broke in to a West Midlands car factory today and chained themselves to the assembly line.

They were demonstrating against "climate-wrecking" Range Rovers.

Police from Coventry were called to Land Rover's Solihull plant during the protest, which started at 7am.

Greenpeace said that 35 volunteers, dressed as staff, breached security at the plant to demonstrate against greenhouse gas emissions.

They locked themselves to the car assembly line to halt production.

Greenpeace says it is seeking a pledge from parent company Ford to stop making and marketing the cars for use in cities.

The protest comes shortly after parents driving their children to a Coventry school in 4x4s were confronted by campaigners.

Last Thursday, members of Coventry Friends of the Earth challenged mums and dads arriving in four-wheel drive vehicles at Bablake School in Radford, Coventry.

They held up traffic as they handed out leaflets and outlined their concerns to owners of so-called Chelsea tractors. It was



part of a national campaign against drivers of the vehicles, which protesters claim are dangerous and cause pollution.

Ben Stewart of Greenpeace, said: "Making cars like this for urban use is crazy when 150,000 people are dying every year from climate change. Range Rover do less miles to the gallon than the model T Ford. These are cli-

mate-wrecking cars that will tackle nothing steeper than a speed bump but the greenhouse gas they spew out is killing people."

He said volunteers were leafleting staff, while the protesters themselves had food and water and planned to "stay as long as we can".

Greenpeace executive director Stephen Tindale - a former New Labour environment adviser - is one of the protesters who chained themselves to half-built chassis.

He said: "Range Rover's parent company, Ford, is losing money and shedding jobs in America because sales of their gas-guzzling models are falling, whereas Asian companies are thriving by making fuel-efficient vehicles."

Higher charge to use M6 Toll route

PRICES to use the M6 Toll motorway are to rise next month by 25 per cent.

A new price structure announced today for the pay-as-you-go road, which starts at junction 4 or the original M6, will see rises of between 50p and £1.

A car driver travelling on

the toll road during the day will pay £3.50 as of June 14 and a motorcyclist will pay £2.50 - an increase of 50p on both tolls.

Cars with trailers and vans and HGVs face having to pay £1 extra on every journey.

The price hike comes as the success of the road is

still being debated - bosses Midland Expressway Limited (MEL) hail the toll road a success but usage figures are still lower than originally hoped for.

Tom Fanning, managing director, said: "This is the first increase we've made to the standard rate since the

road opened in December 2003. We believe the new toll schedule remains excellent value for money."

MEL also announced a new discount scheme for frequent users.

Mr Fanning said there were no plans to review prices again during the next year.