

Motorists and car owners in Rwanda have woken up to a significant spike in fuel costs this morning as the government implemented its second price hike in less than a fortnight.

Starting at 6:00 AM on April 17, the maximum price for petrol has jumped to Rwf 2,938 per litre, up from the Rwf2,303 set on April 4. This represents a staggering 27.5% increase in just 13 days, a move that has left many drivers in the capital and beyond reeling from the rapid change in their daily expenses.

The latest announcement by RURA on April 16, 2026 comes as a shock to many who were still adjusting to the previous hike. While petrol users are feeling the pinch, the Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA) has opted to freeze the price of diesel at Rwf2,205 per litre in an effort to prevent a total surge in the cost of public transport and essential goods.

The timeline of the recent increases paints a picture of a domestic market under intense pressure from global volatility including the USA, Iran and Israel war.

In less than two weeks, the price of a litre of petrol has climbed by nearly Rwf950. For a standard 50-litre tank, a full refill now costs almost Rwf47, 500 more than it did at the start of the month.

RURA attributes the turbulent international petroleum market as the primary driver behind the revision. Prime Minister Justin Nsengiyumva had previously warned that Middle East conflicts and disruptions to international trade routes were beginning to create “visible effects” on domestic prices.

In a statement released starting on Thursday April 16, 2026, the Director General of RURA, Evariste Rugigana, noted that while international costs are rising, the government is stepping in to protect certain sectors.

“These prices were established based on price fluctuations on the international petroleum market and measures taken by the Government of Rwanda to mitigate the impact of these rising international costs,” Rugigana stated in the announcement. “The price of diesel has remained unchanged to continue supporting public transportation, the transport of goods, and general economic activities.”

The price hike arrives amid growing reports of fuel scarcity in parts of the country.

In the Eastern Provinces, motorists have reported “dry” pumps, forcing many to travel to neighboring secondary cities just to find petrol.

Once motorist and car owners who have spoken to this publication have described the frustration of the past week. “Even when fuel arrives, they couldn’t allow you to fill large quantities, other gas stations where hoarding” they said. “Just two weeks after prices were hiked, we know we see more price hikes.”

RURA has acknowledged these supply chain pressures and is urging the public to rethink their travel habits. The regulator is encouraging Rwandans to prioritize carpooling, use public transport, and avoid “unnecessary trips” to conserve fuel as the market remains unpredictable.

While the freeze on diesel prices provides some relief for the bus networks in Kigali and intercity haulage, experts have warned that the massive jump in petrol costs is expected to ripple through the wider economy.

Eugene Mugabo, a private businessman in Kayonza District who relies on petrol to run his agribusiness, said that the coming weeks will be a test of financial bounciness.” They noted.

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As global oil trends remain unstable, RURA says it will continue to monitor the regional and international markets closely. For now, however, Rwandans are left to navigate a new reality where the cost of moving from A to B has never been higher.