Trade minister has attributed rising consumer prices to reduced agricultural output caused by changing weather patterns and higher import costs linked to the ongoing conflict involving the United States and Iran, as official data show food prices climbing faster than overall inflation.

Antoine Kajangwe said delayed or insufficient rainfall had affected agricultural production, reducing the quantity of food reaching markets compared with the previous year.

He made the remarks following households and traders continued to report difficulties coping with higher prices.

Figures from the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) show that urban inflation reached 19.5 per cent in October 2026, up from 17.2 per cent in September and significantly higher than the rate recorded a year earlier.

Food and non-alcoholic beverage prices rose by 28.9 per cent over the 12 months to October, while transport costs increased by 22.4 per cent and housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels by 14.2 per cent.

“The first factor is climate change. Weather patterns have changed significantly, and the rainfall expected to support agricultural activities did not come as anticipated, reducing the harvest available for markets,” Kajangwe said.

He also pointed to the conflict involving the United States and Iran, saying its effects were being felt through goods Rwanda imports from international markets.

“The second factor is the impact of the war between the United States and Iran. Compared with last year, when there was no such conflict, we are now seeing its effects particularly in the goods we import, which arrive in the country at higher prices,” he said.

NISR data indicate that locally produced goods rose by 22.8 per cent over the year, compared with a 9.5 per cent increase for imported products. Fresh produce prices increased by 39.9 per cent.

The rising costs are also affecting traders. Mukamasabo Eliana, who operates at Mulindi market in Rusororo Sector, said expensive stock and weaker purchasing power were making business difficult.

“Prices have risen sharply, but people have little money. We sell and fail to recover the money we spent buying the goods because we purchased them at high prices,” she said.

The figures point to mounting pressure on household budgets, particularly as food accounts for a substantial share of consumer spendin