

Rising US fuel prices risk sparking domestic wildfire for Trump

AFP, Washington

Sean Robinson, a 54-year-old schoolteacher in the US capital Washington, did not realize how high gas prices had gotten until he arrived at the pump on Friday.

"That is a sizeable jump," he told AFP, pointing to a neon sign showing \$3.27 for a gallon of regular gasoline.

Robinson is among US consumers feeling the sting of a cost surge sparked by the US-Israel war on Iran, which sent oil prices soaring as Tehran effectively blocked the Strait of Hormuz after being attacked.

But the price hike comes at a politically sensitive time for President Donald Trump as midterm elections approach, hitting voters hard.

Expensive gasoline could also prompt the independent central bank to put the brakes on the world's largest economy as it battles stubborn inflation.

Since last week, US average domestic fuel prices have risen 11 percent, according to the AAA's fuel price gauge.

It is the kind of move that Robinson said will have him cutting down on all but the essentials.

"It just determines what I'm going to do on a day-to-day basis," he said. "Pretty much start thinking about (watching) Netflix, staying in the house instead of burning gas."

Others at the gas station agreed. "It impacts all areas of life," said Toloria Washington, 39. "We are in a state of survival mode."

Washington, who works in finance, said fuel expenses are non-negotiable for her. With prices rising at the pump, she had to make cuts elsewhere.

That, she said, is a problem for people already battered by years of high prices post-pandemic.

"That's the key thing, it's tapping into everybody's basics," she added. "It's the basics. Daily survival of food, water, housing."

US inflation hit a peak of 9.1 percent during the pandemic. While it has cooled



The photo shows a sign displaying prices for gasoline at a station in Chicago, Illinois on March 2. US consumers are feeling the sting of a cost surge sparked by the US-Israel war on Iran, which sent oil prices soaring.

PHOTO: AFP

since then, analysts warn of risks of another pick-up.

"Inflation showed signs of accelerating prior to the jump in energy prices," said KPMG chief economist Diane Swonk.

"That has left consumers in a sour mood," she added.

Swonk warned that rising fuel prices added "insult to injury" for low-income Americans, who are already seeing higher healthcare costs and a tightening of welfare benefits under Trump.

Trump, who has bragged about oil prices falling during his term, sought to address the political fallout on Friday, telling CNN he expected prices to come down quickly.

His Republican party holds only a slim majority in both the House and Senate.

With midterm elections due in November, he will be hoping that voters do not let tightening household budgets weaken his political position.

Trump could see further complications if inflation from gasoline price hikes pushes the Fed to respond by keeping interest rates at a higher level.

The central bank has a dual mandate of maintaining stable prices and maximum employment, but has one main tool to do so — adjusting interest rates.

Raising them generally cools economic activity and reduces inflation while lowering them can spur activity, boosting the weakening employment market.

The prospect of more inflation due to oil prices raises the specter of what some analysts call a nightmare scenario.

"This could not come at a worse time for the Federal Reserve," said KPMG's Swonk. "It now has a dueling mandate with the risk that inflation not only lingers but accelerates."

Fed policymakers remain cautious.

Addressing higher domestic energy prices on Friday, Federal Reserve governor Christopher Waller told Bloomberg TV he considered them "unlikely to cause sustained inflation."

But this is scant consolation for many Americans hit by even a temporary bout of price increases.

"One thing after another, it's chaos, you know, every day," said Lucas Tamaren, 32, at a gas pump in Los Angeles.

"Living in America feels unpredictable and chaotic and it's hard."

US states sue to challenge Trump's new 10% tariff

AFP, Washington

A group of US states said Thursday that they had filed a lawsuit against President Donald Trump's new tariffs on imports, imposed after the Supreme Court struck down his global duties last month.

In their lawsuit, attorneys general from New York, California, Oregon and other states argued that Trump had "once again exercised tariff authority that he does not have" in rolling out a 10-percent levy after his earlier duties were ruled illegal.

"Because these tariffs are unlawful, this court should declare that they are not in force" and order that refunds be made, the group of 24 states said in its filing to the US Court of International Trade.

Trump's new tariffs last only for 150 days, unless they are extended by Congress, but he has already threatened to raise the rate to 15 percent and his administration is pursuing more lasting action.

For now, the states charged that Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974 did not authorize Trump's "immense and ever-changing" duties.

For one, the law was designed to allow limited tariffs to address issues like a significant "balance of payments" deficit, the group said — a situation the group says the United States is not facing.

The law also requires that new tariffs should not be applied discriminatorily, something the filing says Trump is doing.

"The new tariffs exempt many goods from Canada, Mexico, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua," New York Attorney General Letitia James's office said in a statement.

"They also include 84 pages of specific product exceptions," the statement said.

"Once again, President Trump is ignoring the law and the Constitution to effectively raise taxes on consumers and small businesses," James said.

California Attorney General Rob Bonta said in a separate statement that the state had "challenged the illegal imposition of tariffs time and time again because this question matters enormously for Californians who are already struggling with rising costs."

The Supreme Court's ruling does not affect Trump's sector-specific tariffs, but it has opened the door to a rush for refunds as importers try to get back lost revenues.

The tariffs now ruled illegal had generated more than \$130 billion for the US government as of late-2025.



Lubna Yasmin, chief consultant of Meena IVF & Fertility Care Limited, and Shailla Abedin, senior executive vice-president and head of liability of Prime Bank PLC, pose for a photograph after signing the agreement at Prime Aspire in Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: PRIME BANK

Securing shipping lane from Mideast war challenging: experts

AFP, Paris

The United States and France have promised to secure oil shipping threatened by the Middle East war, but experts warn warship availability and Iran's wide range of weaponry could make this complicated.

US-Israeli attacks on Iran since Saturday and Iran's fiery response have caused global economic turmoil as shipping avoids the Strait of Hormuz near Iran, one of the world's most vital shipping lanes.

Around a fifth of the world's crude and liquefied natural gas from the Gulf, must pass through this chokepoint.

While Iran has not officially shut

through the Strait of Hormuz, shipping through the waterway has all but dried up.

President Donald Trump said Tuesday the US Navy was ready to escort oil tankers through the crucial Gulf shipping route to ensure the "FREE FLOW OF ENERGY to the WORLD".

France's President Emmanuel Macron said earlier the same day France was building a coalition "to pool the necessary resources, including military ones, so that traffic can be restored and secured" in the Strait of Hormuz, Suez Canal and Red Sea.

But, said analyst Dirk Siebels from consultancy firm Risk Intelligence,

"the practical realities of this potential operation would be very challenging".

Kais Makhoul, also from Risk Intelligence, signalled one major obstacle.

"Military assets are busy right now doing military stuff", limiting the number that might be free to escort oil and LNG tankers, he said.

US-Israeli air strikes have pounded Iran, while a US submarine this week torpedoed an Iranian warship off the coast of Sri Lanka, killing at least 86 crew members.

A European military source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Iran still posed a threat to shipping.

Prime Bank clients to enjoy healthcare benefits at Meena IVF

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Prime Bank PLC has signed a strategic agreement with Meena IVF & Fertility Care Limited to offer healthcare benefits to its customers and employees.

Shailla Abedin, senior executive vice-president and head of liability of Prime Bank PLC, and Lubna Yasmin, chief consultant of Meena IVF & Fertility Care Limited, signed the agreement at Prime Aspire in

Dhaka recently, according to a press release.

Under the partnership, Prime Bank Neera customers and employees will enjoy attractive discounts on a wide range of services provided by Meena IVF & Fertility Care Limited, one of the country's leading fertility and reproductive healthcare providers.

The collaboration reflects Prime Bank's continued commitment to delivering meaningful privileges

and comprehensive lifestyle benefits to its customers and employees while reinforcing its dedication to supporting quality healthcare services in Bangladesh, the release added.

Hossain Mohammad Zakaria, head of customer proposition of the bank, and Mehmod Hasan Joy, senior manager of operations at the healthcare provider, along with other senior officials from both organisations, were also present.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Principal
Sher-e-Bangla Regional Cooperative Institute
Kashipur, Barishal

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e-Gp Re-Tender Notice 01/2025-2026 (OTM)

e-GP Re-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procurement of the following packages:

Sl No.	e-GP Re-Tender ID	Package No.	Description of goods	Last selling date and time	Closing and opening date and time
1	1222302 (Tender ID: 1237626)	2025-26_GR1	Computer and Display Monitor	24/03/2026 14:30	25/03/2026 13:00

This is online tender, where only e-GP Re-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-GP Re-Tenders, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-GP Re-Tenders documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Mohammad Khorshed Alam
Principal
Sher-e-Bangla Regional Cooperative Institute
Kashipur, Barishal

GD-510

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Memo No.-RRI/SMR Project/2026/08 Date: 07/03/2026

CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

Invitation Tender Notice No.: RRI/SMR Project/G-06/28 Dated 04/03/2026 invited in the national e-GP portal (ID No. 1239980) and published in the National and Local News Papers have been amended in the invitation of Tender (IFT) notice as below.

Package Name	Old Value	New Value
Package No-G-06: Supply, Installation, Commissioning and Training of 3D Laser Scanner and Handheld Global positioning System (GPS)	In IFT Notice "Eligibility of Tenderer" item 5. "Tenderer must have minimum 01 (one) contract of supply of 3D Laser Scanner/Lidar Laser Scanner/ Topographic Survey Instruments to Government/Semi-Government/Autonomous organizations of minimum Tk. 116.2 (One Crore sixteen Lakh Twenty Thousand) lakh within last 05 (five) years with successfully completion certificates supported by NOA.	In IFT Notice "Eligibility of Tenderer" item 5. "Tenderer must have minimum 01 (one) contract of supply of 3D Laser Scanner/Lidar Laser Scanner/ Topographic Survey Instruments to Government/Semi-Government/Autonomous organizations of minimum Tk. 145.6 (One Crore forty-five Lakh sixty Thousand) lakh within last 05 (five) years with successfully completion certificates supported by NOA.
	In IFT Notice "Eligibility of Tenderer" item 6. "The minimum amount of liquid assets or working capital or credit line, net of other contractual commitment of the Tender shall be Tk. 149.40 (One Crore forty-nine lakh forty thousand) lakh with any government schedule bank"	In IFT Notice "Eligibility of Tenderer" item 6. "The minimum amount of liquid assets or working capital or credit line, net of other contractual commitment of the Tender shall be Tk. 163.80 (One Crore sixty-three lakh eighty thousand) lakh with any government schedule bank"
	In IFT Notice "Tender/ Proposal Security (Amount in BDT) 448200	In IFT Notice "Tender/ Proposal Security (Amount in BDT) 491400

This corrigendum will be the part of the Tender document. All other terms and conditions and requirements will remain unchanged.

07.03.2026
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GD-514