




USA OUTLOOK


WEEKLY NEWSLETTER
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Photo: NY TIMES

Why Diesel Has Become a Much Bigger Economic Problem Than Gasoline

Diesel has become a bigger economic problem than gasoline because its prices have risen faster (about 45% vs. 35%) due to the Iran war disrupting already tight global supplies. The Persian Gulf, a key producer of diesel and jet fuel, cut exports, and other countries cannot easily replace that supply.

Unlike gasoline, diesel is critical for trucks, farming, shipping, and heavy industry, and demand is less flexible—**meaning users can't بسهولة** reduce consumption. At the same time, refineries have limited ability to increase diesel production, and global supply constraints keep prices high.

As a result, rising diesel costs have broader economic impacts, driving up transportation and goods prices worldwide, and are likely to remain elevated even if oil markets stabilize.

Source:
<https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/23/business/energy-environment/iran-war-diesel-prices-gasoline.html>

Iran War Has Drained U.S. Supplies of Critical, Costly Weapons

The war in Iran has significantly depleted U.S. stockpiles of critical and expensive weapons, including cruise missiles, Patriot interceptors, and long-range strike systems. The U.S. has used thousands of munitions—many faster than they can be produced—raising concerns about military readiness in other regions, especially against potential threats like China and Russia.

The conflict has already cost an estimated \$28–35 billion, and replenishing supplies could take years due to limited production capacity and funding delays. Meanwhile, the heavy reliance on costly weapons has exposed weaknesses in the defense system, including the need for cheaper and faster-to-produce alternatives.

The strain has forced the Pentagon to redirect weapons from Europe and Asia to the Middle East, potentially weakening U.S. deterrence globally.



Photo: NYTIMES

Source:
<https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/23/us/politics/iran-war-cost-military.html>



Photo: NY TIMES

Trump Administration Takes Steps to Refund \$166 Billion in Tariffs

The Trump administration has started refunding \$166 billion in tariffs after the Supreme Court ruled them illegal. The money will go to businesses (importers), not consumers, even though higher prices affected households.

The refund process may be slow and complicated, and most companies have not said whether they will pass savings on to customers. Meanwhile, uncertainty remains as the administration considers new tariffs, limiting the broader economic impact of the refunds.

Many businesses—especially smaller ones—see the refunds as overdue relief but doubt they will arrive quickly or fully offset past losses. At the same time, political pressure is growing for companies to share the money with consumers, though it is unclear if that will happen.

Source:
<https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/20/us/politics/trump-administration-tariff-refunds.html>

Why Gas Prices Go Up Fast and Take So Long to Fall

Gasoline prices tend to rise quickly but fall slowly due to how gas stations manage costs and consumer behavior. When oil prices spike, station owners often absorb part of the increase at first to stay competitive and avoid losing customers. However, when costs later drop, they lower prices more gradually to recover lost profits.

Another reason is consumer psychology: drivers compare prices to recent highs, so even small decreases feel like good deals, reducing pressure on stations to cut prices بسرعة.

Additionally, gas stations make most of their profits from in-store sales, not fuel, which influences pricing strategies. Industry structure, competition, and pricing software can also contribute to slower price declines.



Photo: NYTIMES

Source:
<https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/20/business/economy/gas-stations-pricing.html>



Photo: NYTIMES

Tariffs Raised Consumers' Prices, but the Refunds Go Only to Businesses

The U.S. government is set to refund over \$166 billion in tariffs that were ruled illegal by the Supreme Court. However, these refunds will go primarily to businesses (importers)—not directly to consumers—even though many companies had passed those tariff costs on to customers through higher prices.

Large retailers like Costco, Walmart, and Target could receive billions of dollars, but most have not clarified whether they will share these refunds with consumers. A few companies, like FedEx and UPS, have said they will return some money to customers, but this is not the norm.

Studies show that American consumers and companies bore most of the cost of the tariffs, contradicting claims that foreign countries paid. The tariffs also contributed to higher prices and reduced household income.

This situation has sparked political and legal controversy, with critics arguing that it is unfair for companies to benefit twice—first by raising prices, and then by receiving refunds. Some lawsuits and political pressure are pushing for businesses to pass those savings back to consumers, but it remains uncertain if or how that will happen.

► Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/24/us/politics/companies-consumers-tariff-refunds.html>