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MYANMAR

MARKET PRICE UPDATE

February 2021


HIGHLIGHTS


The effects of the current political crisis are reflecting in the retail prices, the biggest price increases so far have been observed in **northern Rakhine** where the average retail price of **cooking oil** has **increased by 27%** from January to February. The price of **pulses** has increased by **15% in Maungdaw township**. The price of petrol has increased by 33% and diesel by 29% from the end of January in northern Rakhine.

The overall retail price of **rice increased by 3%**, however, higher increases were observed in Kachin, Mon and Shan states. The highest **increases** were observed in **Putao (36%)** and **Bhamo (23%) townships** in Kachin state.


In northern Rakhine especially, worries among retailers are growing over possible food supply and availability issues, dysfunctional financial services, and restrictions on the movement of people that might result in panic buying in the coming weeks.


STAPLE FOODS

 **COOKING OIL** The price of cooking oil has increased nationwide by about 6% on average from January to February due to the current crisis. Increases higher than the national average were observed in northern Rakhine (27%) and central Rakhine (11%), with the highest prices of 1900 MMK per litre reported in Buthidaung township (northern Rakhine) and 2100 MMK per litre in Pauktaw township (central Rakhine). In Tanintharyi region cooking oil prices increased by 14% and in Magway region by 8% from January.

 **RICE** While the average retail price of rice increased by 3% from January to February, higher increases were observed in Kachin, Shan and Mon states. In Kachin, in Putao township the price of rice increased by 36% (from 658 MMK/kg to 893 MMK/kg) and in Bhamo township, a 23% increase was observed (from 470 MMK/kg to 576 MMK/kg). In Chipwi township, Kachin, the price of rice increased by 18% and in Mansi township by 21%. ▶


▶ Traders from Chipwi, Mansi, Mohnyin, Puta-O and Tanai townships reported that the current situation and transport difficulties and restrictions are affecting prices. Roadblocks and not getting transport permits were mentioned in Tanai. In Shan state rice prices increased by 10% and in Mon state by 11%.

 **PULSES** The average retail price of pulses remained stable, however, in Maungdaw township in northern Rakhine an increase of 15% from January was reported.

 In Paletwa, Chin state, prices of key food items decreased from January to February thanks to better road access. Rice, however, continues to be unavailable in the shops and can only be sourced from the informal market at a high price.

Seasonal decreases were observed in the price of tomatoes and onions; an average decrease of 20% for tomatoes across all states and regions was observed, with the biggest drops in Kachin, Magway, northern and southern Rakhine and Sagaing. The price of onions decreased by an average of 10% across all monitored states and regions.

FUEL

 Overall fuel prices have increased by 15% since the beginning of February.

In northern Rakhine, the price of fuel has increased since the first week of February; petrol at 1,000 MMK per litre is 33% higher and diesel at 1,100 MMK per litre is 29% higher than at the end of January.

In central Rakhine, petrol (92 RN) is currently 941 MMK per litre and diesel 950 MMK.

FEEDBACK from TRADERS

There are no blockage of routes connecting to northern Rakhine, however traders have high concerns over supply blockages and product availability over the coming weeks.

Traders from northern and central Rakhine mentioned goods are becoming difficult to order from Yangon. For traders in central Rakhine oil has also been difficult to order from Pyay, Bago region.

In Toungup, Rakhine state, due to all banks not functioning, traders are transferring to suppliers through Wave Money. The charge for a 100,000 MMK transfer is 1,500 MMK and products are being sold at a higher price to cover the transfer fees.

Traders from Pakokku township, Magway reported that palm oil prices are affected by lower stocks and import challenges due to banks not functioning.

In Shan state in the townships bordering China, the exchange rate to the Yuan has increased from 205 MMK to 1 CNY in the beginning of February to 222 MMK - 227 MMK to 1 CNY currently, and thus increasing prices of imported commodities.

ISSUES TO WATCH

- ♣ Prices of cooking oil, rice, and fuel
- ♣ In **northern Rakhine** (Buthidaung and Maungdaw), the availability of food items, non-food items including fuel, and medicines might be in shortage in the coming weeks.
- ♣ Price increases are starting to be seen elsewhere in the country: **Kachin** – rice, oil; **Southeast in Tanintharyi** – rice, oil due to panic buying and transportation costs, in **Kayah** increased demand of rice and cooking oil, with traders reporting scarcity of rice, oil, and pulses from suppliers.

The data was collected over the phone and in-person by WFP and co-operating partner staff between 9-17 February 2021 from 64 townships, 104 markets and from 253 traders/shops.

For details on price changes by state/region, WFP operational area or township, please see the [Market Monitoring Dashboard](#).
