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Irkutsk Police Fine Gasoline Scalpers as Governor Declares 'High Alert' Over Supply Problems

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@mvd_38 / Telegram

Law enforcement authorities in Siberia's Irkutsk region said Monday that they fined four people accused of reselling gasoline at inflated prices, coming after the local governor ordered a crackdown on price gouging as the region battles fuel shortages.

Irkutsk regional police said one of those fined had been caught trying to sell gasoline near a filling station. The other three were selling gasoline online, charging as much as 250 per liter ($12.15 per gallon).

The average price of gasoline in Russia has climbed 9.8% since the start of the year, with a single-week surge pushing the national average to 71.20 rubles per liter ($3.47 per gallon) as of June 22.

In Irkutsk, the average price of gasoline hovered just below 71 rubles per liter, according to

weekly data from the state statistics agency Rosstat.

On Sunday, Irkutsk region Governor Igor Kobzev declared a state of “high alert” due to what he described as insufficient fuel shipments to the region. “This is a vital measure to prevent a crisis situation,” Kobzev wrote in a post on Telegram.

Police warned that drivers caught hoarding fuel in canisters rather than filling their vehicles directly at gas stations could face steep penalties given the state of “high alert.”

“Efforts to crack down on these illegal operations will continue,” the regional branch of the Interior Ministry said in a statement.

Dozens of Russian regions and annexed Ukrainian territories have seen fuel rationing measures slowly introduced at gas stations in recent weeks. The disruptions arrive at a critical time, with both the peak summer travel and agricultural seasons in full swing.

President Vladimir Putin admitted this weekend that Russia is facing a “certain shortage” of fuel following a wave of repeated Ukrainian strikes targeting oil refineries and domestic supply lines.

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