



Vietnam's Gig Workers Face Rising Fuel Costs Post-Iran War

Description

After a long day of working, Nguyen, an e-hailing driver in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, felt disheartened to discover that half of his earnings had gone on fuel expenses. He drove for eight hours, earning about 240,000 Vietnamese dong (around £9.11), but spent 120,000 dong (approximately £4.56) on petrol. "I can't survive with this amount of money in the city," he explained.

In Vietnam, the impact of the ongoing US-Israel conflict is affecting many gig workers. Normally, about 80 percent of the country's crude oil comes from Kuwait, but due to an effective blockade by Iran in the Strait of Hormuz, fuel shipments have plummeted, causing prices to rise significantly. Diesel prices have more than doubled, and petrol prices have increased by nearly 30 percent, making transport costs more burdensome in cities like Ho Chi Minh.

Consequently, many drivers, including Nguyen, are choosing to stop working temporarily due to high fuel costs. "I will turn off the app and stop working for a few days to see if the price goes down," he stated.

The Vietnamese government has introduced emergency measures to alleviate the situation. Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh announced a suspension of environmental taxes on diesel and petrol until mid-April to stabilise prices. Despite sacrificing an estimated \$273 million in revenue, authorities recognise the urgent need for action as rising costs lead to increased discontent among citizens.

Long-term solutions are required, particularly around energy independence. Policymakers aim to expand refining capacity, as current infrastructure is insufficient for the country's needs.

Vocabulary List:

1. **disheartened** //dɪs'hɑːtənd// (adjective): feeling sad and less hopeful about something
2. **earnings** //ˈɜːnɪŋz// (noun): money you get from work or business
3. **blockade** //blɒk'eɪd// (noun): action stopping ships, goods, or people moving
4. **plummeted** //ˈplʌmətɪd// (verb): fell or dropped very quickly and a lot
5. **alleviate** //ə'lɪvi,eɪt// (verb): make a problem or pain less severe
6. **infrastructure** //ˈɪnfɹə,striktʃə// (noun): basic systems and services a country needs

Comprehension Questions



Multiple Choice

1. What is Nguyen's occupation?

- Option: Teacher
- Option: E-hailing driver
- Option: Office worker
- Option: Chef

2. How much did Nguyen earn after working for eight hours?

- Option: 120,000 dong
- Option: 240,000 dong
- Option: 300,000 dong
- Option: 200,000 dong

3. What percentage of Vietnam's crude oil typically comes from Kuwait?

- Option: 50%
- Option: 70%
- Option: 80%
- Option: 90%

4. By how much have diesel prices increased in Vietnam?

- Option: By 10%
- Option: By 20%
- Option: By 30%
- Option: More than doubled

5. Who announced the suspension of environmental taxes in Vietnam?

- Option: President Nguyen
- Option: Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh
- Option: Minister of Finance
- Option: Governor of Ho Chi Minh City

6. How much revenue is estimated to be sacrificed due to the tax suspension?

- Option: \$250 million
- Option: \$273 million
- Option: \$300 million
- Option: \$200 million



True-False

7. Nguyen spent more on petrol than he earned during his work hours.
8. Petrol prices have decreased in Ho Chi Minh City.
9. The Vietnamese government has taken measures to address rising fuel costs.
10. Nguyen drives for a ride-sharing service for only a few hours a day.
11. The blockade by Iran has caused fuel shipments to increase.
12. The government's actions have resulted in a decrease in citizen discontent.

Gap-Fill

13. Nguyen spent _____ on petrol.
14. Diesel prices in Vietnam have more than _____.
15. The Prime Minister announced the suspension of environmental taxes until _____.
16. Long-term solutions are required for energy _____ in Vietnam.
17. Nguyen earned approximately _____ for eight hours of work.
18. Many drivers are choosing to stop working temporarily due to _____ fuel costs.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. E-hailing driver 2. 240,000 dong 3. 80% 4. More than doubled 5. Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh 6. \$273 million

True-False: 7. True 8. False 9. True 10. False 11. False 12. False

Gap-Fill: 13. 120,000 dong 14. doubled 15. mid-April 16. independence 17. 240,000 dong 18. high

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