



NIS CEO Kirill Kravchenko said on Wednesday that the price of fuel will stabilize at the current level - "as long as there is no war in Iran".

This is a big risk and the price of oil and fuel could go up, he told reporters in Novi Sad, noting this is not up to NIS but the world market and the situation in the world.

Kravchenko, who heads Gazprom-owned Oil Industry of Serbia (NIS), said the price of fuel has gone up eight percent since the beginning of the year, which he noted is less than the 10 and 11 percent rise in prices in Europe and America.

This is not a good answer for consumers who want lower prices, but keeping in mind the weakening of the dinar, the price hike in Serbia is half of that in the region, Kravchenko said, adding this is possible primarily because NIS "has domestic oil and is continually cutting costs".

Commenting on the consumers' announced boycott, the NIS CEO said it this is a free country and free region, "and anyone can do as they please".

He believes, however a boycott would not be good, because NIS and consumers need to cooperate, and asked for understanding of the circumstances which forced NIS to raise prices.

The National Organization of Consumers of Serbia (NOPS) on Tuesday called on "the population in Serbia" not to buy fuel at gas stations on March 15, the World Consumer Rights Day.

"Let World Consumer Rights Day be a day when all gas stations are empty - for a day at least. The clear message we shall send will have lasting consequences for all who create the market economy of Serbia," it said in the statement.

The organization said that the price of fuels at filling stations has grown by RSD 13 since the start of the year and that, despite the increase of the price of oil on the world markets, fuel could be cheaper if the state and the retailers yielded a part of their revenue.

"The state and the retailers have no concern for the ordinary consumer. Nobody wants to surrender a part of the huge profit - either from excise duty and taxes, or from retailer margins," the organization said.

The second domestic consumer protection organization, the Association of Consumers of Serbia, proposed to the government to form a ministry for the protection of consumer rights, on the occasion of World Consumer Rights Day, March 15.

Source B92