

## Bengal cuts fuel prices by 1 Rupee



After Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh, the West Bengal state government has announced a cut of 1 Rupee in petrol and diesel prices while the entire country faces major fuel price hikes and active protests against the Centre to bring down the process.

The excise duty and cess applied on fossil fuels has been raised nine times, which is leading to high petrol and diesel rates even when crude oil gets cheaper. As the fuel prices touch sky-high limits in India, burning pockets of common citizens, some of the state government have announced reductions in petrol and diesel prices to give relief to their people. Following the footsteps of Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan in bringing down fuel prices is the West Bengal government as they announced to bring down rates of petrol and diesel by 1 Rupee per litre. The new rates will be effective in entire state from today, 12th September 12AM onwards.

With the new reduced prices, petrol will cost Rs 82.74 per litre and diesel will cost Rs 74.82 per litre in West Bengal. It may look like a tiny little relief but the one-rupee cut is likely to create a dent of exchequer Rs 500-550 crore annually, compared to the current level of consumption ? which is a loss of 5-6% from the total revenue of the state. The financial burden will create tighter situations in West Bengal's treasury as Banerjee said that the state is in a huge debt burden.

Seeking permanent solution to the fuel price hikes, the state government also claims to have appealed to the Central government to withdraw central cess and taxes implemented on fuels to make it affordable and cheaper for common people of India. Pointing out the continuous raise in excise duty while making reduction announcement, West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee said that there has been an increase of Rs 11.77 in excise duty which is resulting into high fuel prices.