

Gordhan's Budget caps e-tolling fees

Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan has announced a proposal that will bring about relief for Gauteng motorists with regard to e-tolling fees.

Delivering his Budget Speech, Gordhan said a special approbation of R5.8 billion was being proposed to reduce the toll burden on motorists as a result of the Gauteng Freeway Improvement Programme (GFIP).

The R5.8 billion is to be included in the 2011/12 expenditure.

"This will reduce the debt to be repaid through the toll system, and will make a steeper discount possible for regular road users," he added.

The contribution by government will ensure that tariffs are reduced by up to half the price for e-tag holders. The total debt associated with Gauteng freeway programme is R20 billion.

The new fees will see drivers of e-tag vehicles pay 30 cents a kilometer, instead of 66 cents as originally planned. There will also be a monthly cap of R550 for frequent users, the minister said. In addition, there will be a 15% discount in the rates after their toll fees reach R400.

Drivers of motorcycles will pay 20c per kilometre and non-articulated and articulated trucks would pay 75c and R1.51 per kilometre respectively.

To help ease congestion, heavy vehicles will qualify for a 20% discount if they use the roads during off-peak times in the day.

Taxis and other public transport operators will be exempt from toll fees.

The e-tolling system in Gauteng was due to commence in February but it was placed on hold amid a public outcry.

Many Gauteng motorists had threatened to boycott the entire tolling system by refusing to pay the fees or register for their e-toll accounts to get their e-tags. Numerous petitions against the system were circulated to have it halted.

Motorists complained about the unaffordability of toll tariffs, despite government reassessing them and making them cheaper.

SANRAL halted the e-tolling so that could address the concerns and issues raised by the public in petitions submitted

against the system.

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