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Government plans annual and life-time toll passes for pvt cars plying on NHs

The highways ministry plans to introduce annual and life-time passes for private cars, allowing unlimited travel on NHs with a one-time toll payment. With private cars contributing only 20-26% of toll revenue despite being 60% of NH traffic, the initiative aims to provide relief to commuters and streamline toll collection.

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Read on: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/government-plans-annual-and-life-time-toll-passes-for-pvt-cars-plying-on-nhs/articleshow/117276085.cms>

Article Content:

The highways ministry is working on a plan to issue annual and ‘life-time’ passes for private cars to allow them unlimited travel across the NH network by making a one time lump sum payment for tolls, Union road transport minister Nitin Gadkari said on Wednesday. At present, while private cars constitute about 60% of the traffic on NHs, the share of toll revenue from these vehicles is barely 20-26%.

Speaking at a workshop on ‘Barrierless Tolling in India’, Gadkari said, “We get less revenue from private vehicles.

Nearly 74% of toll revenue comes from commercial vehicles. So, now we are considering the introduction of a scheme of yearly passes so that they don’t face any problem. We will have no loss, but people will get huge relief.” TOI has learnt that a detailed plan is in the final stages and the ministry will soon take a call on the cost of the annual and life-time’ pass. “Commuters will have the option to go for this. The contours of how many years will be considered as ‘lifetime’ pass is under deliberation,” said a source. There have been a few rounds of meetings to decide the course of action in the ministry in recent weeks.

Sources said the move has been initiated considering car users are more vocal while the major chunk of the revenue comes from heavy and commercial vehicles. They added that a mechanism is being worked out on how the govt will deal with the private toll operators if they raise claims of high number of pass users on stretches under them.

Pointing to how tolling every stretch of highway for optimum collection is becoming an issue among commuters and the need to avoid people going against this, Gadkari said there is need to accelerate barrier free tolling to ensure people “pay for kms travelled”. He added that the govt will roll out a barrier-less global navigation satellite system (GNSS)-based toll collection system on NHs. “This system will be better than the current toll collection system,” he added. The minister urged the industry players to ensure that people get the best service and there is no leakage of revenue at any cost. “

We will not spare anyone and will take strictest action against deficiencies,” he added. A thought paper prepared by Primus Partners and Think Infra, which was released by Gadkari, claimed that with GNSS-based tolling the traffic flow will improve significantly, eliminating delays and reducing travel time by 20–30% and saving 8–10 minutes per toll point. It estimated that the environmental benefits will include a reduction of 50 lakh tonne of carbon emissions annually and fuel cost savings of approximately Rs 12,000 crore per year.