



National Highways Fee Rules, 2026 Amended to Strengthen Toll Compliance and Digital Enforcement

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Introducing a comprehensive and technology-driven framework to strengthen toll compliance on National Highways, the Government of India has notified the *National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) (Second Amendment) Rules, 2026*.

The amendment provides a structured recovery mechanism in cases of unpaid user fee and has been introduced to strengthen digital enforcement of toll collection, particularly in the context of evolving barrier-free tolling systems, and to ensure efficient and transparent realisation of user fee on National Highways. The rules have come into effect from 17th March 2026.

The amendment also modifies the rules to introduce the definition of “unpaid user fee” as the toll applicable to a vehicle whose passage has been recorded by Electronic Toll Collection (ETC) infrastructure but where the applicable user fee has not been received.

The structured recovery mechanism for unpaid user fee, notified under Rule 14, includes a technology-driven Electronic Notice (e-notice) system, wherein electronic notices will be issued to registered vehicle owners specifying vehicle details, date and location of passage, and the amount payable. These notices may be served through SMS, email, mobile-based applications, or other electronic means, and will also be made available on a designated online portal.

The rules further provide for integration of the National Electronic Toll Collection system with the VAHAN database to enable seamless identification of vehicles and enforcement of unpaid dues.

As per the amendment, the unpaid user fee payable in response to an e-notice shall be twice the applicable toll amount. However, to encourage timely compliance, if the amount is paid within 72 hours of issuance of the e-notice, only the original user fee will be payable without any additional charge.

A provision has also been made for grievance redressal. Any aggrieved vehicle owner or driver may submit a representation through the designated portal within 72 hours of issuance of the e-notice. Such representation is required to be examined and disposed of within five days, failing which the claim for unpaid user fee shall lapse.

In cases where the unpaid user fee remains unpaid beyond 15 days and no representation is pending, the amount will be recorded in the VAHAN system, and appropriate restrictions may be imposed on vehicle-related services until the dues are cleared.

The amendment will further enhance transparency in toll operations, boost investor confidence, and provide legal and financial safeguards. This amendment marks an important step towards strengthening compliance mechanisms and supporting the transition to a modern, efficient, and barrier-free tolling ecosystem in the country.

GDH/HJ

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