NHAI Guidelines to Standardise Design and Infrastructure for Multi-Lane Free Flow Tolling on Four-Lane and Above National Highways

Standardised infrastructure and design to facilitate seamless, technology led, barrier-free toll collection system across upcoming and ongoing National Highway projects

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Paving way for wider adoption of barrier-less Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling system across the country, National Highways Authrity of India (NHAI) has issued guidelines to standardise design and infrastructure of toll plazas on four-lane and above National Highways. The guidelines will ensure that upcoming and ongoing National Highway projects are equipped to support MLFF based barrier-free toll collection without requiring vehicles to stop at toll booths. The initiative is aimed at eliminating traffic queues and waiting time, reducing fuel consumption at toll plazas, while making National Highway journeys safer and more seamless.

The guidelines prescribe uniform requirements for toll plaza layouts, lane configuration, gantries, road infrastructure, lighting, signage and supporting facilities. It also lays down an implementation framework for upcoming and ongoing National Highway projects.

Standardized design for different National Highway configurations

The policy circular lays down standardised guidelines for the layout and infrastructure of Barrier-Less Toll Plazas across different configurations of National Highways. These guidelines broadly prescribe the plaza layout, number of tolling lanes, provision and placement of gantries, and associated road safety features, signage and lighting arrangements to ensure uniformity in the design and facilitate seamless implementation of barrier-less tolling across the country.

With vehicles being tolled without the need to stop at physical barriers, the number of lanes required at a toll plaza has been rationalised in comparison to conventional toll plazas, facilitating more efficient utilisation of available space and improving traffic movement through the tolling zone.

Implementation on National Highway projects

The guidelines will apply to all future and under construction projects. Projects at the Detailed Project Report (DPR) stage will incorporate the new design in their documents, while projects already awarded or under construction will adopt the changes through applicable contractual provisions. NHAI field offices have been directed to incorporate the prescribed requirements in upcoming projects and facilitate their adoption in ongoing projects.

Emphasis on safety and user convenience

The policy circular emphasize the provision of adequate lighting, advance information and guidance to highway users through appropriate signage and Electronic Variable Message Signs (VMS) at toll plazas. These measures are aimed at enhancing visibility, keeping road users informed about the tolling zone and ensuring safe and smooth movement of vehicles. The guidelines also provide for construction of an administrative building-cum-operations and maintenance centre operational and maintenance infrastructure for efficient management of toll plaza operations.

Earlier, NHAI released comprehensive guidelines for planning and designing of High-Speed Access controlled National Highways, other than Expressways. The guidelines aimed to bring uniformity in standards for preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) of upcoming high-speed National Highway corridors to bring greater consistency in technical standards and strengthen road safety.

The introduction of standardized infrastructure and design framework for MLFF toll plazas mark an important step towards creating a uniform framework for barrier-less tolling, providing seamless travel experience to National Highway users and enhancing overall efficiency of toll operations across the country.

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