

## **Expect toll hikes if BN wins GE14, says DAP lawmaker**

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The government is expected to allow at least one round of toll hikes if it wins in the upcoming general election, said DAP lawmaker Ong Kian Ming.

The Serdang MP pointed out how a number of toll highways have had their toll hikes postponed and this includes all tolls owned by toll concessionaires Plus Malaysia Bhd and the Shah Alam Expressway (Kesas).

"A number of tolls had not received their allowable toll hikes as per their respective concession agreements, including the Damansara-Puchong Expressway (LDP).

"During this time, the government has had to pay compensation to these toll concessionaires for postponing the toll hikes," he said in a statement today.

Citing the promise made by BN in its manifesto for the last general election that there would be a gradual reduction of intra-city tolls, Ong said as most intra-city tolls are found in the Klang Valley, it would have been expected that toll rates on major intra-city highways such as the Maju Expressway (Mex), Kajang Dispersal Link Expressway (Silk) and LDP, among others, would be reduced.

"But two and a half years after the 13th general election, the BN government failed to deliver on its manifesto promise when it allowed toll hikes of between RM0.20 to RM2.30 on eighteen toll highways.

As the government is facing financial pressures, Ong believes it is unlikely that it would want to continue to pay toll compensations.

As such, toll hikes are all but guaranteed, he added.

For instance, there was supposed to be a price hike of five percent for all tolls under Plus last year which was not implemented and Plus, Ong pointed out, is allowed to increase its toll rate by five percent every three years.

"If the toll hike that was supposed to take place in 2016 is lumped together with the projected toll hike in 2019, all of the tolls under Plus would increase by 10 percent in price.

Below is the projected increase in toll rates:  
"Rather than voting for a government that will increase the cost of living for each and every Malaysian, voters must choose Pakatan Harapan who has promised to take over these toll concessionaires as per the terms and conditions in the concession agreements, which will lead to the eventual abolishment of the tolls," said Ong.

The DAP leader added that the BN government has shown that it was willing to take over loss-making tolls such as the Eastern Dispersal Link (EDL) in Johor but continues to pay out billions in compensation to the concessionaires which own and operate profitable tolls such as the LDP.

"This is another clear example of how losses by private companies are socialised - taken over by the government but profits are privatised for the enjoyment of these toll concession companies.

"The only way that this can be stopped is if there is a change in the federal government in the 14th general election," he said.

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