April - 31 May 2025

TAXI INDUSTRY
GRANT R408 MILLION

VAT REFUNDS: R343 BILLION

TAXI OPERATORS: WE ALSO PAY TAX

Cover picture Sifiso Shangase

TOTAL REVENUE: R2.1 TRILLION

FREE STATE TAXI LEADER CLEARED TAXI INDUSTRY IN SURVIVAL MODE

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TAXI ECONOMY BUDGET 2025 SPECIAL



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Budget Should Also Reflect the Needs of Taxi Industry

he importance of the national budget has taken centre stage due to Parliamentarians' inability to agree on tax-related matters—a situation amplified by the Value Added Tax (VAT) impasse, which has caused delays in budget approval.

The public interest generated by the VAT issue, including within the taxi industry, highlights how taxi operators are now actively invested in understanding how the government determines the collection, distribution, and accounting of taxes raised from taxpayers.

The failure of major political parties to agree on VAT rates has sparked informal debates in unlikely places like taxi ranks, where drivers and passengers alike share ideas on how the government could raise additional revenue to fund various national programmes.

Another thorny issue emerging from these discussions is the implications of VAT's impact on taxi operators' businesses from the owners' perspective.

It's no secret that taxi operators

do not charge VAT on passenger fares, believing this act of service avoids placing further financial strain on users of this affordable, unsubsidised mode of public transport.

While airlines, trains, and buses charge VAT on ticket sales and later claim it back from SARS—a privilege taxi operators do not enjoy—the taxi industry's cost structure includes VATable (taxable) items for which they cannot reclaim taxes.

The taxi industry, which employs an estimated upwards of 400,000 people and generates over R80 billion annual revenue, transporting 16 million commuters daily, deserves recognition and support to comply with tax regulations of which according to taxi leaders they do.

Instead of begrudging taxi operators that they don't deserve a share of the national budget revenue division, Parliamentarians should focus on their oversight role: tracking how officials manage resources to ensure funds reach intended beneficiaries—not consultants or bureaucrats.

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Address

3A Eton Road
Parktown
Johannesburg, 2193
Fax: 086 572 8002
E-mail: taxiworld@polka.co.za
www.taxiworldmagazine.com

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he R408-million budgetary allocation to the taxi industry, announced by Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana, is facing scrutiny from Mmusi Maimane, leader of Build One South Africa (BOSA).

The allocation, detailed in Godongwana's revised 2025/2026
National Budget Speech delivered on 12 March 2025, drew significant backlash as Parliament prepared to vote on the national budget early this month.

Described as a "once-off gratuity," the grant has sparked criticism from stakeholders, including BOSA, which is demanding clarity from Transport Minister Barbara Creecy.

Maimane's office submitted parliamentary questions seeking explanations behind the justification of the R408-million gratuity to the taxi operators.

BOSA spokesperson Roger Solomon criticised the decision, accusing the taxi industry of systemic tax non-compliance: "We have to ask for a multibillion-rand industry that pays zero tax, this allocation is highly questionable.

"Taxpayers deserve to know whether this R408-million payment is a necessary intervention or simply another opaque expenditure benefitting a politically connected sector." The taxi industry, however, has vehemently rejected BOSA's claims, accusing Maimane's party of political grandstanding.

SANTACO KZN Office Manager Mr Sifiso Shangase argued, "politicians must be educated about the taxi industry's tax status as they may end up disseminating wrong messages to the members of public.

Shangase challenged BOSA's assertions: "How does Roger Solomon know that individual taxi operators don't pay tax?

"Such comments border on ignorance.

"As per law, the tax details of individual taxpayers or companies are private and confidential, but I can confirm that taxi operators pay their taxes.

"The problem is that those who accuse taxi operators of being non tax compliant choose to ignore the taxable expenses we incur when we run our businesses and instead concentrate only in the income the industry generates.

"They need to do a thorough assessment of the taxi industry to determine as to whether those that they say don't pay tax meet the SARS tax threshold or specific tax bracket.

"Again, we encourage our mem-

bers to be in good standing with SARS as this is also a requirement to have SARS PIN to apply for an operating license. Workshops are also conducted to educate taxi operators about the importance of paying tax," he said.

Midday Mali, SANTACO Gauteng chairperson, echoes Shangase:

"Those that claims that taxi operators don't pay taxi are misinformed and need to be educated themselves about the taxi industry and SARS processes.

"When operators apply for operating licenses to the regulator, they are required to produce a tax clearance certificate issued by SARS," Mali clarified.

He added that taxi operators pay all forms of taxes including declaring their personal income, and that they deserve the R408 million gratuity as budgeted for them.

"Taxi operators when they buy cars, they pay VAT that they don't even claim including declaring their personal income to the receiver. In terms of VAT this is the area that the government should assist us to claim back those billions we pay dealerships when we buy cars.

"We deserve every penny of the R408 million grant," he said.



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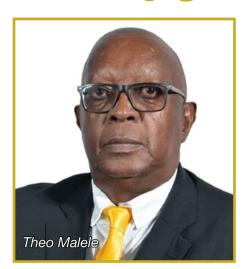
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Work-from-home blamed for Gautrain market share decline as minibus taxi industry growth stalls as well



he Gautrain, also known as the Shilowa Express, is experiencing a faster decline in ridership than anticipated, as commuters increasingly opt for Shilowa Express alternative transport, including the persistently popular minibus taxi industry.

This revelation by the Gautrain Management Company follows reports of over five million lost passengers in the past four years.

Gautrain Management Agency CEO Tshepo Kgobe cited COV-ID-19's lasting impact, including financial losses and reduced demand from previous regular commuters who now work from home.

"The days of a predictable 9-to-5, Monday through Friday commute are over. Passengers are demanding that we run a frequent service throughout the day and offer dynamic pricing to suit their hybrid work schedules," Kgobe noted.

GAUTRAIN R120 BILLION IN-VESTMENT

To regain lost commuters and improve accessibility, the Gauteng

government has pledged to fasttrack the R120 billion expansion plan, extending services to townships like Soweto and Mamelodi. Gauteng Premier Panyaza Lesufi reiterated this commitment during his recent State of the Province Address:

"Gauteng Government will invest R120 billion in the expansion of Gautrain to the following areas: Soweto via Fourways, Mamelodi, Atteridgeville, Lanseria, and Springs."

The Gautrain's existing network links Pretoria, Centurion, Johannesburg, Kempton Park, and OR Tambo International Airport.

The Gauteng Taxi Industry remains skeptical of the plan, arguing funds should instead bolster the taxi sector and road infrastructure.

"We are not surprised by the failures and financial losses suffered by the Gautrain as it caters mainly for the needs of the rich elite who does not even deserve to be subsidized at the expense of the unsubsidized mini-bus taxi users.

Priority should be given to fixing roads, potholes, including empowering the taxi industry to embrace technology to better and fully understand the benefits of Fourth Industrial revolution that includes the electronic payment system," says Theo Malele from the National Taxi Alliance.

TAXI INDUSTRY COMPETITION THREAT

Despite Gautrain's planned township expansion, Malele says the taxi industry remains confident it will survive for now. "Already our members are feeling the effects of competition from local PRASA trains running in Soweto, Pretoria and Durban. How do you compete with trains reduced and subsidized ticket prices.

TAXI INDUSTRY SURVIVAL MODE

Malele urges the government to protect and support the taxi industry instead of promoting unhealthy competition between mini-bus taxis, buses and trains.

"Government should do something urgently before it's too late for the industry. We need a subsidy. The taxi industry should be an integral part of the integrated public transport feeder system for harmonious relationships"

Malele added that taxi industry is no longer as profitable as it used to be in the past.

"The taxi industry is on a survival mode operators given the challenges it faces like vehicle repossessions, banks reluctance to finance operators, competition, high interest rates, increased running costs, dwindling revenue as most people are unemployed, competition from e-hailing taxis such as Uber and Bolt," he said.

DECLINING VEHICLE SALES

CFaO Group Executive of Taxi Affairs, Solly Msiza, says the taxi industry is experiencing its worst trading conditions since COVID-19.

"The current picture of the taxi economy does not look good the industry has not fully recovered since COVID-19 pandemic," Msiza said.

Baloyi's acquittal opens internal fights within Santaco region in Free State



ebogo Moses Baloyi has opened up and speaks out against personal attacks on his names by his fellow colleagues from the Lejweleputswa Santaco regional structure in the Free state.

He is an executive member of the region and is also chairman of the Welkom United Taxi Association. He says his troubles started late last year when he was accused of taking money paid members for membership and other fines for himself without producing receipts to indicate that, making all those payments null and void. He also says that he was accused of using permits belonging to deceased members for his own benefits, something that Baloyi strongly denies.

"The regional executive members, who are my colleagues by the way, say I took money for my own benefits but have produced no proof to back up those claims. Even the permit board from the region has cleared me of those allegations that I have used dead people's permits to benefit myself," says Baloyi.

He had been suspended for six months with another member, known as mama Tsebe. The two have just returned to work in March. For now, Baloyi says he will fight to clear his name and need all those who had initially pressed them to explain the reason for doing so in the firs place.

"These allegations have hurt my good name and will ensure that a proper explanation is given as to why they have been laid in the first place. Not even after authorities have found no substantive proof to those claims," concludes Baloyi.

SPIRITUAL CORNER



PRAYER

Luke 11:1

ow it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, Lord teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.

Prayer is communicating with God. That can mean thanking Him, praising Him, confessing something you've done wrong or expressing a need you have. It can mean talking to him as you would to a friend.

Learning how to pray is really about developing a relationship with God. Relationships are built on moments of connection and communicating. But how do you do that with God almighty?

Prayer is a supernatural activity. It's talking with a God who is unlike anyone else. He has a personality and qualities you can understand and relate to, but you cannot expect to relate to God in exactly the way you might to a close friend or family member. He's so much bigger and more incredible than that.

Even if talking honestly with other people comes naturally to you, it's understandable if talking with God feels like a steep learning curve. In fact, the disciple -Jesus closest followers – only asked Jesus a few questions about how to do something one of which was "teach us how to pray."

Women taxi operators invest millions in the textile factory



emale taxi operators from KwaZulu-Natal are making history—not on the roads, but in the textile sector.

In March, the SANTACO Women's Desk in the Ugu Region launched a women-owned upholstery and uniform manufacturing plant, a first for the taxi industry.

"This is a historic transformative moment for the taxi industry," said Rebecca Phala, SANTACO national spokesperson.

Funded entirely by contributions from local women operators, the initiative marks a significant move toward gender equality and economic diversification for the taxi industry.

"The newly established company was made possible by the collective efforts of these women, who have pooled together their resources to fund the rental of the property and contribute to the monthly installments, demonstrating their unwavering commitment to building a sustainable business that will benefit future generations," Phala said.

The company aims to empower and address challenges faced by women within the taxi industry.

Phala says this initiative hopes

to create a sustainable livelihood for women who have historically been marginalized in the industry and ensure that they are given the opportunity to thrive.

Managed by representatives from 17 regional taxi associations, the plant aims to employ 60 women within three years, focusing on women taxi operators who face challenges with vehicle ownership or are struggling with operating licenses.

Deputy Transport Minister Mkhuleko Hlengwa commended the initiative, linking it to national efforts to empower the taxi sector.

Former Deputy President Baleka Mbete too praised women's determination highlighting the importance of an inclusive industry transformation.

"The formation of this company represents a significant step towards gender equality in the sector and a bright future for women taxi operators who are shaping the future of the industry."

Impressed by the initiative, Duduzekile Maphumulo, National Chairperson of the Women's Desk, announced plans to replicate the model nationally.

"We invite investors to join this historic journey. The company needs additional funding for post-launch to further enhance operational efficiencies and create more employment opportunities within the plant," Phala urged.







The evolving global order impacts everyone—including the taxi industry

hy is it important for taxi operators to care about global issues or events beyond South Africa's borders when local challenges already dominate our focus?

The answer is simple: "we must care".

Take, for example, the recent tariffs imposed by the United States on exports from South Africa and other countries like China, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Lesotho. These tariffs indirectly affect taxi operators, too. We must also consider how rising costs from tariffs impact cross-border taxi operations in neighboring countries.

Tariffs create a domino effect across supply chains. For the taxi industry, this means:

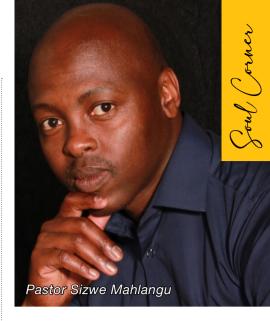
- Higher vehicle prices (including imported parts and accessories).
- Reduced affordability due to rising interest rates and loan repayments.
- Increased fares as operators pass these costs to passengers.

These pressures could also force the government to reluctantly raise taxes or prompt the Reserve Bank to hike interest rates, especially if the rand weakens, inflation spikes, or other external and domestic pressures come into play.

It's a sad reality, but as veterans of the taxi industry, we believe that if things continue to deteriorate under the new global economic order, the taxi industry may cease to exist within the next ten years.

This once-vibrant minibus taxi industry is eroding like soil. One in three operators is heading for bankruptcy.

Let me conclude by saying: I sincerely hope this scenario does not become our reality.



Forward ever, backward never

s we step further into the new year, let us keep our eyes fixed on the promises we've believed God for in this season.

It's easy to feel discouraged when our efforts don't immediately seem to yield results, but we must remember that we are a people of resilience—born to push through challenges and setbacks.

Every delay is not a denial, and every obstacle is an opportunity for growth. No matter what we face, we press on with unwavering faith and determination. God's plans for us are greater than our struggles. Indeed, forward ever, backward never—our breakthrough is coming! Bambelela.

KZN-SANTACO WOMEN DESK FACTORY LAUNCH

- Portshepstone UGU Region



KZN-SANTACO WOMEN ELECTIVE CONFERENCE

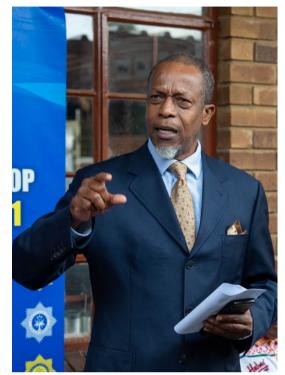
- Pietermaritzburg





LIMPOPO-NTA: Ndlelanhle Road Safety Campaign Launch

& School Donation Event















NTA shows love to schools in Limpopo as road awareness campaign launched

he National Taxi Alliance (NTA) was in the Limpopo area of Zebediela to give school uniform and launch road safety campaigns for the two schools.

The partnership to donate school uniforms is conjunction with the Transport Education Training Authority (TETA).

This was part of the organization's Ndlelanhle road safety campaign's Back To School initiative. The Matshuma and Sobotsi Combined primary schools in the Zebediela schools. At the event both schools received school shoes for the learners during

which kids also received practical lessons on road safety.

"As you would know, we do this on an annual basis and this was our time to go do it that side of the country," says NTA spokesperson Theo Malele.

PP Maboya, principal for Sobotsi Primary School, says his school is grateful to the NTA for the donation received and looking forward to continuing working relationship with provincial taxi structure.

"We are grateful for the NTA and TETA for coming here to donate shoes and wish that this relationship can continue for a long time," said Maboya.

F.Maphutha, principal at Matshuma primary also thanked the NTA for the good gesture.

"This has gone a long way to alleviating poverty because many of our leaners have been long distances, some of them doing so bare footed," said Maphutha.

Among some of the officials who attended the event and spoke proudly about the relationship with NTA included Limpopo Transport department representative Fhalani Tsedu and Nkosinathi Ndwalaza from TETA.







Maredi promises to rebuild FELLDTA after assuming leadership position

en Maredi is the new national president of the Federation for long and local distance taxi association (FELLDTA) after a special sitting of the executive committee elected him to the position recently.

He is the present chairman of the Mamelodi Amalgamated Taxi Association (Mata) and deputy president of FELLDTA in Gauteng as well as Tswhane GNTA deputy chairperson.

His endorsement was passed by the management committee (Manco) after a reported deliberation among members. He replaces late Dusty Madalane, who died in December last year after being shot in his Mpumalanga area of Dwarsloop, Bushbuckridge. Maredi said during an interview at Mata's offices that his immediate task would be to unite all taxi associations under FELLDTA, indicating that some associations were not working well within the structure. That, said Maredi, has to be corrected.

"I must ensure that some of the associations address some of the challenges they have had in the past years. You see, there are still associations that still complain that they have problems that still need to be addressed, and we should attend to that," he said. Maredi feels that FELLDTA now as a whole should retain the respect and discipline among all members across structures as that would ensure everyone works towards one common goal of rebuilding the organization.

"It will be unfair of us as an executive not to listen to all the concerns that our members may have as they complain that they have been having these issues for quite some time," said Maredi, adding that trust among the executive members within FELLDTA was important if they were to take the taxi body forward.



How Healthy Is Your Heart?

ith heart disease on the rise in our country, taking care of your heart health and being aware of cardiovascular risk factors can potentially add years to your life as a taxi operator including your family.

"Every day there are simple things we can incorporate into our lifestyle that add up to help protect the heart against preventable causes of cardiovascular disease," says Dr Robert Routier, a cardiologist practising at Netcare Olivedale Hospital.

"While diet and exercise play an important role in heart health, there are other factors that can increase our risk of developing heart disease."

CHECK YOUR HEART RISK FACTORS

- Do you have a family history of heart disease?
- Do you have diabetes?
- Do you have high cholesterol?
- Are you overweight?
- Do you have high blood

pressure (hypertension)?

- Are you a smoker?
- Do you have a sedentary lifestyle?

"Once you are aware of any specific risks you may face, or if you are diagnosed with cardiovascular disease, it is possible to better manage your risk, and if necessary, your cardiologist may prescribe treatment to help slow the progression of the condition," he says.

"Never ignore symptoms of chest discomfort because, if it is heartrelated, seeking medical attention could save your life," says Dr Routier.

"Too often people mistakenly dismiss cardiac symptoms as "heartburn", so it is important to establish the cause. An electrocardiogram [ECG] performed by your General Practitioner or at the emergency department with a blood test, can clarify heart-related concerns that require further management.

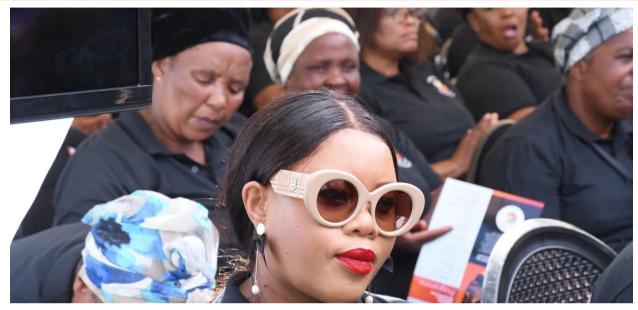
"If you experience chest pains while exercising, it could be a

sign of angina, meaning your heart muscles are not getting enough oxygen, which can be linked to advanced coronary disease, and you should have a medical assessment as soon as possible," he advises.

TOP TIPS TO CARE FOR YOUR HEART

- Aim for at least 40 minutes of defined exercise a day.
- Stress control, including a healthy work-life balance and mindfulness, can help to reduce cortisol and adrenergic drive that may be harmful over time.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Have regular heart-related health screenings, including cholesterol, blood pressure and glucose testing.
- Carefully manage preexisting chronic conditions and moni tor your treatment progress with your doctor.
- Incorporate more physical activity into your daily routine (walking, stretching, taking the stairs instead of the lift, etc.).
- Take a moment to think about or chart your dietary intake and exercise habits.
- Aim for a balanced and varied diet, with more fresh foods, lower fat, and fewer processed foods
- Limit alcohol and refined carbohydrate consumption.
- Aim for seven to nine hours of sleep each night. Check with your partner if you snore or have trouble breathing in your sleep, and if so, talk to your doctor about the possibility of sleep apnoea.

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- On February 2025 CSTE Registry processed and issued certificates to TIH subscribers.
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