

10 things to know about Pravin Gordhan



1. Pravin Jamnadas Gordhan was born on 12 April 1949 in Durban. He is married to Vanitha Raju and has two daughters.

2. Pravin is a South African political figure, serving as Minister of Finance since May 2009, succeeding Trevor Manuel.

3. Pravin's medium term budget policy statement, which he gave on 27 October 2009, has been broadly welcomed with the ANC stating that it clearly articulates government's commitment to key priority areas.

4. He was quoted in saying: "It's quite a simple message - we've just come through a very tough period, both the world and South Africa - [but] there's interesting signs of hope, we should not waste the crisis, and [must] be willing to do bold and different things."

5. In this policy statement we have five clear assurances for all South Africans:

- We will sustain our delivery of services and developmental programmes;
- We will carefully prioritise and focus our efforts;
- We will be diligent in the management of the public finances - and not burden future generations unduly;
- We will vigorously pursue savings within all spheres of government and;
- We will ensure consistency in policy, while creating room for engagement and review.

6. Criticism of Pravin's address is that his proposed budget is more of a balancing act with many challenges lying ahead. Wonder remains as to whether he will need to raise taxes in February 2010 to attain his budgeting goals.

7. From 1991 to 1994, Pravin chaired the Convention for a Democratic South Africa and was also co-chairman of the Transitional Executive Council, which oversaw the transition to the first democratically elected government.

8. As a member of parliament from 1994 to 1998, Pravin chaired the parliamentary committee that focused on the implementation of the new Constitution and the transformation of local government in the post-apartheid. From 1999 to 2009 Pravin served as Commissioner of the South African Revenue Service.

9. Pravin is acclaimed for building one of the government's now most successful institutions - the South African Revenue Service (SARS). His organisation abilities and instinctive ideas were responsible for the turnaround of the system.

10. Despite government's initial hesitation to Pravin's notion of an online taxing system, SARS eFiling was launched in 2004 as a free service and allows individuals to submit tax returns, make payments and perform a number of other interactions with SARS in a secure online environment. The service is on a par with international standards, being comparable with services offered in the US and Australia. Pravin's success here has been internationally recognised.