

TRANSPORT

Tollway booths to be scrapped next year

POST REPORTERS

The Ministry of Transport will remove tollway booths and remodel billing systems to incorporate vehicle recognition, in a bid to reduce congestion on tollway and expressways next year.

Transport Minister Saksayam Chidchob yesterday told reporters that the ministry's vehicle registration database will be shared with the Department of Land Transport, Department of Highways and Expressway Authority of Thailand under a memorandum of understanding to track vehicles using tollways and expressways when barriers and toll booths are taken away next year.

He said a toll system without barriers

and toll booths is being developed to be used on roads by the Department of Highways, Expressway Authority of Thailand, Department of Land Transport, Bangkok Expressway and Metro Plc, and Don Muang Tollway Plc.

According to the new system, called M-Flow, licence plate detectors will be used to later match the vehicle information in the licence registration database and bill motorists every month to post-pay without the assistance of barriers and toll booths, the minister said.

In the meantime, the tracking system for post-payment will be tested at Thap Chang Toll gate.

All tollway and expressway gates will be modified by next year, he said.

"This system has another benefit ... we can check for illegal vehicles," he said referring to the linked database and the licence detection system.

Laws will be amended so that failure to pay road tolls will be considered an offence, he said.

Sarawut Songsivilai, director-general of the Department of Highways, said officials will be able to check whether vehicles match their registrations or not.

Then the bills will be mailed to the car owner's home, and users will have 30 days to pay.

Current users of M-Pass will be able to link their pass with their vehicle licence and pay the tolls automatically, he said.