

More cashless options on buses soon

KUALA LUMPUR: RapidKL will soon allow other cashless options apart from Touch n' Go on its buses in the Klang Valley.

Transport Minister Anthony Loke said yesterday Prasarana Sdn Bhd would call for a tender soon.

"I have also instructed Prasarana to implement this open payment system for RapidKL buses first.

"We were supposed to implement this system for rail stations as well, but this would need integration at all rail and train stations, and there are alternatives for rail stations such as tokens.

"At present, buses only accept Touch n' Go cards as payment.

"I hope the tender can be done within the next two months and ideally, the open payment system will be rolled out in the next three to six months.

"But we hope it can be resolved

by year end, at least for Rapid KL buses first," he told reporters in Parliament.

He said the decision was approved by the cabinet committee on road safety and traffic congestion earlier yesterday.

Last week, a group of German tourists were left frustrated by their inability to board a bus in Batu Caves for the lack of a Touch 'n Go card.

Loke, however, denied that the decision was made following the viral video, saying that the move had been planned earlier.

"We hope that the tender can be called soon so that taking the public bus will be easier for users in Klang Valley, including tourists."

The minister said the cabinet committee had also agreed to the construction of 344 bus stations and more than 7,000m of covered pedestrian walkways in

seven localities in the Klang Valley.

Some of these facilities would be built this year, and the other next year.

He further said Kuala Lumpur City Hall would open a contra flow lane from the Sungai Besi toll to the Smart tunnel to alleviate city-bound traffic congestion.

City Hall would iron out the details with the relevant concessionaires, he added.

"Last year, a Malaysian Institute of Road Safety (Miros) study polled 88 per cent of 713 respondents who agreed that contra flow lanes helped with traffic congestion.

"Therefore, the cabinet committee has agreed to City Hall's suggestion to expand the contra flow lane, especially from the Sungai Besi toll plaza to the Smart Tunnel."