Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling system

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Infrastructure*

Why in News?

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has directed banks issuing FASTags to verify and correct vehicle registration numbers to enable the rollout of the Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling system.

- It is an advanced facility that ***allows vehicles to pass through toll gates at high speeds,*** without stopping or slowing at toll plazas.
- It will replace traditional physical toll booths.
- **Process -** The MLFF or barrier-less tolling system does not have boom barriers.
- **Technology –** The toll is collected with
  - **Satellite-based GPS technology**,
  - **High-performance Radio Frequency Identification_FASTag readers -** Detects tags mounted on windshields,
  - **Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras** - Captures front/back images to recognize license plates (using India-optimized OCR) and
  - **Laser/Sensor Technology -** Performs automatic vehicle classification (AVC).
- **Mandatory VRN Linkage -** In the absence of human intervention in this process, a mismatch in the VRN linked to the FASTag could see commuters pass without paying the fee.
- Thus, Accurate VRN mapping with FASTag is critical for MLFF tolling.
- So, the NHAI has directed banks to blacklist FASTags found linked to incorrect or invalid VRNs.
- **Benefits of MLFF**
  - **Uninterrupted Travel -** No slowdowns or physical barriers.
  - **Reduced Congestion -** High-speed travel increases traffic throughput.

    - **Improved Efficiency** - Saves fuel and reduces vehicle emissions due to no idling.
    - **Enhanced Revenue -** Lower risk of leakage and improved compliance.
- **Enforcement actions-** Before the MLFF system is made fully operational, NHAI and the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) are taking a series of steps to prevent misuse, especially concerning the user fee.
- Issuance of electronic notices to vehicles for non-payment of the user fee.
- **Operationality -** The MoRTH has awarded the tender for 16 toll plazas to implement barrierless tolling.
- The *Choryasi fee plaza in Gujarat* will be the first barrier-free toll plaza in India.

Reference

The Indian Express | Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling system

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