

SMART tunnel not opened immediately due to safety factor

KUALA LUMPUR: As a precautionary measure following the uncertain weather, the SMART tunnel was not immediately opened to traffic after the major flash floods in the Klang Valley last week.

There was as much as three million cubic metres of water recorded in both tunnels during the floods, breaching its maximum level for the first time since opening in 2007, said Stormwater Management and Road Tunnel Sdn Bhd chief operating officer Mohd Fuad Kamal Ariffin.

The company took six hours to drain the floodwaters, Mohd Fuad added.

Even then, he said, the Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) had advised against opening the tunnel as there were signs of continuing rain.

Heavy rain and thunderstorm hit Klang Valley last Wednesday, causing flash floods in several areas in the federal capital, with one death reported.

Following the floods, the tunnel was closed for four days, incurring the wrath of motorists as the city was caught in a massive traffic congestion.

It was re-opened at 2am yesterday.

Mohd Fuad said the closure of both tunnels had to be done to save the whole of Kuala Lumpur from being flooded.

He said even though the SMART tunnel was an alternative route for road users, its primary purpose was to channel floodwaters out of the city.

He added that they had prepared a contingency plan to overcome any delay in re-opening the tunnel should similar flooding occur in the future. — Bernama