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SMART Tunnel listed among CNN's top 10 world's greatest tunnels

PETALING JAYA: The SMART Tunnel in Malaysia has been listed as one of the top 10 world's greatest tunnels by CNN.

The article explains that the tunnel is expected to prevent billions of dollars of possible flood damage and costs from traffic congestion in Kuala Lumpur's city centre.

Built in 2007, the SMART (stormwater management and road tunnel) project serves as storm drainage and road structure. The stormwater tunnel length runs 9.7km while the motorway tunnel length is 4km.

The tunnel, the longest in Malaysia, was built to solve the problem of flash floods in Kuala Lumpur.

The article further elaborated on the tunnel's operations, stating that it can be used in three ways. First, it acts as a road tunnel when there is no flood.

In situations where flood levels are moderate, rainwater will be diverted to the lower drainage chamber in the tunnel while the upper level of the tunnel remains open to motorists.

Finally, the tunnel will be closed to traffic during exceptionally heavy floods and is used fully for floodwaters to pass through with the use of watertight gates.

Since its opening, flood-prone areas such as Masjid Jamek, Dataran Merdeka, Leboh Ampang and Jalan Melaka have been spared from major floods.

The SMART tunnel is no stranger to international recognition. In April 2015, it was described by the United Nations as one of the most innovative projects in the world for an urban issue. (<http://bit.ly/2hy69VG>). In 2011, it received the UN Habitat Scroll of Honour Award for its innovative and unique management of stormwater and peak hour traffic.

Other tunnels named in the article are the Gotthard Base Tunnel in Switzerland, the Channel Tunnel which links the UK and France, Eisenhower Tunnel in the USA, the Spiralen Tunnel and the Laerdal Tunnel, both in Norway, China's Guoliang Tunnel in Henan Province and Bund Sightseeing Tunnel in Shanghai, Japan's Seikan Tunnel and the Tokyo Bay Aqua-Line.