



Traffic heading to the city centre slows to a crawl due to the closure of the Stormwater Management and Road Tunnel.

# Tunnel closure spells nightmare for KL motorists

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Traffic jams are expected in the city until this weekend at the very least as the Stormwater Management and Road Tunnel (Smart) remains closed.

The tunnel, which connects the city centre near the Kampung Pandan roundabout to the KL-Seremban highway, has been closed since 6pm on Saturday to prevent flooding in the city.

Drainage and Irrigation Department's Kuala Lumpur Flood Mitigation Project director K.J. Abraham said 1.2 million cubic metres of water was diverted into the tunnel on Saturday due to heavy rain.

The RM2 billion tunnel, which became fully operational in June last year, is able to store three million cubic metres of flood water.

"We can't tell when the tunnel will be reopened," he said, adding that the DID would make announcements once the de-watering process was completed.

The Malaysian Meteorological Department had forecast thunderstorms in the city until the end of this week.

However, the inter-monsoonal season is expected to cause rain and strong winds until early May.

Yesterday, there was a traffic snarl in Sungai Besi for at least three hours as motorists were not aware of the tunnel's closure.

Motorists were allowed to make a U-

turn after the toll plaza to avoid congestion.

A Smart spokesperson said the tunnel had to be closed on Saturday after a downpour of more than three hours.

The order to close the tunnel was issued by the DID at 5.15pm on Saturday.

This is the third time that the tunnel has been completely closed to traffic.

The dual purpose tunnel system acts as a bypass channel for floodwater at the confluence of the Klang and Ampang rivers into a storage reservoir in Taman Desa before being discharged into Sungai Kerayong.

A motorway tunnel is also integrated into the system to relieve traffic congestion at the main southern gateway to the city centre.