



### Snail's pace

Traffic chaos reigns in Sungai Besi after the authorities closed the Smart Tunnel on Saturday, preventing what could have been one of the worst floods to hit Kuala Lumpur. **M7**

# Closing tunnel a wise move

## Flood avoided but traffic chaotic

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If not for the Smart Tunnel, Kuala Lumpur would have experienced one of the worst floods last weekend.

According to a spokesman from Syarikat Mengurus Air Banjir dan Terowong, the company managing the tunnel, the move by the Drainage and Irrigation Department (JPS) to close the tunnel at 6pm on Saturday was a blessing in disguise.

"It would have been really bad if they had not done so because KL would have been flooded and we had many foreign visitors over the weekend for the F1 Grand Prix celebrations," the spokesman said.

He said that the dewatering exercise on Saturday could not be completed, as the water level at Sungai Kerayong was still quite high.

"The water in the tunnel was receding very slowly and before we could complete the exercise, it started raining again on Sunday," he said.

The spokesman said that due to the unpredictable weather they were not sure when the tunnel

would be operational again.

"Safety is our top priority. We are sorry for the inconvenience caused but dewatering exercise must be fully completed before the tunnel is reopened," he said.

Meanwhile, due to the closure of the tunnel, there was a massive jam along the stretch from the TUDM in Sungai Besi heading to the city centre yesterday morning.

Motorists were stuck in a bumper-to-bumper crawl since 7am in the morning.

Staff monitoring the control room said that the congestion became worse when a car broke down on the highway but the situation had not improved even at noon.

Motorist C.S Tan said he was stuck in a crawl for almost 40 minutes along the TUDM stretch at 9am.

"Traffic was moving very slowly and it was frustrating," said Tan, who had left his house in Happy Garden at 8am.

"When we needed the Smart tunnel it was not operational," an irate Tan said.

For details, the public can call 1-300-88-7188.



**Closed:** A worker placing traffic cones in front of the Smart Tunnel to facilitate flood mitigation work.