



Smart solution

Although the Smart Tunnel in Kuala Lumpur was designed primarily for flood prevention, its role in reducing traffic jams was brought to the fore during the recent four-day closure of the tunnel to divert floodwaters. Motorists complained of constant traffic jams in the Sungai Besi area ever since the tunnel was closed at 6pm last Saturday following a heavy storm.

These two pictures taken yesterday reveal the effectiveness of the tunnel in reducing traffic congestion.

The top picture was taken during the morning rush hour while the picture on the left was taken at 7.10pm, soon after the tunnel was reopened to traffic. See Page 14. —

Bername / KAMARUL ARIFFIN / The Star

Why tunnel reopening was delayed

KUALA LUMPUR: Work to pump out water and safety inspections on all equipment and systems were the reasons why the reopening of the Smart Tunnel was held up for four days.

The tunnel was closed on March 22 following a storm and was only re-opened to the public at 5pm yesterday.

Stormwater Management and Road Tunnel (Smart) general manager of operations Mohd Fuad Kamal Ariffin said the tunnel was closed when a Mode III safety protocol was deployed.

Mode I occurs when there is no rain or light rain, while Mode II is when there is moderate rain requiring water to be diverted through the tunnel's lower channel without requiring the motorway to be closed.

Mode III is when the rainfall is heavy enough to require the tunnel's closure.

He said that during the closure, water had to be pumped out, the 3km motorway physically cleaned and all electrical equipment and systems checked to ensure they were working well.

"Only after all this will the Malaysian Highway Authority approve its reopening," he said.