

Floods still a bane despite billions spent on measures

I REFER to the flash floods that occurred recently in Kuala Lumpur. When the government, under the Department of Irrigation and Drainage (DID), started building the SMART tunnel, it was hailed as the solution to Kuala Lumpur's flooding problems that have been around for the past 40 years.

Billions of ringgit were spent by the government in implementing various flood-mitigation works along Sungai Klang, Sungai Am-

pang and their tributaries, such as Sungai Gombak and Sungai Bunus.

Many methods to help alleviate the flooding problem were carried out, including river widening and deepening, construction of river diversions and flood-relief ponds as well as underground diversion tunnels.

Unfortunately, none of those measures were successful in handling the tasks they were originally designed for.

Then, in the early 2000s, the DID convinced the government that by building this SMART tunnel, Kuala Lumpur would at long last be flood-free.

Kuala Lumpur remained flood-free, but only for four years.

Now flash floods, though not like those encountered during the past four decades, have become the bane again.

After spending RM2 billion, I was surprised to read a top official of the

SMART tunnel saying that the flooding on Feb 25 around Jalan Ampang, Jalan Semarak and Jalan Tun Razak were outside the catchment areas of the SMART tunnel.

If that is true, then the design of the tunnel with its limited capacity must certainly be considered as the most expensive man-made structure ever built.

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