

DPM refutes Smart Tunnel story

TOKYO: Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has denied making a statement that the government would undertake a project such as the "Smart Tunnel" in Kelantan to tackle the problem of floods in the state.

He said the news report that quoted him was not true because although he had observed a tunnel project that had been successfully implemented in Japan in reducing the flood problem, it still needed a thorough study.

"I did not make any statement. It is not necessary that whatever is made and is suitable in Japan is also suitable for Malaysia. We have to undertake a thorough study on the appropriate system and technology.

"We come to Japan to study what is the appropriate technology. Each project involves a substantial cost.

The underground tunnel will certainly involve massive cost. There are technologies that are not appropriate.

"The flood management in Japan is not the same as in Malaysia. We make comparisons. As for what had happened in Kelantan, we want to know the causes, and studies had been initiated by several universities," he said at a media conference here at the conclusion of his four-day visit to Japan yesterday.

Quoting Muhyiddin, it was reported yesterday that the government was looking into setting up a project similar to the Stormwater Management and Road Tunnel, better known as the Smart Tunnel, in Kelantan.

It was also reported that Muhyiddin said the tunnel was geared towards resolving not only the state's

year-end flood woes, but also year-round flooding issues.

On the statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak at the Dewan Rakyat yesterday that the government felt there was no necessity to set up a Royal Commission of Inquiry to study the weaknesses and inadequacies in managing the floods that hit the country last December, Muhyiddin said he agreed with the decision.

He said the government had taken comprehensive measures before, during and after the floods.

"What is important now is the reconstruction to rehabilitate the situation. The government wants to help the people to build houses. The government's commitment is high, we spend a lot on plans and strategies. What is important is the post-flood aid," he said. **Bernama**