

Technical glitches delay Smart tunnel opening
Malaysiakini.com
April 11, 2007
Wong Yeen Fern

The opening of the Stormwater Management and Road Tunnel (Smart) has been delayed until the end of April due to 'technical problems'.

Smart officials said the tunnel will be opened once the cabinet gives the green light.

Conceding that technical problems were a factor behind the delay, the officials, however, declined to elaborate on the matter and kept passing the buck.

Malaysian Highway Authority (MHA) director-general Mohd Noor Yaacob also sidestepped the issue, saying it would be better for the Works Ministry to disclose the information as it is a sensitive matter.

Mohd Noor and Smart officials were asked to respond to a news report on April 4 which quoted Works Minister S Samy Vellu as saying that the opening of the tunnel will be delayed.

Unavoidable circumstances

He said the delay was due to unavoidable circumstances. The 9.7 km tunnel built at a cost of RM1.9 billion was originally scheduled to open on April 9.

Samy said the tunnel will be opened for traffic in two or three weeks time, adding that the tunnel will be opened for free to the public for a month before a toll is imposed.

The design of the Smart tunnel system is described as a twin system comprising a stormwater channel and a motorway incorporated into a single infrastructure.

The tunnel was built since Kuala Lumpur has major constraints in terms of space for river widening and for the construction of flood retention ponds.

The project was a joint effort between the Drainage and Irrigation Department and the MHA to tackle frequent flash floods that hit the city and caused severe traffic jams.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/65796>