

# Elevated highway over Damansara a snarling mess

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FOR almost five years, residents of Medan Damansara, Bukit Damansara and Bangsar, as well as motorists commuting via Pusat Bandar Damansara, have endured congestion from relentless construction work.

A multimillion-ringgit elevated highway project along SPRINT Highway – which stretches from the Jalan Maarof interchange near Pavilion Damansara Heights to the Jalan Semantan interchange – has resulted in traffic congestion, road closures and safety hazards.

The prolonged construction has drawn public criticism, with concerns over poor planning and chaotic traffic management.

“This project was meant to improve traffic flow and provide direct connectivity to the area,” Bangsar resident M. Viknendran said of the partly opened highway.

“Instead, we have faced endless road closures, including the inner lanes in our neighbourhood, which have only made things worse.

“I am tired of being stuck in traffic for long periods despite being just 10 minutes from home.”

Equally frustrated is Jak Aw, another Bangsar resident whose daily commute has been plagued by bumper-to-bumper congestion.

“Jalan Damanlela has been blocked for nearly two years.

“Jalan Maarof from Bangsar Shopping Centre is constantly choked due to the U-turn further up the road caused by Jalan Damanlela’s continued closure.

“To get to Kuala Lumpur (city centre), we have to make a U-turn at Pavilion Damansara Heights, which has become a major bottleneck.

“Jalan Damanlela was meant to be operational alongside Pavilion Damansara’s development, yet it has remained closed,” said Aw.

## Residents: No end in sight after years of congestion, hazards



Ali says road closures and ad-hoc diversions have created a constant traffic nightmare.

(Left) Motorists inching along a congested stretch due to unfinished work. — RAJA FAISAL HISHAN/The Star

Long-time Bukit Bandaraya resident and its residents association advisor Datuk M. Ali said he had repeatedly reached out to Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) on the issue.

“I was told by DBKL that the project was scheduled for completion and handover on Feb 29 last year.

“But that did not happen and the continued road closures and ad-hoc diversions have created a constant traffic nightmare,” he said.

He added that motorists also often encountered large plastic barricades placed in the middle of roads, due to the moving diversions, worsening congestion.

Residents claim that pedestrian access has also been severely affected, with no proper walkways built for those walking to the Pusat Bandar Damansara MRT station or Bangsar.

Concerns have also been raised over a dangerous U-turn originally intended as a temporary measure but remains in use.

Ali said the area was in dire



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need of landscaping and proper maintenance after years of neglect.

“The whole place is a mess. There are dried leaves, broken pavements and construction debris everywhere.

“It looks abandoned and there has been no effort to restore greenery or beautify the area,” he said.

In a media statement, DBKL said construction of the elevated

road near Pavilion Damansara had been completed and opened to the public on Feb 29 last year to improve traffic flow.

“However, upgrading works on Jalan Johar and Jalan Beringin, which are being converted into two-way roads, are still ongoing.

“These works are being carried out by the developer.

“Some parts of Jalan Beringin, under the supervision of SPRINT

Highway, remain closed to the public,” said DBKL.

It explained that based on discussions with consultants and the SPRINT Highway concessionaire, the continued closure of certain sections was due to the requirement for the road safety audit certificate from Malaysian Highway Authority (LLM).

“The Level 4 Road Safety Audit, a key component of the approval process, was completed at the end of last February.

“Following this, consultants submitted the application to LLM early this month for final approval.

“The affected roads will only be opened once all necessary approvals have been obtained,” DBKL added.

StarMetro had previously reported that the three-lane, 1.34km-long elevated Jalan Damansara-Semantan Highway was designed to improve traffic flow and provide direct connectivity to the area.

The project is estimated to cost RM211mil.