

Beat: News

Second Penang Bridge To Be Completed By End Of November

The Second Penang Bridge Project

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USPA NEWS - GEORGE TOWN: The RM4.5 billion Second Penang Bridge is on track to be completed by end of November. State Public Works, Utilities and Transportation Committee chairman Lim Hock Seng said the road works leading to the bridge structure in the island would be ready by next week.

Lim said the stretch of highway linking to the bridge, Lebuhraya Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu would be opened to the public ahead of the bridge opening. "We want to ensure that the heavy machinery and construction works are cleared before seeking permission from relevant road authorities to certify that the highway is safe for public use. "As for now, road works are on-going and the contractor needs to install the guard rail to ensure road safety," Lim said today. He was speaking to reporters prior to a bridge inspection tours with the business fraternity representatives, local authority and bridge officials.

Asked on the expected opening date for the bridge, Lim said the state government had to leave the decision to the Transport Ministry to fix the date. The second Penang bridge is now 99% complete and the launching date will be determined by the Federal Government some time next month. Jambatan Kedua Sdn Bhd (JKSB) managing director Datuk (Ir) Dr Ismail Mohamed Taib said they hoped to wrap things up by Nov 8. The Batu Maung interchange ramp that collapsed in June was rebuilt earlier this month. "Motorists will get to enjoy free trips of the bridge for one month after its launch," Dr Ismail told reporters during a load test at the bridge's main navigational span yesterday. The load test was carried out at the 475m cable-stayed bridge.

A total of 17 trailer trucks ferrying concrete boulders weighing 595 tonnes were placed along the 240m stretch at the main span of the cable-stayed bridge. Dr Ismail said even an earthquake would not affect the bridge. "It was specially designed to withstand quakes measuring 7.5 and above on the Richter scale." Dr Ismail also said the project's cost, which was earlier stipulated at RM4.5bil, was RM50mil lower and the excess funds had been used for landscaping and decorative lights. The colour and tempo of the lights could be changed according to the country's major festivities or celebrations, similar to the Incheon Bridge in South Korea. The toll rate for the bridge has yet to be determined.

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