

Beat: News

Second Penang Bridge ready to open in February 2014

Second Penang Bridge Grand Opening

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USPA NEWS - Bayan Lepas: The RM4.5bil Second Penang Bridge is expected to open to traffic in February next year after completion of the North-South Expressway (NSE) toll system and bridge physical safety testing. Works Minister Datuk Fadillah Yusof said the NSE toll system had to be upgraded.

"We are still making improvements and will open the bridge when the system functions well and is certified safe," he told reporters after visiting the bridge on Thursday. He said the 28-booth toll plaza in Batu Kawan would be the biggest of its kind in the country, but the Government had yet to decide on the toll rate. The Second Penang Bridge, which covers 24km with 16.9km over water and links Batu Maung on the island to Batu Kawan on the mainland, abided by environmental sustainability in design and construction. Being Southeast Asia's longest bridge, the Second Penang Bridge is expected to ease traffic congestion on the Penang Bridge by 25 percent. Responding to a question, Fadillah said toll charges along 29 expressways in the

country were being revised between three and five years, depending on the concession agreement. Jambatan Kedua Sdn Bhd (JKSB), the concessionaire for the Second Penang Bridge, has conducted its final load test at the Ramp 2 of the Batu Maung Interchange. The bridge is expected to open to the public soon. JKSB Chief Operating Officer Ashari Alias said the bridge has achieved about 99.9 per cent completion and this would be the final load test. He said the load test was conducted on a span of Pier 6 to Pier 7 of Ramp 2 that collapsed when its temporary support structures failed on June 6. "The load test is conducted to test the bridge stress and deflection capability and also to gain public confidence on the ramp where the incident happened.

The load test was carried out by Cergas Murni Sdn Bhd, the main contractor for the Batu Maung Interchange, and supervised by Sinclair Knight Merz, the performance auditor consultant. A total of 360 tonnes, carried by about 15 lorries, was placed on the span between Pier 6 and Pier 7 at the Ramp 2 of the interchange. JKSB Managing Director Datuk Dr Ismail Mohamed Taib said the load test was part of the requirements set by JKSB to the contractors involved and also to assure the public that the ramp is able to withstand such a load in accordance with international design standards. He said the load test was conducted to verify that the completed ramp load carrying capacity is comparable with that predicted by theory and to calibrate.

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