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Samy Vellu: Public feedback not needed

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said today that public opinion was not necessary for the RM2 billion second Penang crossing as it was a Government project.

He said it was not a privatised project and therefore, feedback from the public was not required.

"If we get public opinion, there will be no bridge. This is not a privatised project but a government one.

"So, we don't need opinions. If you start obtaining opinions, there will be no roads in the country," Samy Vellu said, adding that in the case of the second Penang crossing, money would be borrowed by the Government. He said that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had agreed that for privatised road projects, the Government would seek the opinion of road users.

Samy Vellu was speaking to reporters after attending the opening of the House of Prayer which is affiliated to the Evangelical Church.

He said the preliminary feasibility reports on the crossing were ready and he would present them to Japanese agencies for funding during his visit to Japan this weekend.

Samy Vellu added that funding would also be sought for the proposed RM1.7 billion elevated highway on the Federal Highway.

Late last month, he had said that his Ministry needed to plan the second Penang crossing quickly as traffic volume on the Penang Bridge had increased tremendously.

The Penang second link will be a combination of a bridge and a tunnel that will link Bagan Jermal in Penang with Bagan Ajam in Seberang Prai. The length of the tunnel is 7.5km and the second crossing will be located north of the Penang Bridge.

The Federal Highway handles between 470,000 and 600,000 vehicles daily. The Government has decided on a 12km stretch with eight lanes on top of the present highway.

The proposed project will begin from the old Subang interchange to the Old Klang Road interchange.

On the proposed RM2 billion East Coast Highway, Samy Vellu said the Government would determine a reasonable toll rate.

Later, after launching the 23rd Kuala Lumpur-Maran Marathon 2000 at Batu Caves, Samy Vellu said the 17.5km North Klang Straits Bypass highway project would continue after the Government approved a RM100 million loan to the developer.

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