

**Najib First Leader To Use Second Penang Bridge**  
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GEORGE TOWN, April 30 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today became the country's first leader to use the 24km Second Penang Bridge to cross from the island to the mainland to attend a function in Kepala Batas, Seberang Perai.

He was escorted by former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, state Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman Teng Chang Yeow, deputy state BN chairman Datuk Zainal Abidin Osman and Jambatan Kedua Sdn Bhd (JKSB) chairman Tan Sri Sulaiman Mahboob.

Also in the prime minister's entourage were Ministers in the Prime Minister's Department Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop and Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon, Tourism Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ng Yen Yen, who is also Penang MCA chairman, and Najib's son, Norashman.

JKSB managing director Datuk Dr Ismail Mohamed Taib said: "The prime minister's visit is very meaningful to us because JKSB completed connection of the north-bound span from Batu Maung on the island to Batu Kawan in Seberang Perai last week.

"This means that the physical construction of the 16.9 km stretch of the bridge across the sea is completed and it is passable," he said in a media statement

He said the highway and toll plaza for the bridge was expected to be opened to the public in September, ahead of schedule.

The construction of the bridge was launched by Abdullah in 2008 and work started on March 3, 2009. Currently 94 per cent of the construction has been completed.

The Second Penang Bridge, the longest in Southeast Asia, was built at a cost of RM4.5 billion to reduce traffic congestion on the Penang Bridge.

Najib arrived at the Penang International Airport at 2.15pm for a visit to the state.

He was received by Teng, state BN deputy chairman and Zainal, among others, and the BN candidates contesting in Penang in the Sunday polls.

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