

Najib Opens 1.48km Batang Sadong Bridge
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SADONG JAYA, Dec 18 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today officially opened the 1.48km Batang Sadong Bridge costing RM231 million to build and is expected to spur economic growth in the area.

He said the bridge was completed two weeks earlier than planned while its cost was RM12 million lesser than announced initially.

Najib said the project was proof of the government's commitment to developing the rural areas especially, through the building of a network of good, comfortable and safe roads.

"This is a godsend for us. Besides ensuring safe travel, it will stimulate economic growth for people in the area, while their agriculture output potential can be increased," he said at the opening ceremony.

Najib said he had spontaneously approved the building of the bridge during his walkabout in the area in 2011 after hearing of the local people's difficulty, besides considering the importance of creating a network of roads for residents living along the coastal areas that were bypassed by the Pan Borneo Highway.

To complete the coastal route alignment, the prime minister said another bridge, costing RM1 billion, was planned to be built across Sungai Batang Lupar, with the construction expected to start in 2018.

Najib said when ready, the 5km bridge to be built on a 50-50 share between the state and federal governments, would be the longest bridge in Sarawak, with the current status being held by Batang Sadong Bridge.

He said other bridges being planned or already approved to complete the coastal route alignment for comfortable travel included the Batang Samarahan bridge (estimated to cost RM112 million), Batang Igan (RM300 million) and Batang Rambungan (RM130 million).

Najib said these were the government's promises that were never forgotten because for the government, promises must be kept.

Among those present at the ceremony were Sarawak Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Amar Abang Johari Tun Abang Haji Openg, who represented Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem, Works Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Nancy Shukri.

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