

Billion-Dollar Bridge Opens in Vladivostok

July 01, 2012



A friend of daredevil photographer Vitaly Raskalov posing for a photo while hanging off the top of Russky Island Bridge on May 1.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev opened a bridge connecting Vladivostok to Russky Island on Monday, praising workers who toiled to bring to life the structure linking 5,000 residents to the mainland.

"I am certain it will serve a great number of people who live in Vladivostok and on Russky Island, and those who come as tourists. ... It is just a beautiful structure, embodying the genius of engineering," the prime minister said at an opening ceremony for the bridge, RIA-Novosti reported.

The bridge, constructed to serve guests of the upcoming APEC summit in September, is currently only operating on a testing basis. It reportedly cost about 33.9 billion rubles (\$1.1 billion) of federal money to build.

Planners had earlier come under fire after a road built to connect with the bridge was partially

destroyed by storms, though Medvedev stood behind the quality of the bridge.

"I am confident that the quality is there. Where things may be a bit poor, we'll carefully adjust it — we can also do this, you know," Medvedev said.

He also praised Russian specialists who worked on the bridge.

"Everything was correct. Foreigners can't be trusted to do things well. Unfortunately, perhaps, we can't build houses, but we can definitely build such structures," Medvedev said.

The 1,104 meter-long bridge, one of the longest cable-stayed bridges in the world, will be opened for public use and city transport starting August 1.

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