

# Hong Kong Section of Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link opens

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, and the Governor of Guangdong Province, Mr Ma Xingrui, jointly hosted the opening ceremony for the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL) today (September 22).

The ceremony commenced at 10am. Following the performance by the Hong Kong String Orchestra and renowned Chinese violinist Yao Jue, Mrs Lam addressed the audience first. She said, "Upon commissioning, the Hong Kong Section of the XRL would link up the three rapidly-developing leading cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, namely Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Hong Kong. In addition to enhancing the high speed passenger transport network in the Bay Area and promoting the economic, social and cultural exchanges in the area, it would also link Hong Kong with the Capital Economic Circle and Yangtze River Delta Region through the Beijing-Guangzhou Passenger Line and the Hangzhou-Fuzhou-Shenzhen Passenger Line, thereby strengthening the synergy effect among the regions and creating more development opportunities."

Mrs Lam also said that in addition to the efforts made by relevant policy bureaux and departments of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government as well as the project and operations teams of the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), the staunch support by the Central Authorities and the co-operation of relevant departments have been indispensable in enabling the smooth commissioning of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL. The Guangdong Provincial Government and the Shenzhen Municipal Government also made an all-out effort to ensure the delivery of best results under the co-location arrangement. She expressed gratitude to the China Railway Corporation for providing the best arrangements on train scheduling, ticketing and finance to the HKSAR. In addition, Mrs Lam expressed her heartfelt appreciation to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress for providing a firm legal basis for the co-location arrangement, as well as to the Legislative Council for enacting the local legislation for the co-location arrangement in a timely manner. She thanked all the guests who have contributed to the project on behalf of the HKSAR Government.

Thereafter, Mr Ma; the General Manager of the China Railway Corporation, Mr Lu Dongfu; and the Non-executive Chairman of the MTRCL, Professor Frederick Ma, spoke successively in celebration of the opening of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL. After a simple launching ceremony and a plaque unveiling ceremony, all guests boarded the first train bound for Guangzhounan Station after going through clearance procedures under the co-location arrangement at the West Kowloon Station. They returned to Hong Kong after making a brief stop at Guangzhounan station.

Other officiating guests included Vice-Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Mr Tung Chee Hwa; Vice-Chairman of the the National Committee of the CPPCC, Mr C Y Leung; the Director of Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, Mr Zhang Xiaoming; the Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR, Mr Wang Zhimin; the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the HKSAR, Mr Xie Feng; the Commander-in-chief of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison, Mr Tan Benhong; the Secretary of the CPC Shenzhen Municipal Committee, Mr Wang Weizhong; and the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan.

The construction of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL commenced in 2010. It has a total length of 26 kilometres and connects with the Mainland Section of the XRL as well as the 25 000 km-long national high speed rail network. Its service will commence tomorrow morning (September 23).

