Construction of MTR West Island Line Project Commenced

A Ground-Breaking Ceremony for the MTR West Island Line (WIL) Project was held today (10 August) to mark the commencement of its construction works.

Officiating at the Ground-Breaking Ceremony, the Chief Secretary for Administration Mr Henry Tang Ying-yen said, “the West Island Line Project is the first newly implemented railway project in recent years. Apart from creating job opportunities, the West Island Line will extend the coverage of public transport network in Hong Kong and bring huge economic benefits to the community.”

The West Island Line is designed to be a “Community Railway”. “The new extension has many features which respond to the needs of the community. It will also act as a catalyst in rejuvenating the district by upgrading public facilities such as the new Kennedy Town Swimming Pool. It will also improve access between the upper and lower levels of the Western District,” said Mr C K Chow, Chief Executive Officer of MTR Corporation.

The West Island Line project comprises the construction three new railway stations, railway tunnels, procurement of rolling stock, and also associated public infrastructure works, including over 2-km of pedestrian walkways to improve mobility and connectivity within the district. Six civil construction contracts have been awarded since the project agreement was signed in July.

“Further contracts for the West Island Line project will be awarded progressively over the next few months. Construction in the densely built-up Western District poses significant engineering challenges. We will work closely with the community throughout the construction with a view to minimize any possible disturbance to the community,” said Mr Russell Black, Projects Director of MTR Corporation.

The HK$15.4 billion (in Dec 2008 prices) WIL project is a 3-km underground extension of the existing MTR Island Line from Sheung Wan to Kennedy Town, via two new intermediate stations at Sai Ying Pun and the University of Hong Kong. It will bring significant economic, social and environmental benefits to the community. The travelling time savings for the community alone is estimated to be HK$62 billion over its 50 years of operation.

About 3,000 job opportunities will be created at the peak of the construction period and approximately 6,600 positions will be required at various stages during the construction phase. Upon its completion in 2014, it will take only eight minutes to travel from Kennedy Town to Sheung Wan, and fourteen minutes to Tsim Sha Tsui respectively.

- End -
1. Chief Secretary for Administration Mr Henry Tang Ying-yen (fourth left), Secretary for Transport and Housing Ms Eva Cheng (third left), Member of Legislative Council (Functional Constituency - Engineering) Mr Raymond Ho (second left), Chairman of Central and Western District Council Mr Chan Tak Chor (first left), Chief Executive Officer of MTR Corporation Mr C K Chow (fourth right), Chairman of Panel on Transport of Legislative Council Mr Cheung Hok Ming (third right), Director of Highways Mr C S Wai (second right) and Projects Director of MTR Corporation Mr Russell Black (first right) today (10 August) officiated at the Ground-Breaking Ceremony of the MTR West Island Line Project.

2. Chief Executive Officer of MTR Corporation Mr C K Chow (second right), Chief Secretary for Administration Mr Henry Tang Ying-yen (third right) and Secretary for Transport and Housing Ms Eva Cheng (fourth right) performed the eye-dotting for the lions dance at the West Island Line Ground-Breaking Ceremony.
3. Chief Secretary for Administration Mr Henry Tang Ying-yen (fourth right) and Chief Executive Officer of MTR Corporation Mr C K Chow (fourth left) at the roasted pig cutting in the West Island Line Ground-Breaking Ceremony with other officiating guests.
Background Information of MTR West Island Line

**Alignment:** Extension of existing MTR Island Line from Sheung Wan to Kennedy Town via Sai Ying Pun and the University of Hong Kong

**Station:** Three underground stations namely Sai Ying Pun, Hong Kong University and Kennedy Town

**Route length:** Approximately 3 km

**Railway system:** Existing MTR Island Line 8-car trains

**Train frequency:** In line with existing MTR Island Line

**Fare structure:** Consistent with MTR fare structure

**Estimated journey time**

- Between Kennedy Town and Sheung Wan: 8 minutes
- Between Kennedy Town and Causeway Bay: 13 minutes
- Between Kennedy Town and Tsim Sha Tsui: 14 minutes

**Programme**

- Gazetted under the Railways Ordinance: Oct 2007
- Scheme authorization under the Railways Ordinance: Mar 2009
- Commencement of construction: Mid 2009
- Completion of new David Trench Rehabilitation Centre and Kennedy Town Swimming Pool: End 2010
- Completion of the West Island Line: 2014