

So remind us, why we need the white elephant from West Kowloon ?



Futian rail link speeds up travel to Guangzhou

Traveling to Guangzhou will take only 42 minutes for Hongkongers when Shenzhen's Futian Station on the Express Rail Link starts operating on Wednesday.

Thursday, December 24, 2015

Traveling to Guangzhou will take only 42 minutes for Hongkongers when Shenzhen's Futian Station on the Express Rail Link starts operating on Wednesday.

Taking a train from Lo Wu station to Guangzhou would normally take 80 minutes, but with the opening of the Futian Station, it will take just 42 minutes on the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail for Guangzhou South station.

Travelers can take the MTR to Lok Ma Chau, where they will be able to switch to the Express Rail Link.

The Futian terminus is the biggest underground railway station in the world, according to mainland media reports.

The three-story station takes up an area of 147,000 square meters, equivalent to 21 football fields, with 1,200 seats for passengers in the waiting hall. Platform screen doors have been designed to ensure passenger safety. At the first stage of operation, 23 trains toward Guangzhou South will be operating daily. The number of round trips could increase at a later stage.

North District councillor Lau Kwok-fan said he expects more business trips will be made from Futian to Hong Kong's Lok Ma Chau station when the Futian terminus starts running.

With the operation of Futian Station, Hong Kong's long-awaited West Kowloon terminus and rail section will be the only one not ready in the Guangzhou-Shenzhen- Hong Kong Express Rail Link.

Futian is the last station in the mainland before the high-speed rail eventually runs its final stop at Hong Kong's West Kowloon Station **by the third quarter of 2018 at the earliest.**

Traveling from Hong Kong's terminus to Futian Station would take only 14 minutes when the construction finishes. It also cuts the traveling time to Guangzhou to just around 45 minutes. KINLING LO



Express money issue runs too late for vote

Debate on an administration request for more public funding to complete the Express Rail Link closed in the Legislative Council yesterday without a vote taken.

Adeline Mak

Thursday, December 24, 2015

Debate on an administration request for more public funding to complete the Express Rail Link closed in the Legislative Council yesterday without a vote taken. Lawmakers spent half of the two-hour meeting debating agenda arrangements and whether minutes of the meeting should be recorded word for word. Labour Party legislator Lee Cheuk-yan also moved a motion for an adjournment.

Pan-democrat Albert Chan Wai-yip argued that projects relating to people's livelihoods should take precedence over the railway on the agenda. But establishment backer Ip Kwok-him disagreed and griped that major infrastructure projects like the link now set to be finished in the third quarter of 2018 never received support from pan-democrats and had been held back by filibustering.

Also, he said, the rail link is closely related with people's livelihoods. "Citizens know who should take the blame for the delay in discussions on construction linked with people's lives." Pan-democrat Kwok Ka-ki then remarked that Ip should be in the National People's Congress rather than Legco. The question of whether minutes should be recorded word for word received a mixed response with pan-democrats doubting its cost-effectiveness and the establishment camp saying it would show up the extent of filibustering.

Labour's Lee then said he was not satisfied with the delay in announcing "co-location" plans the basing of mainland personnel at the West Kowloon rail terminal to process border-crossing travelers and put forward the motion to adjourn. "We cannot simply throw away the Basic Law and approve the co-location arrangement," he said. "We should not risk jeopardizing 'one country, two systems.'"

Secretary for Transport and Housing Anthony Cheung Bing-leung said the rail link could only function fully and attain the greatest efficiency with co-location. He said the administration is discussing arrangements with the mainland and added that legislators should not underestimate the impact of the rail link. The meeting will resume on January 13.