

**SPEECH BY MR NG CHEE MENG,  
MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (SCHOOLS) &  
SECOND MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT,  
AT OPENING CEREMONY OF TUAS WEST EXTENSION,  
16 JUNE 2017, 11.50 AM, AT TUAS LINK STATION**

Friends,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

**Celebrating Tuas West Extension**

1. The East-West Line was originally conceived to run from Pasir Ris to Boon Lay. The line was completed in 1990. At that time, there were some heavy industries in Tuas, but the number of people working there was too low to warrant an MRT line. Since then, however, Tuas has doubled in size. Many new industries like biomedical, water and offshore and marine have sprung up. Today, Tuas is still growing, most significantly with the upcoming Tuas Port.
2. Recognising the growing number of people travelling to and from the Tuas area, we made the decision in 2011 to build the Tuas West Extension (TWE). Today, I am pleased to join you for its opening.
3. There will be four new stations – Gul Circle, Tuas Crescent, Tuas West Road and Tuas Link. TWE will be connected to the Tuas and Jurong industrial estates by two new bus services and four amended bus services. Passenger service will start this Sunday, 18 June.
4. TWE is expected to serve 100,000 commuters daily. Commuters working in the Jurong and Tuas industrial estates will enjoy significant travel time savings. For example, a commuter staying in Woodlands and going to work at Tuas West will find his journey shortened from one and a half hours currently, to under an hour. This constitutes travel time savings of more than 30%! I just met Ady who stays in Hougang and works in Raffles Marina, located beside this station. She shared with me that she has been looking forward to this Sunday as she takes two hours to travel to work currently. Now, she will take 30 minutes less.
5. The TWE project is also a significant engineering achievement. It is Singapore's first integrated rail-road viaduct. Standing at 23 metres, the integrated viaduct is almost twice the height of an average MRT viaduct. TWE also has the highest elevated

station in our MRT network. Gul Circle Station stands at 33 metres above-ground, about the height of a 10-storey HDB block.

#### Update on New Rail Lines

6. TWE is part of our Land Transport Master Plan, which aims to grow our rail network to 360km by 2030. Other than TWE, commuters can also look forward to the opening of Downtown Line 3 later this year. Together, TWE and DTL3 will add another 28.5km to our rail system, roughly the distance between the northern and southern tips of Singapore.

7. More will follow. We are going full steam ahead with the construction of the Thomson-East Coast Line and Circle Line 6. And by this time next year, we would have commenced civil works on the upcoming Punggol Coast station on the North East Line Extension.

#### Improving Transport Connectivity in the West

8. Besides the TWE, LTA is also embarking on two other major projects to improve rail connectivity for Singaporeans living and working in the western part of Singapore.

9. First, the Cross Island Line (CRL) will link Jurong, West Coast and Clementi, among others, all the way to Changi Airport. We are in the midst of detailed engineering studies and site investigations works.

10. Secondly, the Jurong Region Line (JRL) will connect all the key activity nodes in Jurong West, such as the Jurong Innovation District, the Jurong Industrial Estate and the Jurong Lake District. The JRL is expected to be completed around 2025. We gazetted the Tengah site for the JRL depot in March this year. Site preparation works are ongoing, and the construction of the depot will commence around 2019.

11. So here in the west, we can look forward to many exciting, new MRT facilities in the coming years.

#### Thanking the Public

12. Our fundamental objective for all our rail projects is to provide public transport which is so convenient, comfortable and reliable, that Singaporeans will go car-lite. In fact, as more homes come within walking distance of an MRT station, the proportion of commuters taking public transport during the morning peak hours has been growing steadily. Just five years ago in 2012, this figure was 63%. By 2016, this had grown to an estimated 67%. With DTL3, TEL, and later on JRL and CRL, it should reach 80% by 2030.

13. Rail reliability is another critical consideration for commuters. In this, I am pleased to note that LTA and the operators have also made good progress. In the first five months of this year, the Mean-Km-Before-Failure indicator for our MRT network, which is a measure of rail reliability, had improved to 387,000 train-km. This is more than double the MKBF of 168,000 train-km for the same period in 2016. Our train workers deserve our praise and thanks, for their determination and hard work. Theirs is not an easy job – not the working conditions nor the working hours. The least we can do is cheer them on, and give them our encouragement, as they toil to improve our rail journeys.

14. Finally, let me thank the companies and people working in the Tuas area for their support and understanding over the last six years as we built TWE. The noise and the inconveniences are over. From next week, you will reap the benefit of your patience and tolerance, with faster and more comfortable travel to your offices!

15. I am glad to see so many members of the community joining us today. LTA has organised a whole afternoon of events and will be giving free rides for you to familiarise yourselves with this new extension to our East-West Line.

16. Enjoy yourselves, and thank you!

\*\*\*\*\*

National Archives of Singapore