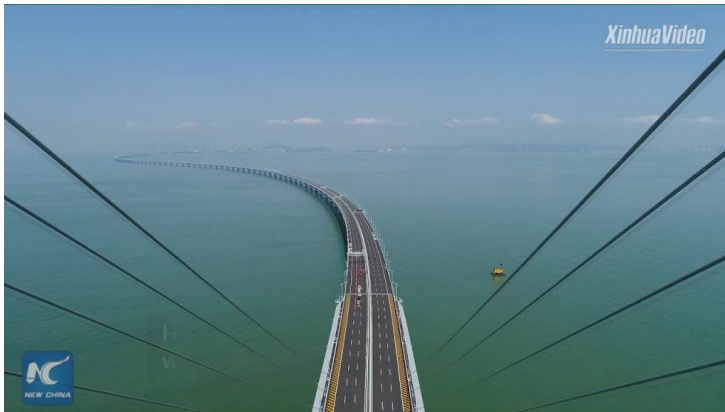


World's longest sea bridge connecting Hong Kong-Macau-Zhuhai ready for public use



China is all ready to inaugurate world's longest sea bridge ever stretching a length of 55 kilometres connecting the Chinese mainland to Hong Kong. Known as the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge, it will be open for public use from October 24th, 2018.

The construction of the mega project to develop the world's longest sea bridge started on December 15, 2009 at a cost of 120 billion yuan (\$17.3 billion). The bridge connects three provinces - Macau, Zhuhai and Hong Kong including an oversea stretch of 22.9 kilometres and a undersea tunnel stretching to 6.7 kilometres that goes down to the depth of 44 metres. The rest of the bridge runs over land and both its ends are connected via artificially developed islands - each stretching over an area of a million square feet, constructed in shallow areas of the Pearl River Estuary to allow transit between the bridge and tunnel sections.

Even if sea and the idea of sea bridges scare you, this bridge shouldn't as it is constructed using 400,000 tonnes of steel and designed in a way that it can withstand a magnitude-8 earthquake and strikes by super-sized cargo ships - at a breeze. Also, the undersea tunnels are made of chain of 33 submerged hollow blocks, each 38 m wide, 11.4 metre high and weighing 80,000 tonnes - again, capable of standing firm in extreme natural disastrous conditions.

The main purpose of the bridge is to promote economic trade commutation between the provinces and will cut down the 4 hour long trip from Hong Kong International Airport to Zhuhai to just 45 minutes. And, the trip from Hong Kong port to Zhuhai will come down from 3 hours 30 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes. The bridge will be capable of hosting 29,000 vehicles a day and will also provide a 24-hour shuttle bus service with a bus every five minutes during peak hours, every 10-15 minutes during the non-peak period, and every 15-30 minutes overnight.